

successive stages in the slow westward advance of a bajir depression; and from it we see that the striated portion of the bottom of the bajir must be the oldest and deepest, as I have previously shown.

Here however we must leave this desert, though in Vol. II I shall have occasion to revert to two or three of the problems connected with it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A TRIP TO ANDERE-TEREM.

The short tract of country which lies between Keng-lajka and the Tschertschen I have already described in *Petermann's Mitteilungen*, Ergänzft. 131 pp. 176—178; consequently I can here pass over it briefly. We rode beside the river on the track that runs up its left bank, threading successively thin poplar groves, luxuriant kamisch-fields, and tamarisk steppes. The village (*kischlak, kent*) of Tattran consisted, as in 1896, of 12 *ujlik*, dwelling in simple huts of sun-dried clay (adobe), buried in toghrak, täräk, and suget (willows). A canal runs through the village, and is spanned by a bridge; and at intervals we discerned traces of older and now abandoned canals. Immediately beyond the village begins the distinctly marked *jar*, or »erosion terrace», of the river, indicating the limit to which the high flood rises. All along its base, down in the bed of the river itself, there are level kamisch-fields, the reeds standing upon dry ground, at all events at the time of our visit. And even in such places where alluvium is wanting, and the current flows close in under the terrace, there is a narrow strip of clear running water barely a meter wide. Here large numbers of wild-duck spend the winter. The opposite or right bank likewise possesses a similar high perpendicular erosion terrace. The two banks run pretty straight, and parallel, but between them the river meanders to and fro a good deal. The poplars do not form a continuous forest; but the trees are old and big, and bear witness to the river's having flowed in its present channel for a very long time.

The greater part of the town of Tschertschen lies on the left bank and consists of homesteads scattered along the canals which leave the river on that side. It is ruled by a bek, and is said to consist of 500 *ujlik*, as compared with 225 on the occasion of my former visit. This great increase might have seemed in the highest degree unlikely, were it not known that the Chinese, since the last Tunghan revolt in 1896, have been concerned to develop and enlarge this town, so that it may eventually become a point of strategic importance, and serve as a barrier in the way of any further Tunghan invasion of Chotan and Kaschgar from the region of Si-ning. Indeed the Chinese are talking of stationing a small garrison in Tschertschen. The bazaar did not however appear to be any busier than it was four years pre-