

originally caused its formation. Above it only a mass of cloud indicated the high range which closes the valley to the North-East. The bleakness of the hills which rise on the West to a height of about four or five thousand feet above the lake and the low mounds of old moraines stretching along the shore, under the grey sky gave a desolate, sombre look to the little lake. As the glaciers of Muztagh-Ata kept wholly invisible, this impression was not relieved by the grandeur of the more distant surroundings. Mournful, too, looked the still smaller Basikkul basins and wild the confusion of ice-ground mounds of rock and detritus which ancient moraines have left in the narrow space between them. It was evident that the icy splendour of the great range eastwards is required to give to this group of little lakes its true Alpine beauty.

I returned by the East shore of Karakul, past the little bay where Dr. Sven Hedin's camp had been pitched. Considering how long he stopped in the neighbourhood, and how closely acquainted he became with the Kirghiz then encamped there, I was surprised how little my guides could tell me of this distinguished visitor. But the nomadic ways of the Kirghiz fully explain this scant recollection. The families then grazing around Muztagh-Ata have wandered elsewhere. Togdasin Beg, Dr. Hedin's friend, has since died far away on the Russian Pamir, and the other companions of his excursions in these mountains seem also to have scattered to other grazing-grounds. It was instructive evidence how little local tradition can be expected among the wandering tribes that frequent these valleys. The path back to camp took me along the cliffs which run down into the lake from Kara-kir ("Black Ridge"), a bleak height of dark rock rising immediately to the East of it. As soon as camp was reached at six o'clock the rain began to pour heavily again. It plainly meant snow in the higher region and consequent delay in my excursions. My diary entries for July 15th,