

and marshy ground it traverses and the ariks being destitute of bridges; besides, it is longer than the route via Terem. Beyond it on the north stretches a barren and uninhabited desert of flat sand.

On the 9th September we travelled from Jupoga to Terem. Leaving behind us the fields of the first-named, we entered upon the steppe, dotted over with scrubby vegetation. Here we met numbers of countrymen or peasants on their way to the market at Jupoga, transporting their produce on the backs of horses, mules, and oxen. Next came a very thinly inhabited tract called Jildislik, where the clay huts are surrounded by poplars and willows. Across it run several more or less barren sand-dunes, with their steep sides towards the east-south-east. Here and there were patches of maize and cotton, amongst which wound a few wretched ariks, then mostly dry, though one or two were still moist from the last overflow from the Kan-arik. Occasionally we saw a flock of sheep. Thereafter we had for some time sand on our left and a tamarisk steppe on our right. Close beside the track, also on the right, stands the masar of Habdan Busrugvar, with its fluttering streamers; and not very far from it was a little *köl* or pool, surrounded by poplars. Although the region was on the whole barren, nevertheless we came every now and again upon an isolated homestead. When the last narrow belt of sand-dunes was passed, we once more entered the steppe. The road was still good and easy, though painfully dusty. At length it began to narrow, as we came to a part where the regular traffic diminished.

At Sängelik on the outskirts of Terem we again struck the Kan-arik; it was perfectly dry, about 4 m. wide, and had a sandy bottom. The little bridges which spanned it proved however that it did carry water sometimes. The avenue which lines it consists of young trees, and is thin and full of gaps; in some places the trees are only planted on one side. The wretched little bazar of Terem was empty and deserted, all the traders and peasants having gone to the market at Jupoga. On the eastern outskirts of the village, which are known as Koselek, we found a *köl* or reservoir, artificially made and surrounded by a rampart of earth, and not more than 0.6 m. deep. It had been filled thirty days previously, and the water still remaining in it was estimated to last ten days longer. When it gets empty, the people dig a well in its deepest part, and reach fresh water at a depth of 1.7 m.; though a short distance from the reservoir it is necessary to go down 5 m. before water is reached, and even then it is not perfectly fresh. The twenty days' supply from the Kan-arik was nothing like enough for the needs of the village; while of the violent downpour which we had encountered on the 5th September, nothing more than a fine drizzle had reached the vicinity of Terem.

Next day we soon left behind us the last homestead and well, and had nothing but the barren desert in front of us. At the same time the extreme arteries of the irrigation-system came to an end, and the outlines of the mountains disappeared in the dust-haze. The vegetation also gradually died away, and the bushes grew smaller and smaller. Here was the well of Kara-kum-kuduk, then perfectly dry, it having been abandoned several years ago. It was said to have been fully 12 m. deep at the time it was in use. Another well however, Mahametning-kudughi, did contain water, which, I found, had a temperature of 15°.8 C. The surface consisted