

into force, because of the copious supplies furnished by the Kodaj-darja. But since the river has begun to carry a smaller volume, it has been necessary to apply it: for instance, Pitschak-sindi is restricted to a 25 days' supply, and the water is then cut off, otherwise the other villages in the neighbourhood would come short. The Chinese leave the administration of this important law in the hands of a native *mirab*, who dwells at Tschighan-tschöl. But the way in which the office is administered gives occasion to endless bickerings and incessant complaints to the Chinese authorities. Indeed, a large percentage of the litigation which comes before the Chinese *ambans* for settlement in East Turkestan consists of irrigation disputes, occasioned in great part by the corruption of the native officials, who constantly accept bribes from this or the other village anxious to prolong unduly the period during which it is lawfully entitled to receive water for irrigating its fields.

Between the Kaschgar-darja and the Kodaj-darja there exist but small patches of sandy desert.* Steppe and thin forest are quite common, the latter in places dead and withered. Apart from these, the intervening country consists of fine clay, bare, hard, and level. In the region which stretches to the north of the Jarkent-darja, and which I have endeavoured to describe above, drift-sand occurs only sporadically at a few places, such as Ak-kum, Dugha-dschaji, Säsik-jarsik, Toghri-kum, Kalmak-kum, Nakara-chane, Atschi-dung, Kötäk-köl, and Kuruk-köbrük. There is a pretty long belt of sand, some 6 km. wide, at Ottus-kemi, south of the Kaschgar-darja. A small patch of sand called Kasch-kum extends west of Avat. South of the great Ak-su highway there lies a larger expanse, called Kaplämä-kum, between the stations of Tschöl-kuduk and Saj-arik. The little patches of sand which we observed on the left bank of the Jarkent-darja are not detached outliers of any great accumulation, but merely isolated gatherings separated from one another by thin poplar woods, tamarisk steppe, underwoods, or kamisch-beds. And the same thing is true of the greater part of the sandy spots which we noticed on the right bank: most of them are isolated, only a few have direct connection with the great desert of East Turkestan.

The map which accompanied my monograph in *Petermanns Mitteilungen* (Ergänzungsheft No. 131) contains only a certain number of the names which I have had occasion to mention above, and what do appear there are mostly those of places situated on the great Ak-su highway. In fact, the region as a whole is unknown, except for the small part of it traversed by Pjevtsoff. No European traveller has ever visited it. Equally unknown, before this journey of mine, was the section of the Jarkent-darja between the Masar-tagh and the confluence of the Chotan-darja: it had never previously been surveyed. Hence a comparison between the map which accompanies these volumes and all previously existing maps of this section of the river will show great, and not unexpected, differences.

But the fact which is of especial interest, in the oral information which I have communicated above about the country that lies between the Kaschgar-darja and the Jarkent-darja, is that it is by no means the sandy desert it has hitherto been

* What the connections between these two rivers are has not yet been made out, so that I am unable to state whether they do actually possess separate and independent beds, or whether they do not rather intermingle their waters in the marsh I have spoken of. Pjevtsoff says distinctly, that the lake of Lalmoj receives water from the Kaschgar-darja as well as from the Jarkent-darja, and in this he may very well be correct.