

forest is entirely absent throughout the whole of the lowermost parts of this hydrographical system, both beside the Tschertschen-darja and beside the Tarim.

Under *e* Richthofen adduces the only hydrographical measurement made by Prschevalskij; but I have left it out because it was not made with the requisite degree of accuracy.

Prschevalskij's reply to Richthofen's criticism was not perfectly convincing. He considered that the differences between the Chinese maps and his own discoveries were due to the unreliability of the maps. But the discoveries which I made in Lâu-lan and in the Desert of Lop prove, that the Chinese maps are perfectly correct. Indeed this was rendered in a high degree probable by Kosloff's discovery of the dry river-bed, the Kuruk-darja, the course of which agrees, according to my measurements, even in its details, with the course of the lowermost Tarim as depicted on the Chinese map.

Prschevalskij's remarks towards the close of his reply are quite correct, and possess the same justification to-day that they did when they were first made. The diminution in the volume of the Tarim is due to the drain made upon the stream by the marginal lakes and by evaporation. And he is quite right in saying that no small arm breaks away from the main river to empty itself into the ancient Lop-nor, for for several centuries it has received no influx of water. According to Prschevalskij, the reason of the water of the Kara-koschun being fresh is, that the lake can be regarded as a shallow area inundated by the river, and that a current can be detected everywhere throughout its western part. In this respect my opinion is in accord with the Russian traveller's. Throughout the whole of the northern stream, as far as one can row towards the east, the water is fresh, because there exists a current, which indeed may be regarded as a direct continuation of the river itself, and the river is considerably deeper than even the deepest part of the marsh. Along the southern stream we found that the water in the eastern basins was to a certain extent salt, owing to its being stagnant. If the basin of the Kara-koschun were more sharply defined as well as deeper, the entire lake would be salt; but the circumstances being as they are now, it *must* of necessity be otherwise. Everywhere where the reeds grow thickly and luxuriantly the water must be fresh, and the western part of the lake is rather an inland delta, where the waters spread themselves out in proportion as the lake grows shallower. A long way to the east we found few reeds near the northern shore, and the water there was so salt as to be scarcely drinkable. Still farther to the east it must be intensely salt, and it is hardly possible that there is any kamisch there. In these extreme eastern parts the water is stationary and evaporates, whereas in the west it is freshened up unceasingly by inflows from the river.

Richthofen's supposition under (*d*), »that there (south and west of Khas-omo) and not at Lob, lie the kingdoms of Leu-lan, Shen-shen, etc., which are named in history as situated near 'the salt lake'», is incorrect, at all events in so far as Lâu-lan is concerned, for I discovered the town of that name on the northern shore of Lop-nor. Grigorieff has given us a statement by the Chinese official and traveller Tschang-tsen (140—127 B.C.), telling us that such was the case. He says, »He (i. e. Tschang-tsen) calls attention to the Salt Lake (Lop-nor) which existed there