

schor. Here too there were bare, steep clay hills, though a good deal smaller and fewer in number than farther east. The first real jardangs on the south of the schor desert were arranged in no decided order; the torrents which traversed them ran in every direction, and were 2 m. deep. But it was not long before they became grouped in the usual parallel lines, forcing us to keep to the south-west. Here also the observation made farther east was repeated again, in that the clay was deposited in three strata.

Once more we came down upon the level desert, and reached the first belt of tamarisks and kamisch-stubble; but as yet there was no living vegetation. We made Camp No. CLVII in the first belt of still standing poplars that we came to. Twice during the day's march we encountered older indications of human presence, first in three stone cairns on the mountain slopes nearest to the spring, and secondly in fragments of earthenware pottery in a couple of places. The mollusc shells occurred at first singly, but soon grew more and more numerous. In the gullies between the jardangs, we frequently observed distinct signs of running water, showing that the rain-water does sometimes get down as far as this.

At Camp No. CLIX, which was pitched amongst the ruins of Lâu-lan, I remained from the 4th to the 9th March. As this locality is described in a special chapter lower down, I accordingly proceed at once to deal with my eastern crossing of the Desert of Lop, and the survey I made there.

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