

river breaks out of the mountains to their common confluence were the same for both, and if the regions which the Jarkent-darja flows through were as thinly populated as those which the Ak-su-darja flows through, and if, again, the Jarkent-darja were not drained to the enormous extent it is by the irrigation-canals to Maral-baschi, probably this stream would be at any rate as big and as powerful as the Ak-su-darja. It is thus to these secondary or contributory circumstances that the *de facto* relations of the two rivers are in the main due. And here the question is suggested, Which of these two rivers is to be regarded as the principal stream of East Turkestan? Not that the answer is of any very special importance; it is, in fact, more or less a matter of taste, which admits of settlement in two different ways. If the principal stream is the one which is longest, then the honour of being the premier river of East Turkestan belongs unquestionably to the Jarkent-darja; but if, on the other hand, we say that the principal stream is the one which carries the greater volume, then it is evident that the distinction goes to the Ak-su-darja. During my first journey I had the opportunity of studying the Jarkent-darja in several parts of its upper waters, where its primary tributaries collect, and I had no doubt whatever about the matter, but, with Bogdanovitsch, regarded that river as the main hydrographic artery of East Turkestan. The distance between its remotest source near the Kara-korum Pass to Jarkent-darjaning-kujluschi, its confluence with the Ak-su-darja, amounts to 1090 km., whereas the distance of the Ak-su-darja from *its* source to the confluence is only 500 km., or, adding thereto the length of its tributary the Toschkan-darja, 640 km. Further, the natives apply to the united stream the name of Jarkent-darja all the way to Abdal, where its waters are dissipated through the marshes. On the other hand, the name Ak-su-darja is never used in the lower course of the river, though it is used, and used to the exclusion of every other name, immediately below the confluence. The name *Jarkent-darjaning-kujluschi* or *-kujluschi* is not without significance: it means the place where the »Jarkent-darja empties itself«. If the Ak-su-darja were regarded as the tributary, the name of the confluence would be Ak-su-darjaning-kujluschi. This shows clearly, that the natives who dwell in the vicinity of the confluence entertain no doubt whatever as to which is the mother stream (*viz.* the Ak-su-darja) and which the contributory (the Jarkent-darja); and in these matters the natives frequently display a remarkable instinct. The reason why the people in the Lop country call the river the Jarkent-darja, and not the Ak-su-darja, is altogether alien to hydrographic considerations; they call it so simply because the city of Jarkent is more famous, and consequently better known to them, than the town of Ak-su. The drainage-basin of the Jarkent-darja is, however, more extensive than that of the sister-stream, measuring 64,000  $\square$  km., as compared with 42,000  $\square$  km. for the basin of the Ak-su-darja. Seeing, then, that in respect of both length and drainage-area, the Jarkent-darja has the advantage over the Ak-su-darja, the former may well be accepted as the chief river of East Turkestan.

Strictly speaking, that river ought to be regarded as the principal stream of the country which shows the higher flood-mean throughout the year. Were the Jarkent-darja dependent upon its own volume alone, it would have difficulty in getting all the way to Abdal; on the other hand, the Tarim would certainly reach that point even though it were not joined by the Jarkent-darja, though in that case the