

I was also told, that, contrary to what happens in the case of several other river-arms which dry up during the summer, the two Schirge-tschapghan canals (*kok-alas*) always carry water. All the same, in the height of the summer they are a good deal lower than they were just then. From this we may conclude, that the Tokus-tarim likewise carries water all the year round. During my former journey I found that the volume of the Kontsche-darja is virtually unchanged: year by year, winter and summer alike, it has the constant volume of 71 cub.m. in the second;\* this is because the Baghrasch-köl serves at once as a water reservoir and as a moderator of the discharge. In the same way, although on a much smaller scale, and with a less pronounced result, the Kara-köl, Sadak-köl, and the whole of the chain of lakes of which they form links, function towards a like end. Once they are filled, it takes an appreciable time to empty them, and so long as they receive a constant supply from the Kontsche-darja they cannot indeed very well be emptied at all. My informants also thought they had observed a diminution in the volume of the Tarim during the last four years, a fact which — and probably with justice — they connected with the increase in the eastern waterway. And the inhabitants of Jurt-tschapghan had observed the same thing, namely that the volume of the Tarim decreases in proportion as the volume of the Tokus-tarim increases. In this connection I will not attempt to decide whether this insignificant change in the hydrographical relations is, as an old fisherman was disposed to believe, the cause of the four wells of the Etek-tarim having this year ceased for the first time to yield water at their usual depths.

At this time there were two families living at Schirge-tschapghan; and at Karaunelik-köl three families of 18 individuals plus 9 more at that instant at Tscharklik. These three families, together with the four at Jäkän-öj, and one of the families of Schirge-tschapghan, or in all 8 ujlik, usually spend the winter at Jalghus-jigde, a little way down the river; consequently it was at the time of our visit uninhabited. The three families of Karaunelik-köl own a small number of sheep, partly at Boghu-baschi, partly at Jäkän-öj. They had arrived at their huts in the beginning of February, when the ice lay thick on the lakes, and made fishing difficult. They intended to remain one month longer, and then go to Tschegelik-uj, and when the water froze again to Jalghus-jigde. Hence these poor fisher-folk, who here too call themselves Lopliks, lead a semi-nomad existence; and this mode of life has been even more enforced upon them since the Chinese began to urge them to take up agriculture at Tscharklik.

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\* I regard this result as only approximate; for it rests upon measurements of breadth, depth, and surface velocity only. Consequently it is certainly too high.