

Returning to fig. 85 — on that part of the western shore of Kara-koschun by which we travelled, that is along the dotted line, we found little or no sand. Dunes have been unable to form there, because that shore is screened from the prevailing wind, which arrives there without any load of sand. On the other hand there is nothing to prevent the formation of dunes along the eastern part of the northern shore; and, as I have stated, we did observe dunes there on the tongue of land between the main lake and the little lakes at the side on 3rd April. There the dunes travel parallel with the lake-shore in the direction of the prevailing wind; but the dotted area remains practically free from sand. The sand which exists there *now* will in course of time disappear, provided that the present circumstances persist sufficiently long in the future, that is unless it becomes in the meantime bound together by vegetation and collects into mounds. Along the whole western part of the southern shore of Kara-koschun there are no dunes; nor can any originate there, for that shore is sheltered throughout.

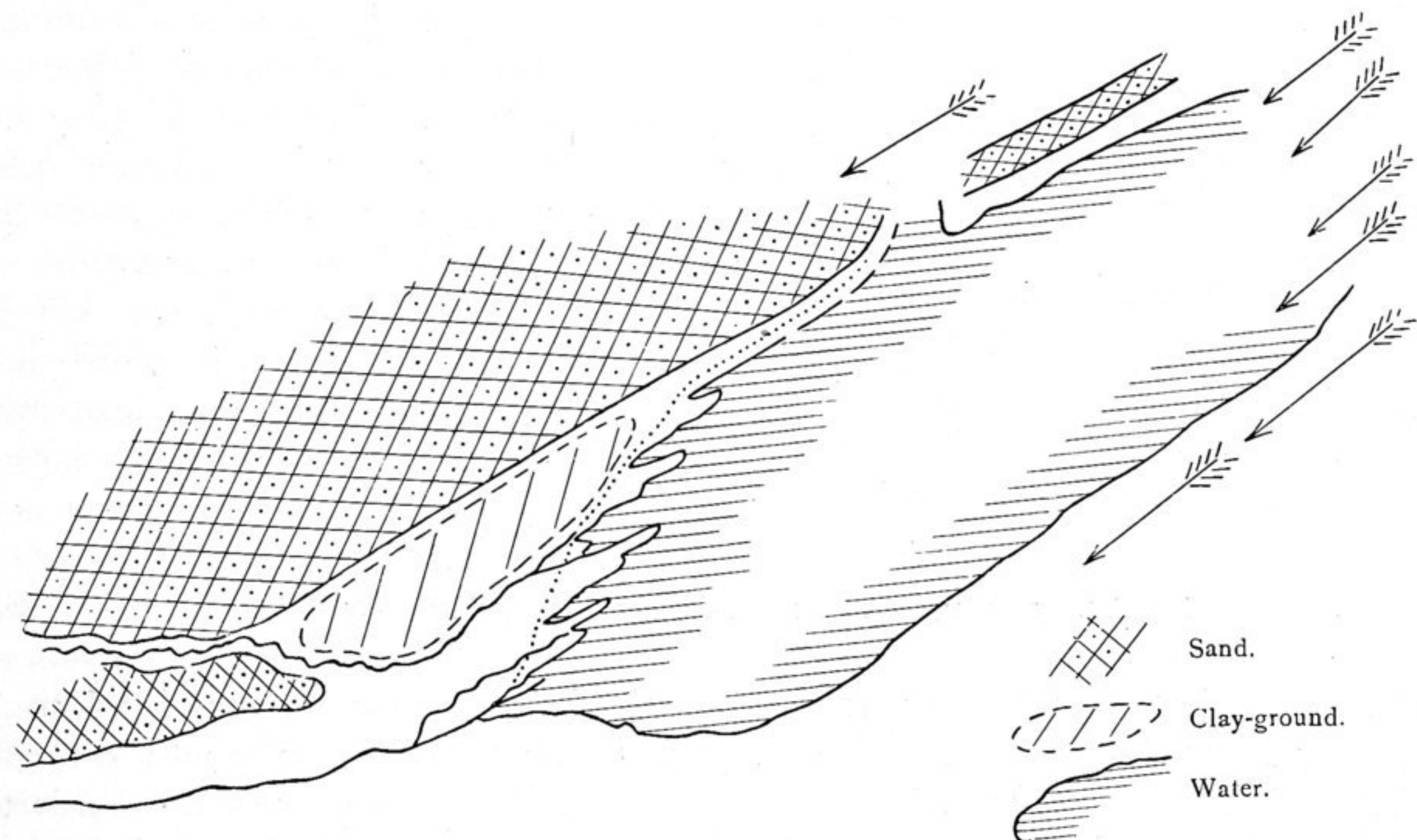


Fig. 86. SANDFIELDS NORTH OF KARA-KOSCHUN.

After that we threaded our way east-south-east through a vast number of small lakes. The river on our right was concealed by the rampart of mounds which help to raise its surface above the level of the adjacent country. At length we saw uplifted ahead of us the detached dunes, bound by vegetation, of Kum-tschapghan. Here is the *saratlik* or »burial-place» of the village, with a fence round the graves — poles with yaks' tails (*tugh*) and fragments of cloth of a peculiar tridentine shape — a custom which put me forcibly in mind of the habits of the Mongols, the only difference being that the latter on their cloth streamers inscribe script signs (prayer formulas).