

about $1\frac{1}{2}$ months longer. The flood caused by the melting of the ice was looked for about the 20th March, though in this arm it is of less magnitude, and only lasts about ten days. But even when this arm is at its lowest, it does not dwindle into a string of pools, like the other side-branches of the Tarim; but it always forms a continuous and connected stream, though the depth sometimes does not exceed a couple of decimeters. The first season of strong gales, called here »kuschdi-tschangi», sets in in the end of February and beginning of March; these storms bring with them sand and dust, which they scatter over the lakes and the rivers, and so accelerate the thawing of the ice. This season is followed by a period of calm, during which the wild-geese and wild-duck usually return. That winter there had been more snow than for many years previously, the snow lying to a thickness of 1 dm. In May and June it sometimes rains, though that is seldom, and then in short intermittent showers. If by any chance it rains all day, the rain is so fine that it barely moistens the surface of the ground.

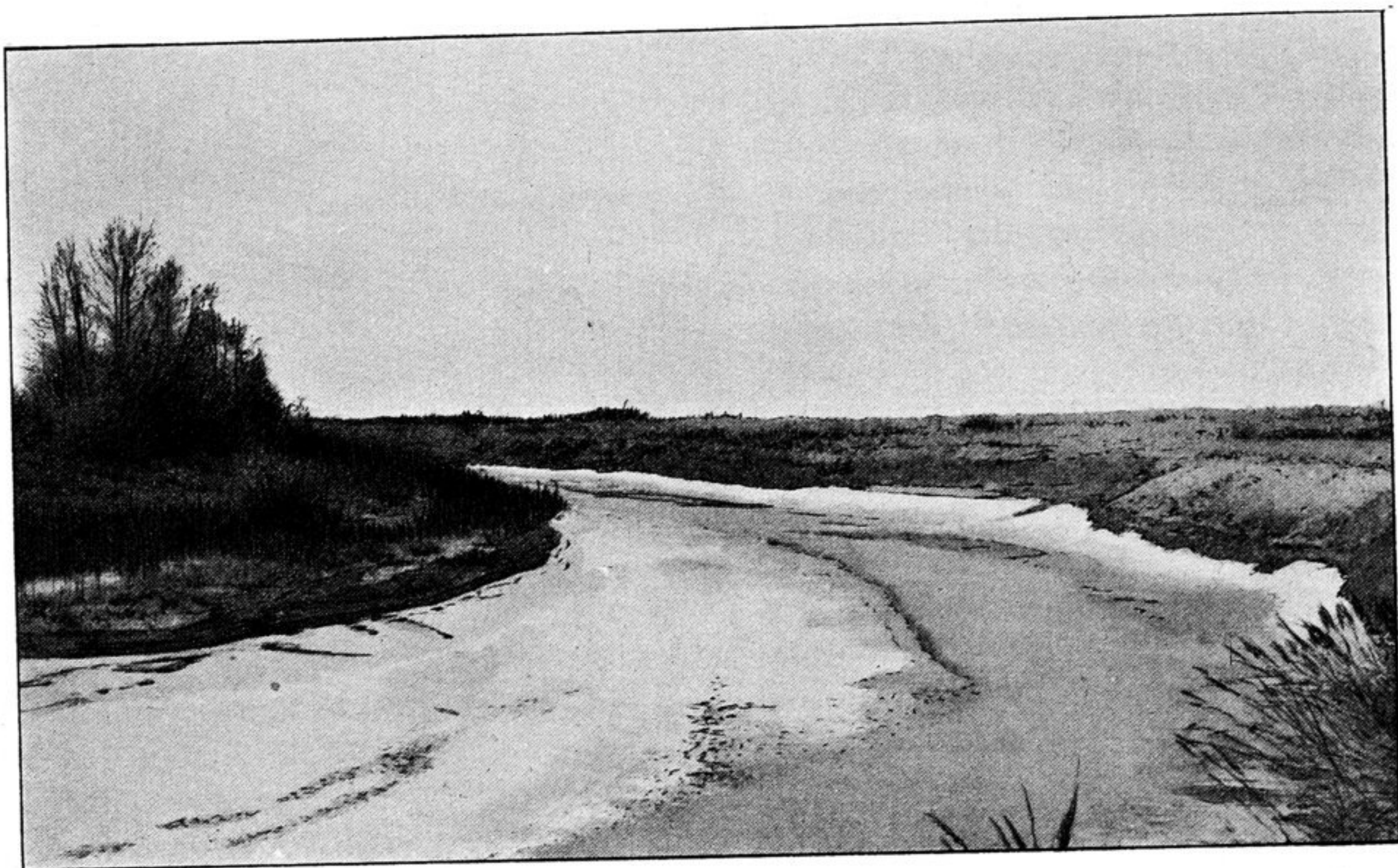


Fig. 369. A VIEW OF THE JÄTIM-TARIM BELOW SCHEJTLER.

At Schejtler, which we were to return to on a subsequent excursion, the Jätim-tarim or Kok-ala was 16.9 m. broad at the moment it froze, but at the time of our visit it had shrunk to 9.4 m., and under the ice the water had dwindled away no less than 0.88 m. during the winter. The greatest depth amounted to 2.19 m.; the ice was 0.34 m. thick. In fact there was open water just above the village.

We crossed the river on 20th February a little to the west of the village, and soon came to the lake of Jäkänlik-köl, its dry bottom then covered with luxuriant pasture. We again crossed the river in the district of Bulak. Here, as the name