

that direction. At the point where we turned to the south-west the Jaka-atscha leaves the river eastwards for Ak-dung, situated just above the *baschi* or »head» of the Laschin-darja. Jaka-atscha, which means the »last», or »the outermost», channel is however no longer applicable, for there is now yet another canal, which has perhaps been formed since the Jaka-atscha was given its name. Next comes, on the right, Joldaschte-uj, uninhabited. It was indeed surprising to find all the huts we saw empty; for all the way our ferry-boat was surrounded by a crowd of canoes. They came from the newly built huts on the other side of the reeds, which we could not see. On our right we had firm ground, with poplars, small tamarisk-mounds, and sand-ridges clothed with vegetation; often too the dense reeds hid firm ground, which consequently we could not always see. The stream carried us out of the lake into another reedy channel, which soon divided, the left branch going to Ak-dung. We however followed the right branch. Immediately below Ak-dung begins the Laschin-darja, a powerful stream (see below) formed by the union of several emissaries from the lakes I have been speaking about, and entering, as I have said, the Ara-tarim. On the left comes the homestead of Adok-uji, and then, but a little way back, Ojman-köl-kischdake-uji, or the »Winter Domicile of the Deep Lake», the people of which are now settled at Tikenlik. Then we entered the Otak-köl, which winds like a broad river-arm; it was tolerably shallow and the water perfectly transparent, so that we were able to see all the details at its bottom. To the south-west we perceived the patch of sand which marks the entrance to the lower Baschtage-köl. Beyond Otak-köl the river contracts to a narrow channel with broken water (Scharkurun), pointing to the existence of a ridge or »threshold» across the bottom. Here we had to steady our ferry-boat by ropes from both banks. Finally she again glided out upon the Tarim, at a point where we once more perceived the old bed which begins at Bulung-su, and which for a great part of its course forms a channel for the Katik-arik. The volume of this last was here 2 to 3 cub.m., the stream keeping close to the scarped right bank. The old bed was however filled with silt and sand, this being virtually the cause of its having deserted that channel. Although the quantity of water which now flows down it is insignificant, this old river-bed shows that formerly it was traversed by a stream of some magnitude. The greater part of the water of the Tarim goes into the Laschin-darja. Another arm, now dry, goes to Putalik-köl, just above the village of Ojman-köl, inhabited by five families or 40 individuals, and thence proceeds to the Ojman-köl. The cultivated ground of the village is watered by a smaller arik, which leaves the Tarim lower down. The bottom of several of these ariks lay at that time a good meter higher than the river, and even at the period of high flood they get little or no water in them owing to the strong inclination which the river manifests to pour itself wholly into the bed of the Laschin-darja, and so destroy the channel which we were then navigating. For the same reason the former lake of Iskatka Värđi-köl has completely dried up; and the same thing is true of the Kara-tschege-köl, a lake surrounded by small dunes, bearing tamarisk bushes. A dry arik goes off to the former grazing-grounds of Menglighi-tschakmaka-kalghan. The river then becomes very winding, the bends being short and abrupt, and the alluvial desposits to a greater extent exposed. There was a little scanty forest, the trees being quite young