

when we passed, and looked like a river bay. This place, Dargh-ilek, is also interesting for another reason; it possesses the ruins of about a score of huts, to which during the Chinese supremacy, previous to Jakub Bek's time, the beks of Turfan used to come, *viâ* Turfan-köbrük and the Bos-ilek, to collect tribute from the inhabitants of Kara-koschun and Laj-su. The tribute, which consisted of 9 otter-skins (*kama, kamar*), was no doubt a symbol of these people's subjection to the Chinese at Turfan. These tribute-levying beks are stated to have brought with them supplies of flour, which they presented to the native beks for distribution amongst the people, and as at that time agriculture was not carried on in these regions it was a most welcome gift. Accordingly the people streamed together in their canoes from all parts to this improvised market at Dargh-ilek. The oldest of these Turfan beks whom the people remembered was Murat Baki Bek, who lived at least sixty years ago. He was followed by Sarki Bek and Ahmet Bek; my guide, Kirghuj Pavan remembered the journeys of the last-named forty years back. The last two beks used also to visit Tikenlik on a similar errand. The practice died of course a natural death when Jakub Bek conquered East Turkestan.

In this region the river scenery is grand and imposing, the forests being abundant and well-grown, the scarped banks high, the river deep and well defined, and the windings not dangerous; the banks are silent and peaceful, there being neither human beings on them nor their dwellings. On the right we passed the abandoned boldschemal of Kisil-su, containing, as the name indicates, bitter water; opposite to it is a mill. After passing the confluence of the Kuntschkisch-tarim and the Laschin-darja, we encamped on the right bank of the former, near the huts of Muhamed Tokta at Säkitma. At this time the inhabitants consisted of 10 persons, forming one ujlik, or household; they support themselves by agriculture and breeding sheep, but do not carry on fishing. The general name for the district is Dilgi, from Dilgi Baj, the father of Muhamed Tokta; Säkitma is the name of the huts only. The river is here called the Kontsche-darja, and at that season almost all the water that flowed along it was derived from the Hädik-ghol and the Baghrasch-köl; for the bed of the Kuntschkisch-tarim above Gendeng is practically dry, the only inflow into it being through a dug arik which begins at Kirtschin and enters it after irrigating the fields of Tikenlik. The Kuntschkisch-tarim drops during the summer about 60 cm. at Säkitma, so that its fall is a good deal less than that of the other streams, which are reported to fall one kulatsch (1.7 m.), but then the more constant flow of the Kontsche-darja has also to be taken into account. This last does of course rise in the autumn, but is highest in the spring; being in this respect contrary to the Tarim and its ramifications, in which the high-water season occurs in September and October. In the Kontsche-darja the formation of the ice and its subsequent break up are the principal causes of fluctuation, all the other changes being regulated by the Baghrasch-köl.

At this place I gleaned the following information. Our river was at that season dropping every day. The Tschivilik-köl would maintain its then level for yet another month, but during the two following months it would drop. In the autumn it rises, at first slowly, then swiftly, until it reaches its maximum for the year, exactly at the same time that the Tarim reaches its autumn maximum. Then