

ghan, and encamped on the left bank. The river, being here unusually straight, and its banks well wooded with old and lofty forest-trees, though some are gnarled, presented a magnificent piece of scenery.

From this camp we made an excursion to the lower canal that issues from the Karaunelik-köl. It is spanned by two bridges, and from the lower of these it was quite evident that the water had risen since 1896, for the bridge in question, which was also in existence in the year named, was on this occasion submerged to the extent of some centimeters, so that canoes would float over the top of it. The other bridge has been prudently thrown across at a much higher level and is out of danger; in fact, we paddled under it quite comfortably. This canal arm is likewise deeply excavated, and yet at its mouth the adjacent banks were only 0.50 to 1 m. above the surface of the water. In 1896 there was a small waterfall at the embouchure of the lower arm: but since that date it has ascended to its existing position, and dwindled to a cataract.



Fig. 397. THE BROAD, OPEN PART OF THE LOWER KOK-ALA OF SCHIRGE-TSCHAPGHAN; VIEW TOWARDS THE NE. FROM THE RIGHT BANK.

Above the lower bridge the canal expands, until it resembles an old, but imposing, river-bed, or an oblong lake. Possibly at some time or other the Tarim in the many vicissitudes of its history has once flowed along this channel. Its banks too are reminiscent of an old river; for, while the left (eastern) bank is convex and low, and planted with a plentiful toghrak forest, the opposite or right bank is concave and vertical, rising 2 m. above the level of the water. It is amongst the old poplars of the right bank that the huts of Schirge-tschapghan are situated; higher up