

at Kum-ägis, and which is here so choked with underwood and young forest that I should never have observed it, had not my attention been expressly directed to it. At Jesi-köl we found two shepherds and their families in charge of 500 sheep; they grow wheat in the bed of a lake which dried up ten years ago; and there is a still older lake farther to the south. The country between this place and Avat is estimated to count 7 shepherds' encampments, with the same number of *partscha-koj*, or »sheepfolds», likewise known as *aghil*. Between Avat and the mouth of the Chotan-darja there are said to be 8 such sheepfolds on the right bank and 5 on the left. The flockmasters all dwell in Avat.

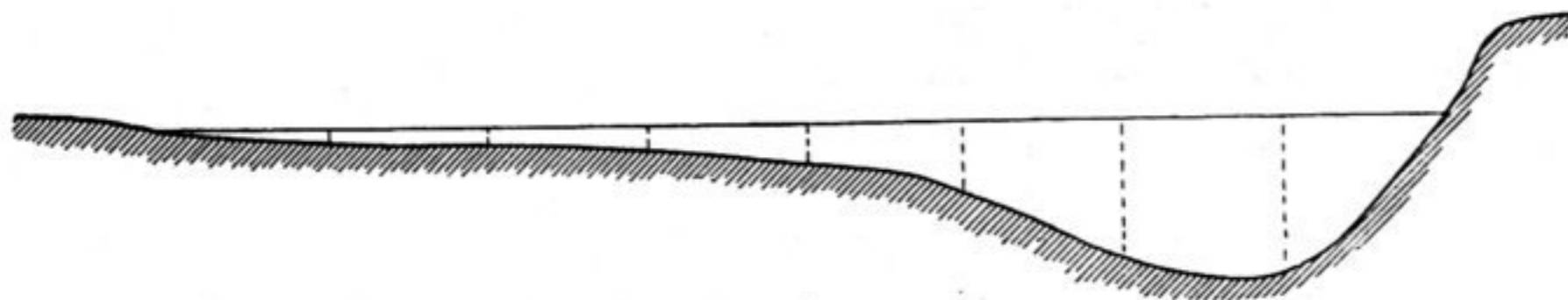


Fig. 77. Left. 0.26 0.38 0.46 0.79 1.47 2.81 3.14 = depth. Right.

19	22	35	56	65	68	48	} velocity.
	22	31	37	65	68	51	
				40	61	52	

Breadth = 26.2 m. Jesi-köl, October 26. Scale 1 : 300.

At Jesi-köl the breadth amounted to 26.2 m., the mean depth to 1.164 m., the mean velocity to 0.4906 m. per second, and the volume to 14.96 cub. m. in the second. Thus the river was steadily decreasing in volume. The quantity of water at this part of its course depends in autumn upon the amount contributed by the Pamirs and the mountains of western Tibet, and that again depends upon the amount of the precipitation and the meteorological conditions prevailing there. Heavy falls of snow in winter always give rise to a considerably swollen stream. When the summer is bright and sunny, the snow melts rapidly; and even when it is cloudy and rainy, there is always a full river. On the other hand, when the snowfall in winter is only slight, the volume of the river is relatively small. Here too, as higher up, the quantity of water is to some extent dependent upon the pressure of the atmosphere; and also — this applies with especial force to this particular part of the Jarkent-darja — to the subterranean contributories returning from the canals and fields. After the latter have been supplied with as much irrigation water as they need, the canals which carry it to them are left open, so that the water is free to run off, and eventually it finds its way back to the river again.

October 27th. Drop = 0.8 cm.; the transparency, 18.8 at 7 a. m. and 16.3 at 1 p. m. The scarped banks were 2.05 m. high, and the high-water level was 1.17 m. above the then existing level of the current. The river still continued to wind backwards and forwards. At first the velocity was normal, but it gradually decreased as we drew near to the Ak-su-darja, until at the confluence the stream was quite stationary. Steppe and bush vegetation still held sway on the banks. It was a perfectly still day, without a breath of wind, and the river glittered like a mirror, the only thing which ruffled its metallic smoothness being a few faint ripples in the actual current. As we advanced the river-bed contracted more and more. On the left a canal was led off to Kurme, the home of a shepherd family.