

were able to see, nothing but sand, though it is not heaped up to anything like the same degree that it is at Tokus-kum, and it is for the most part overgrown with vegetation. As compared with these stupendous masses of sand, the Tarim is like a mere narrow strip of meandering ribbon. There is a small lake even at the western foot of that part of the Tokus-kum which actually touches the river. And, as we shall find, the tendency for marginal lakes to be formed immediately at the foot of the highest accumulations of sand becomes still more pronounced as we advance down the river.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM THE TOKUS-KUM TO KARAUŁ.

The district below Tokus-kum is called Laj-su, and there, on the left bank, stands the village of Al-katik-tscheke, inhabited by ten families, or 35 people in all. Besides these, the bek, Istam Schang-ja, had under his authority twenty families in other villages in the vicinity. Another old man of ninety, who was born on the shore of the Kara-köl, had some sixty years before flitted up-stream, and finally come to anchor in Laj-su. The huts were arranged after the Lop fashion, in two compact masses, both to secure greater warmth in winter and greater shade and coolness in summer, as well as for more efficient protection against the storms. In addition they had stables for their cattle and sheepfolds for their sheep. The only trees at this village were five poplars. On a subsequent page will be found illustrations of typical Lop

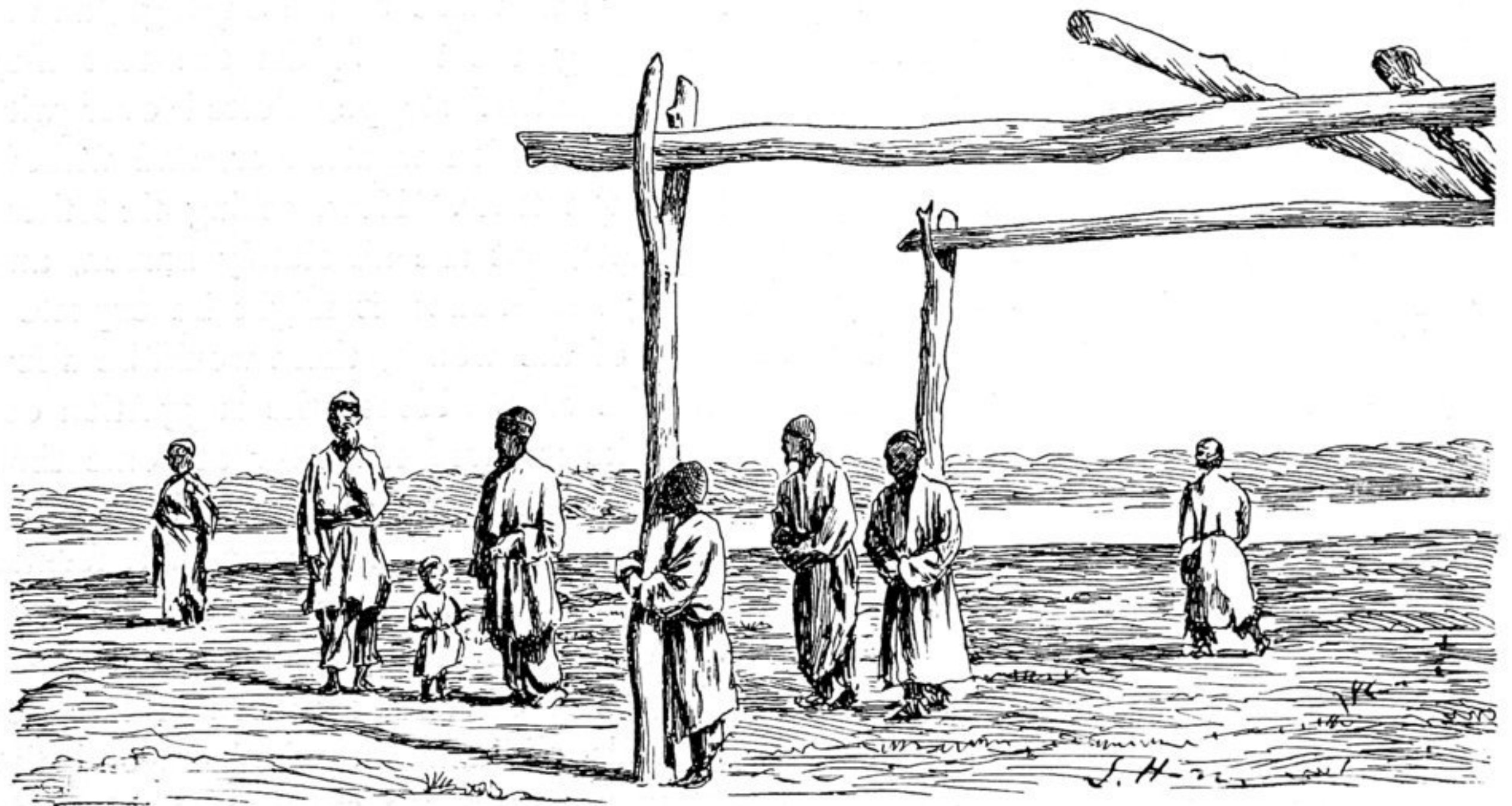


Fig. 119. HOW AN UJ OR SATMA IS CONSTRUCTED.