

has thinned away until it has almost come to an end. Between the Tarim and the Ugen-darja the forest is reported to be continuous.

3rd December. The river tolerably winding and broad, with low terraced banks. On the north forest, on the south high sand quite close to the river, but with dense reed-brakes between the two. From this district the people call themselves Lopliks. In this region the high flood is considered to pass by in the end of September and the beginning of October. In the mountains the high-flood season occurs at the beginning of summer; but the farther down the river one goes the later is the date of its arrival and the more are its effects equalised. In a similar way the quantity of sand in its bed increases with the distance from the source, because the belts of sand, especially the great desert on the south, approach nearer to the river and are more vigorously attacked by it. The sand and silt which are in consequence of this deposited in its bed constitute one of the principal causes of the river's tendency to shift its position.

4th December. The stream winds but little. The bed broad, for the most part filled with water, the alluvial deposits being small. The velocity considerable. The forest comes to an end a little above Karaul. A patch of sand-dunes situated amongst sparse forest is known as Aral-kum.

6th December. Here the river is unusually straight, there being only a couple of accentuated bends at Karaul. There too the river changes its direction from east to south-east. The velocity is great, the bed in places narrow; scarce any alluvial deposits; the terraced banks only $\frac{1}{2}$ m. high. No forest at all, only kamisch and grassy steppes. On the left bank low dunes with tamarisk-mounds. On the right high sand, but some distance away.

7th December. A strong current, forming small rapids as in the immediately preceding stretch. The channel winds but little; what bends there are show a tendency to penetrate into the high sand, which now either directly overhangs the river or is merely separated from it by a narrow belt of steppe. The elbows pointing south are shallow, those pointing north deep, so deep that an 8.6 m. long punting-pole failed to reach the bottom, indeed it was quite *unable* to reach it because of the strength of the current. In the south-going bends the river is broad, in the north-going bends narrow, sometimes little more than 30 m. broad.
