

darja breaks away. This last must not be confounded with the large old bed on the south of the Tarim. Another old river-bed is passed on the left at Topa-kaschte, and lower down a Kona-darja, which the Tarim abandoned three years before my visit. In the newly formed channel, a deep, narrow trench between lofty terraced banks, the velocity amounted to as much as 2.05 m. in the second. Along this stretch erosion is wonderfully active, the river being very energetic in carving out its new bed. The big forest follows of course the Kona-darja, the margins of the Jangi-darja being relatively barren; such vegetation as there is consists for the most part of tamarisks. As a general rule the breadth of the belt of forest and vegetation varies in direct proportion to the changeability of the river-bed. The more the river changes its bed the wider the area that is moistened with its water, and if only the river shifts its position with sufficient frequency, the vegetation will not die out during the intervening periods of drought. The great sandy desert is estimated to be 40 km. from the masar of Ala Kunglek Busrugvar. The Kisil-kum runs behind the old river-beds on the left bank.

3rd November. The river in part very winding, in part straight. Where it is straight, the bed is narrow and the current swift. Poplar forest is abundant. Sheep-breeding is highly cultivated throughout all this region. Here too the river is considered to rise a little just before it freezes. The sandy belt of the Kisil-kum is said on this meridian to be 6 to 7 km. broad; this is evidently the narrow strip of sandy desert that lies between the Ak-su-Kutschar road on the north and the Tarim on the south, although a good deal nearer to the former than to the latter. On the east this strip of desert would appear to be bordered by the Mus-art-darja or Schah-jar-darja. On the right bank lies the belt of sand called Ak-jantak-kum: it appears to be distinct from the great sandy desert, which only begins on the south side of the old bed, the Atschik-darja, three days' journey away.

4th November. The stream very winding, for it flings itself backwards and forwards from one terraced bank to the other, flowing over the alluvial deposits of the high-water channel. Here again the river flows in a new bed. The old bed, which the forest accompanies, lies to the left, and is called the K k-tschol-darjasi; while the new bed is destitute of forest, the sandy soil beside it producing only steppe. It is moreover deep and narrow, and had a velocity of 1.45 m. in the second.

5th November. The river not particularly winding; the bed narrow and the current swift. Forest appears again below the junction of the K k-tschol-darjasi; apart from that the toghraks stand in separate groups. Dunes, bound together by vegetation, are abundant.

6th November. The river not particularly sinuous. On both sides several branches go off, though they only carry water during the high-flood period. At Kum-aral and Dung-kotan dunes overgrown with vegetation. Forest abundant.

7th November. The stream tolerably straight. Down as far as Tschong-aral thick and plenteous forest clothes the banks close to the river; but after that they recede from it, the country becoming quite open. Boldschemals, jarsiks, and high-water branches numerous. On the left the river is again joined by the old bed of the Atschik-darja. On the same side it is entered also by the Jilgha, which issues