

The right or southern arm traversed the following lakes — Kara-basch-salghan, Jäschil-köl, Gurkur, Dschan Kullu, Odschuluk-köl, Ghudschek-sapi, Ilek, Jäschanglik-köl, Karani-kadasi, Karaunelik-köl, Ukarlik-köl, Bajir, Julghunlik-köl, Baki-kamisch-urghan-köl, Togghoro-darja (the Straight River), where the arm in question enters the Kontsche-darja. Certain of these terms are manifestly not the names of lakes, e. g. Gurkur, which means »waterfall» or »cascade», and Ilek, which signifies the connecting link between two lakes. Another *ilek* is reported to have connected the Dschan Kullu and Odschuluk-köl. Bajir was a salt lake; plainly because it was not touched by the flowing current, but must have been a detached pool lying by the side of the stream. This name is however so far forth interesting in that it seems to suggest, that the natives look upon the bajir depressions in general as desiccated lake-basins. The distance between the mouths of the two branches was estimated at a day's journey. It was also a day's journey from Aghis on the Tarim to Tughu-baschi, and from the same point two day's journey to Togghoro-darja. Hence at the period alluded to the river broke up here into several arms after the manner of a delta. Now the relations are reversed, and these several diagonal rivers, starting in divers different places, gradually converge, precisely as we have seen in the case of the Kuntschekisch-tarim. The largest of all these lakes is said to have been the Jäschanglik-köl, which lay next the Kontsche-darja. To ride round it at the gallop took a whole day. At the present time its dry flat basin is open towards the Kontsche-darja, but in every other direction it is bordered by low dunes. About two hundred years ago it was possible to row from Soghot (see below) *via* the Togghoro-darja to the Tarim; so that the intervening portion of this old waterway has now disappeared. At that time the Tarim joined the Kontsche-darja a good deal higher up than it does now; and at a period still earlier the junction was effected, as I have already stated, higher up still, namely at Tschong-köl and the Intschkä-darja. Just at the time of my last visit the junction was on the point of making yet another step towards the south, in consequence of the Laschin-darja gathering into itself the main flood of the Tarim.

Thus the region between the two now dry river-arms used to be filled with a number of lakes and marshes, or rather it was one large lake, with occasional interruptions, similar to what the Kara-koschun is now. Probably at that time the latter did not exist, but came into being when these northern lakes dried up; that is to say, the lakes travelled down the Tarim in the same way as they now show a tendency to travel north again. The Lop-men of Tikenlik are convinced, that at the time when the Tarim flowed through the two series of lakes, the present Tschong-tarim did not exist from the district of Jangi-köl southwards, and in proof of this they point — and they are in many respects shrewd, clear-sighted men — to the fact that the forest beside the Tschong-tarim consists of young trees only, and that, had the river occupied its present situation for any great length of time, the sand on its right bank would have been carried farther to the left. This is also my own opinion, for which I have already advanced my reasons. In many places moreover the old river-beds are indicated by driftwood, which still remains sticking up out of the ground. Seeing then that the changes in the hydrographical system have been so great in such a brief space of time, there should be nothing to surprise us when we find that, as I shall subsequently prove, they have been