

The riparian tracts on the right of the big loop I have mentioned are called Schor-kasch and Kara-ködschäk. Then follow, on the left bank, the village of Schejklerning-tamlari, with ten families, several heads of which are »sheiks» attached to the masar of Sultan Ali Katta Busrugvar, which, with its *chaneka*, its *gumbes*, and its streamers and poles, stands a good bit back from the river. At Kara-tal, a day's journey north of the river, agriculture is carried on; as it also was until recently at Schejklerning-tamlari (the Sheiks' Huts), the fields here having been destroyed by an inundation. The little dwellings are pleasantly embowered in a grove of *täräk* and *toghrak*, and the people possess a canoe, with which they maintain communication with the opposite bank. On the left bank, in a district called Kujlusch (the Confluence), the Tarim is joined by two small tributaries, or rather by one tributary with two mouths, one of which contains a lagoon. The water which this affluent brings is *bulak-su*, or »spring water», coming from the canals of Arka-jilgha and Kara-tal. On the right bank we next note Intschkä-digeta, with one family, and a little way from the bank Chalpa, with five shepherd families. Then comes, on the right bank, Tolan-kemisi, taking its name from a well-made boat, with oars, which belongs to the bajs of Kara-tal, who pasture their sheep on Aral, the triangular tract of land bounded by the Ak-su-darja, the Chotan-darja, and the dry branch of the last-named. The word *aral* means »island», and the name still survives, although the tract is no longer an island, but only a peninsula, in consequence of the branch of the Chotan-darja having dried up. On the left we then have the village of Schor-tschokti, inhabited by four »schejk» families.

From our camp on Aral it was stated to be a three days' ride to the great highway between Ak-su and Kutschar. Twenty potaj, or 72 km., south of that highway there is said to be a river-bed called Atschik-jilgha, fed by natural springs lying east and south-east of Ak-su; this, in summer, when it is full, returns to the Tarim through the district of Choras-öldi. Except for a few pools, it was, however, at this time quite empty and dry. Between the Atschik-jilgha and the Tarim stretches a belt of drift-sand, the Kisil-kum, interrupted at intervals by forest, steppe, or naked mother earth. During the course of the day we passed six *tor*, or trumpet-shaped baskets, for catching fish. They were fastened to stakes fixed in the bottom of the river, as well as to poles thrust horizontally into the bank, and the fish were guided into them by means of a palisade built in the river and converging upon the mouth of the trap.

October 30th. A rise of 0.9 cm. Transparency, 13.2 cm. The summer flood had risen 2.37 m. above the existing level. The river's windings were now of great length and their angles obtuse; in fact, we did not double a single rectangular loop throughout the day. Thus the waterway was very little longer than the path from Chotan-kemisi to Schah-jar, which accompanies the river on its left bank. At Egrijar, the first of the north-going loops which is touched by this path, the bank is very distinctly marked, although planted with tamarisks, and behind it we caught distinct glimpses of the Kisil-kum sand-belt. Then, after passing Jildis-toghrak, where there is a homestead amid a grove of poplars, we came to the second loop, called Kara-dung, on whose sandy soil tamarisks were again growing. The region on the opposite, or right, bank is known as Kasan-asma. Some of the so-called houses