

the latter unaided would certainly die away before reaching Tschimen. If the Kontsche-darja had no connection on the way with the Tarim, it would be little likely to penetrate right down to the Kara-koschun. The Tschertschen-darja is the only one of the tributaries of the system which is powerful enough by its own efforts to reach the terminal lake, and that is only because its source is relatively near. How far the Kontsche-darja possesses a corresponding degree of power it is difficult to say, because at several points — in the Kuntschekisch-tarim, the Tschivilik-köl, and the Kara-köl lakes — it mingles its waters with those of the Tarim; besides, the measurements which I possess of this river are all too few to warrant any reliable conclusion. Nevertheless such numerical data as do exist are interesting, and suggest a train of thought which I will here insert by way of parenthesis as an appendix to what I have already said above (p. 7 and ff.) about the Kontsche-darja.

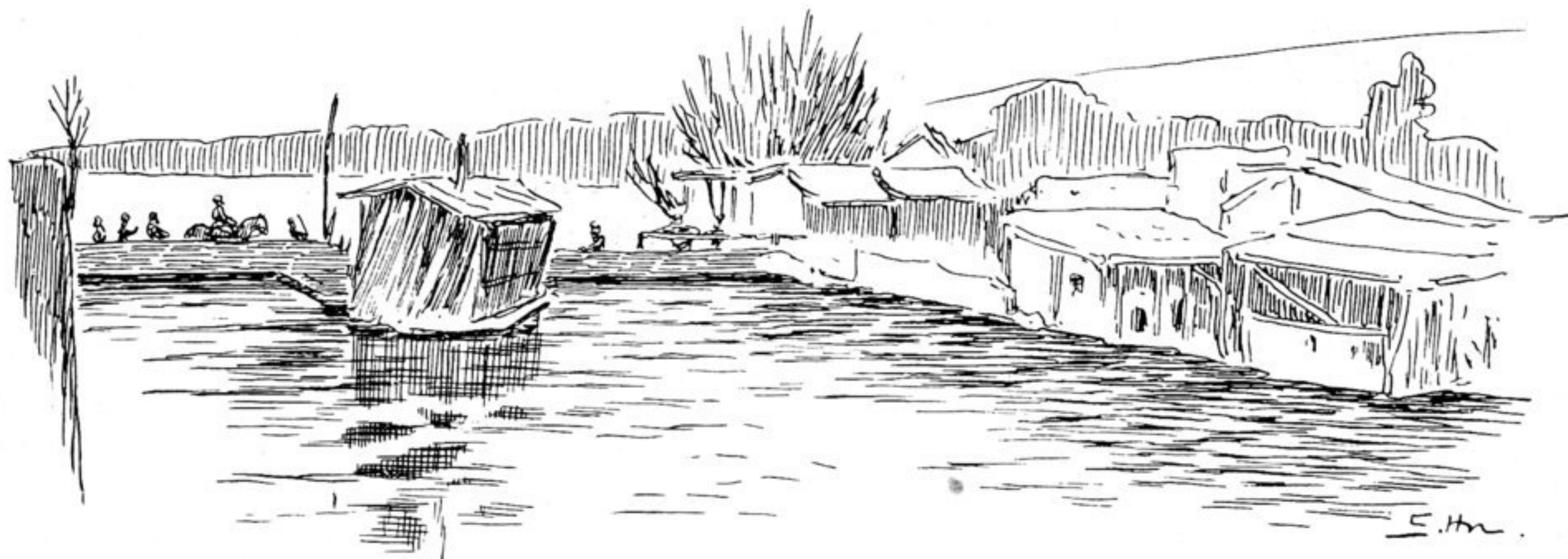


Fig. 237. THE BRIDGE AT KORLA WHERE I MEASURED THE KONTSCHE-DARJA IN 1896.

On 11th March 1896 I ascertained that the Kontsche-darja had at Korla a volume of 71.72 cub.m. in the second, although the Chajdu-gol on the 12th March only delivered into the Baghrasch-köl a volume of 53.5 cub.m. Thus the lake discharged 18 cub.m. more than it received. Now from what I saw at the bridge at Korla, and from what I was told by the natives, I understand that the river preserves at the point indicated the same level winter and summer alike, year after year, and therefore I conclude that the Baghrasch-köl acts as a regulator, equalising the oscillations of the Chajdu-gol, for its volume does of course vary from season to season in the same way as that of all the other rivers of East Turkestan. Hence the volume of the Kontsche-darja may be regarded as constant. At Dilpar on 6th March 1900 this river had a volume of only 32.7 cub.m., and had therefore on the short stretch of 150 km. (disregarding the windings) lost more than one-half of its volume. All the same it would be rash to infer from this, that this rate of diminution of volume continues throughout the entire course of the river — putting aside its connection with the Tarim — down to the terminal lake of the basin, which lies about 320 km. below Dilpar. *If* however that rate of decrease of volume were maintained, the water of the Kontsche-darja would not be able to get farther down than to the Tschivilik-köl or the Kara-köl. I attribute the great decrease I have noted above to the formation of the ice, which of course arrests and, as it were, ties up large