

the part of the country in which vegetation thrives has been elevated owing to the drift-sand and dust lodging against the roots of the plants, and thus in course of time gradually raising the dry-land level. But even the strip of »shore» along the left bank of the Kontsche-darja forms an exception to this, for it forms a sort of rather narrow rampart, elevated a few meters above the level of the stream. The river constitutes, as I proved after my journey of 1896, a boundary-line beyond which the drift-sand and the dunes do not advance towards the west. Of the sand which does pile itself up on the left bank, some gets washed away by the river, some settles in the forest, which thus detains it and brings its journeying to a standstill, so that the rampart I have spoken of becomes raised higher as the years go past. And yet the law to which I have alluded above, namely that the belt of vegetation is the higher ground, is not inoperative; for one, or it may be two kilometers north-east of the Kontsche-darja the desert does undoubtedly lie lower than the inter-riverine-tract.

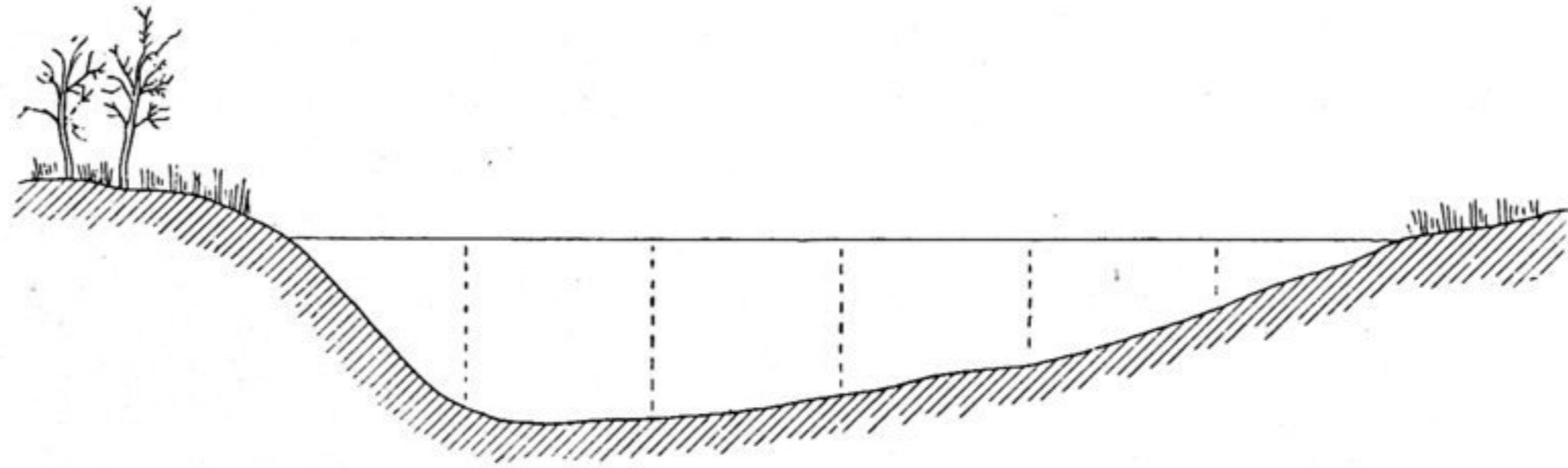


Fig. 6. Left.

5.62	5.92	5.01	4.05	2.03 = depth.
0.50	0.32	0.29	0.49	0.60 = thickness of ice.
40	43	40	34	} velocity.
27	44	41	40	
29	49	42	36	
28	42	44	0	
10	29	0	0	
	0			

Breadth = 36.0 m; Kontsche-darja at Dilpar; March 6; Scale = 1 : 400.

The toghrak forest on the left bank is well advanced in age. True, the trees are neither so magnificently grown, nor yet so old as the poplars beside the Tscherschen-darja and at At-jegen (vol. I, p. 423); still they are considerably past their prime. On the Jarkent-darja, south of Dilpar, the oldest poplars do not exceed 50 years, and are extremely sparse and rare. Beside the Jaman-ilek the forest is more plentiful as well as older; but when we get to the Kontsche-darja the trees grow thickly together and are relatively old. Whence we are justified in concluding that the Kontsche is the oldest stream of the three.

The shape and dimensions of the river-bed at Dilpar on the 6th March are shown in the accompanying section: breadth, 36.0 m.; mean depth, 3.405 m.; maximum depth, 5.92 m.; mean velocity, 0.2667 m.; and volume, 32.70 cub.m. in the second. On the 2nd of March the Tarim had a volume of 41.78 cub.m. Thus the difference in volume between the two rivers is not at this season particularly great; or, what amounts to the same thing, the difference between maximum and minimum volume