

koschun is the plant-bound sand-dune at Kum-tschapghan, namely 10.24 m. The longest reeds I measured in 1896 rose 6 m. above the water-level and descended 2 m. below it. Hence this extraordinarily vigorous and luxuriant kamisch, to which we found it impossible to force a passage in 1900 — its stalks were 6 cm. in circumference at the water-level — towered up more than one meter above the culminating point of the surveyed line and 3.718 m. above the point of departure. This circumstance again, that, throughout the distance of 81.9 km., we were never higher than the seed-vessels of this kamisch as it swayed in the wind in the marsh of the Kara-koschun, — this circumstance again is well calculated to convey a clear idea of the unparalleled flatness of the country. Finally I have indicated the height of a man standing on the shore, 1.75 m.; a loaded camel, on the other hand, would with the top of his burden reach up to the horizontal level of the point of departure.

A rise of 2.282 m. in the water-level of the Kara-koschun would cause this lake to expand to an extraordinary extent; but along the line we measured it would not lead to any communication with the Lop-nor basin, though if communication were established, this lake would become a lake of considerable size. Undoubtedly communication was at that time already established between the two depressions west of our line of traverse; this was owing to the formation of the new lakes originated by the arms A to F, which in 1901 had by no means reached their most northerly point, but were still moving steadily on in the direction of the Lop-nor depression. Sooner or later they will fill it, unless there happens to be a threshold or ridge west of Camps CLXII and CLXIII. But this is little likely, for in 1900 we crossed depressions in the Lop-basin which were filled with sand, and which were quite distinguishable without the aid of instruments.

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