

luxuriant, old forest. Towards the west however the belt of vegetation is only narrow, as I ascertained through a reconnaissance, and the high, barren sand approaches quite close to the river. Except for the tongues of sand which the desert thrusts out towards the forest at intervals, there intervenes between forest and desert a belt of steppe, or, as the natives call it, *tschöl* or *tättir*. On the left we have the boldschemal of Mening-tschökön, containing water, with another similar one opposite to it, but dry. Next comes, on the left, the locality of Tugha-öldi (Camel Died); I was even told that it was a Mongol's camel which fell there. In Jakub Bek's time the Mongol pilgrims to and from Lassa (Lhasa) used to travel along the west bank, in order to avoid the great highway, were they were exposed to the exactions of Jakub Bek and his men, besides being also interfered with by the Tungans. But since the Chinese have had possession of the country, the pilgrims have been able to travel without molestation.

After passing a fresh jarsik we came to the district of Tschimälelik, and beyond it to a couple of sharp bends with a boldschemal, and, on the left, a lateral bed called the Jäkänlik-boldschemal, 35 years old; it contained stagnant water, but is supplied from the river at the period of high flood. At Jäkänlik-tüschkün, where, as the name indicates, the highway again touches the river, there is a little *örtäng*, no longer in use. Below it an arik (now dry) is led off to the *jajlaks* (or »pasture-grounds»). Then the river turns to the east, until it reaches Aschur Bek-tüschken, or Where Aschur Bek Encamped — Aschur Bek, the chief commissioned to lead the Kamschuks northwards, is said to have made a halt here. On the left bank there is a belt of sand,

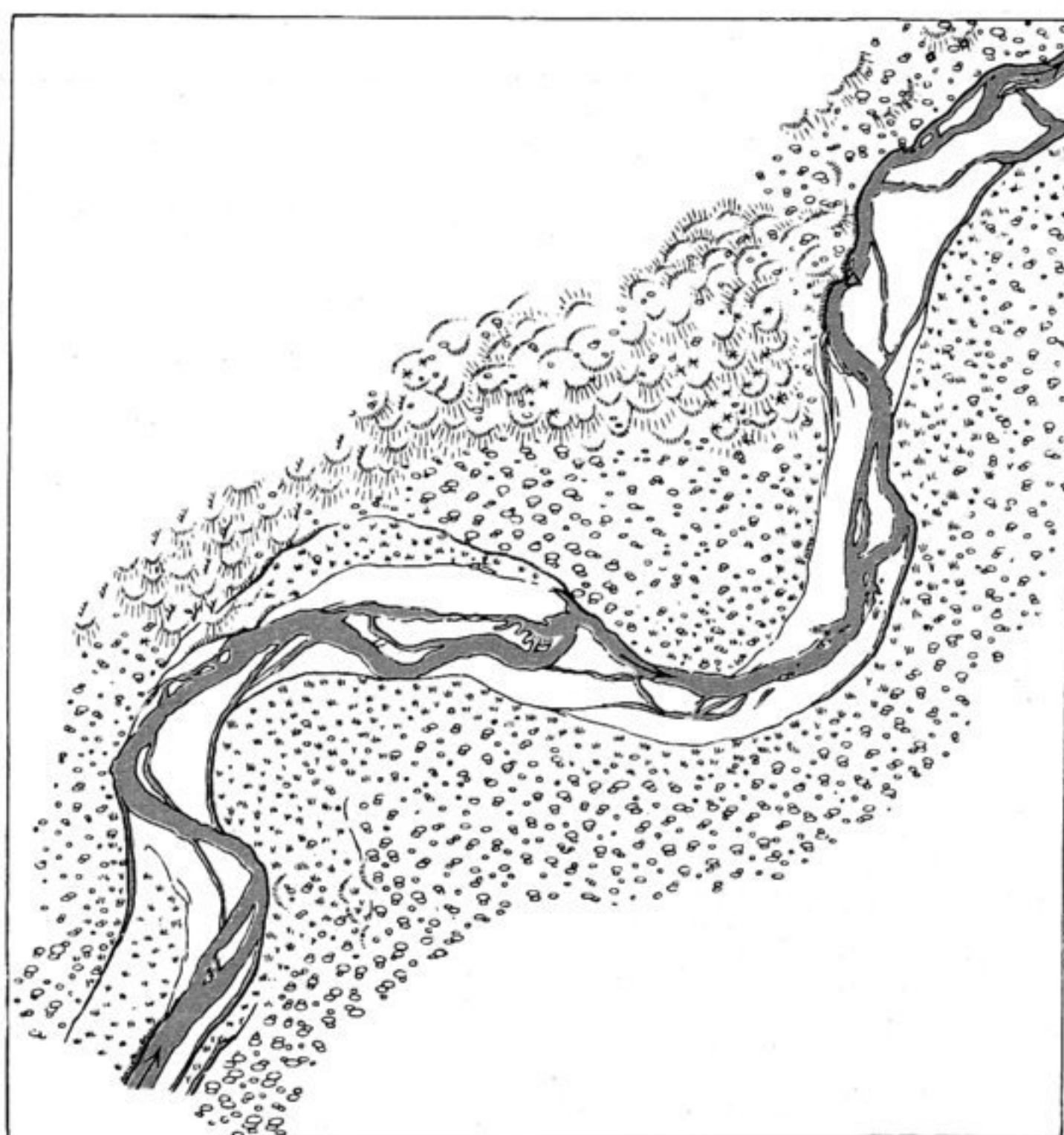


Fig. 180. JARKENT-DARJA AT KALMAK-KUM, 20 OCT.
SHOWING JARSIKS ON BOTH SIDES.

planted for the most part with poplars and tamarisks. The great highway, after running close beside the river for a time, again diverges from it, bending towards the south, whilst the river flows on towards the east. In the district of Kara-ghatik-jarsighi, on the other side of an acute bend, there are jarsiks on both sides of the stream. After that the current flows tolerably straight. These two jarsiks of Kara-ghatik might serve to illustrate the difference between the jarsik and the boldschemal; for the difference is more than one of name only, it is rooted in the origins of the two features. A bolschdema is, as I have already explained, a disused loop; a jarsik is generally (like the two here in question) a product of a specially high flood, caused by the river swelling out beyond its usual eroded bank, and forming a new containing bank at a little distance from the usual one. These exceptional and higher