

first-mentioned, being separated from them by a low, narrow neck of land, on which are drift-sand and tamarisk-mounds. Consequently the Kara-köl is a member of the series of bajirs that lies nearest on the west to the series in which the three first-mentioned lakes occur. Another notable error into which I fell in 1896 was accepting the statement my guides made, to the effect that the Kum-tscheke Ilek issued direct from the Arka-köl, whereas in actual fact it comes from the Suji-sarik-köl, and flows towards the south-south-east, west of the Kara-köl and Arka-köl, and receives from these lakes but an insignificant influx of water. This river belongs therefore in that particular neighbourhood, west of the Kara-köl, to a third series of bajirs; but in the locality west of the Tajek-köl and Arka-köl it belongs no doubt to the same series as the Kara-köl does, after it has apparently cut diagonally across a dividing strip of land which formerly formed part of one of the lofty accumulations of sand.



Fig. 165. FOREST ON THE BANKS OF THE ILEK, BELOW KUM-TSCHEKE.

If then the Avullu-köl, the Tajek-köl, and the Arka-köl are members of the same chain of bajirs, they ought to be bordered on the east by a ridge of high dunes, in the same way as the former series of depressions; and this really is the case, as I learned only too well when in 1896 I had to make a heavy and difficult march through the sand in question, though it is now in great part bound together by vegetation. In a similar way, this same series of bajirs, that is to say lakes, ought to be also bordered by a corresponding strip of sand on the west; and this I found to be the case in 1900, when I crossed on foot, at three separate places, the long