

yet a day's halt at Bozai-gumbaz was for several reasons indispensable. The Wakhis, whose help was necessary for crossing the pass, badly needed a rest after their preceding exertions; the collection of fresh baggage animals from the scattered Kirghiz camps would cost time; and, lastly, it was important to send Kirghiz ahead to the Chinese side to make sure about the transport we should require after crossing to the Taghdumbash Pamir. Months before I had informed M. Sher Muhammad, the 'British Political Munshi' in Sarikol, of my planned route and of the help I expected in the matter of transport. Again from Chitral and Mastuj I had used the convenient wire to Gilgit in order to communicate to him *via* Hunza the approximately exact date of our coming. And now after all these precautions it was disquieting to find at Bozai-gumbaz that for months past no news whatever had come through from the Taghdumbash Pamir.

I used our halt on May 24th for a ride to the west shore of Lake Chakmaktin, at a distance of about twelve miles from Bozai-gumbaz, and to the Little Pamir. Our way took us past a ruined watch-tower on a low plateau, known as Karaul-dong, and a warm and slightly sulphurous spring close below it. Then we crossed, almost without perceiving it, the low and flat saddle which separates the Ab-i-Panja Valley from the drainage of the Murghab or Ak-su, the other main branch of the Oxus. By a geographically interesting bifurcation which I was glad to verify closely, the stream of the Chilap Jilga which debouches on this saddle from the range to the north sends its waters partly towards Bozai-gumbaz and the Ab-i-Panja and partly into Lake Chakmaktin, the head-waters basin of the Murghab. It was curious to think that, while some drops in the Chilap stream would reach the true Oxus bed within a couple of hours, others from the same melting snow-bed would have to travel over three hundred and fifty miles through the Russian Pamirs and the gorges of Roshan before becoming reunited.

From where we touched the shore of Lake Chakmaktin the broad basin of the Little Pamir spread out to the north-east, a *morne* waste of half-frozen marsh and