

pheral zone from the catchment-area of the Kaschgar-darja to the catchment-area of the Kuruk-tagh, both inclusive, with the southern peripheral zone from the catchment-area of the Jarkent-darja to the catchment-area of the Astin-tagh, both again inclusive, we find that the former has an area of 215,000 sq. km. and the latter an area of 232,000 sq. km., or in other words that they are approximately of the same size. In the case of both the breadth decreases on the whole towards the east, until they each terminate in a narrow strip, the domain of the Kuruk-tagh on the one hand and that of the Astin-tagh on the other. But before they contract in this way the zones swell out into the Chajdu-gol and the Tschertschen-darja + Kara-muran respectively, the catchment-areas of which in point of both area and breadth exceed the catchment-areas of the rivers to the west of them. A corresponding symmetry can also be seen in the rivers which gather off the encircling mountains into the depression. In the extreme west we have the Kaschgar-darja belonging to the northern zone and the Jarkent-darja belonging to the southern. Then follows on both sides a wide gap in which there are no rivers. Instead we have on the north a tract of arid, barren desert, crossed at intervals by low mountain chains, and on the south the Desert of Taklamakan proper, with its appalling ocean of sand. After that come a couple of rivers, the Ak-su-darja on the north and the Chotan-darja on the south, which have their courses tolerably near together. But while in the Kaschgar—Jarkent-darja the larger river and the larger catchment-area lie to the south, in the Chotan—Ak-su-darja the larger river and the larger catchment-area lie to the north. And as, interpolated between the Kaschgar-darja and the Ak-su-darja, there occurs a small distinct area belonging to neither, so also there is a corresponding independent area between the Jarkent-darja and the Chotan-darja on the other side of the basin. And the parallelism extends even farther still; for, while the northern river is formed by two powerful upper branches, the Tauschkan-darja and the Ak-su-darja, the southern is likewise formed in a similar way out of the Kara-kasch and the Jurun-kasch. The next intermediate region on the north of the basin is the barren desert between the Kutschar road and the forest belt of the Tarim, to which there corresponds on the south the desert of Kerija, a tract possessed of the same properties as the Taklamakan. After that comes the next pair of rivers, namely on the north the Mus-art-darja or Schah-jar-darja and on the south the Kerija-darja. East of these follow the two largest of the intermediate areas, in which the rivers are so small that they hardly reach down to the caravan roads on the north and south respectively, to say nothing of their travelling across the adjacent deserts. Finally, we have the last pair of rivers, the Chajdu-gol (Kontsche-darja) on the north and the Tschertschen-darja on the south, which join the main stream not very far from one another. Both are fairly equal in point of magnitude; for, though the Kontsche-darja carries the bigger volume, it has a longer distance to travel from its sources, and consequently experiences a relatively greater degree of exhaustion on the way. The Kerija-darja is undoubtedly a more powerful stream than the Tschertschen-darja; for, while its catchment-area is somewhat less, it receives in consequence of its more westerly situation a heavier amount of rainfall. The oasis of Kerija is however far more populous than the oasis of Tschertschen; consequently a greater amount of water is drawn off from the Kerija-darja by irrigation than from the Tschertschen-