

October 26th. The drop in 9 hours amounted to 0.7 cm. The transparency was 17.8 cm. at 7 a. m. and 16.8 cm. at 1 p. m. The reason of the decrease in the latter *datum*, or in other words the reason of the river becoming more turbid, was that it was now passing through clay, and consequently held the finer particles of matter a longer time in suspension than when it travelled amongst sand. Hitherto it had steered a steady east-north-east course; and, though rather sinuous, was nothing like so serpentine as in the region below the Masar-tagh. Bushes and kamisch were the predominant forms of vegetation; young poplars occurred in small clumps at great distances apart. The first district we passed on the left was K  k-ajak. At Jigde-kotan, on the right bank, there was a loop, more like an expansion of the river-bed than anything else, which became deserted three years previously, and still embraced a large kamisch island. Next, at At-  ldi, on the left bank, came a small clump of poplars (*toghrak* and *t  r  k*), like an oasis in the dead level of the kamisch steppe. It sheltered a hut, and in the bed of a dried-up lake close by wheat is grown, on ground irrigated by a little canal drawn off from the river. With an energetic and clear-sighted government there should surely be no difficulty in devising and carrying out a widely ramifying system of irrigation on both sides of the Jarkent-darja and Tarim, and so conferring fertility, and its concomitant, prosperity, upon many square kilometers of this now rather neglected province. The agriculture which is carried on in the immediate vicinity of the river is altogether insignificant; the most the shepherds do is to grow just sufficient for their own domestic use.\* As a rule, the ground chosen for cultivation is generally the bottom of a desiccated lake or marsh which has recently been under water; the old watercourse which fed the lake or marsh being utilized as an irrigation-channel to carry water to the crops.

The third arm of the Kaschgar-darja enters the Jarkent-darja at At-  ldi, though it is very rare indeed that it contributes even a small quantity of water to the latter. As a rule, it resolves itself into a chain of small lagoons or pools, which are only filled in the season of high flood. The largest of these, and the one which retains water even when all the others have dried up, is Bulak. Farther on, on the same side of the river, is the forest-tract of Tschakan; and on the right Tulumischtan, a place inhabited by a shepherd's family, who own a canoe, and grow wheat in the bed of an old desiccated lake. Seven kilometers south of Jolbars  sildi there is said to be a masar called Mejim Kuli Busrugvar. On the left of the river we next observed a satma at Schupurluk; and 9 km. north of it is the large and greatly venerated masar of Imam Bet Ali Ghasim, with several »oratories», and a village of 20 to 30 families and several schejks. This masar is estimated to be 18 potaj from Schupurluk, so that, on this reckoning, the last-named must be 97 km. from Ak-su. According to my first map, the same route measures 88 km. At K  k-akin, on the right, our stream is joined by the old branch which starts

\* Not that the Chinese authorities are absolutely supine and indifferent to the possibilities of improvement, both in agriculture and in irrigation. Goro-tsch  l, mentioned above, is a so-called *jangi-jurt*, that is to say a new settlement or colony, founded by command of the Chinese authorities; it was made about two years after the Chinese occupation of East Turkestan. We shall come across two or three similar »colonies» lower down.