

people of Abdal during the winter, to make room for the young kamisch shoots to grow up in the spring. These sort of fire-clearings are called here *öjtäng*, i. e. *örtäng*, the same word as Prschevalskij's *Ujtun*. Sometimes we caught to the north glimpses of dunes rising 3 to 4 m. in height, and just peeping over the kamisch.



Fig. 383. DRAGGING THE CANOES ACROSS A NARROW TONGUE OF LAND.

At last however we once more came out into running water, an actual current in fact, and our men had to paddle for all they were worth to make headway against the powerful suction. The velocity of the current was sometimes as much as 2.32 m. in the second; this was occasioned in part by the Schirge-tschapghan arm being shorter than the Tarim, in part it was owing to the fall being concentrated in the sections of connecting current, and in part it was due to the acceleration of the current, caused by evaporation and absorption in the lower lakes, a loss which has to be continually made good from above. Here again it was reported, that there are other currents or arms to both north and south. Our arm turned first north, then west. For the most part it was contained between well-marked banks, plentifully supplied with alluvia, and having at intervals tamarisk-mounds or young tamarisks growing straight out of the level ground without the usual mounds. Sometimes however the actual banks on the one side or the other were masked by the reeds. Sometimes too we saw the sparse *kötäk* of poplars looming faintly through the haze. It was plain that the water had here sought out an older and larger