

tions, a state of things which did not exist, at any rate not to the same extent as now, when the Tarim flowed along the northern limit-line of its delta.

During the 19th May therefore the river was accompanied, as it was during the immediately preceding stages, by a string of marginal lakes on its right bank. The course was especially straight, the bed broad, the alluvial deposits not particularly extensive, and such as there were consisted of »sedimented» sand. The country was open, the surface in part bare, in part overgrown with kamisch and grass. The few poplars that occurred were quite young. Along that stretch there are several old river-beds on the left side of the stream, each of which has in turn served to carry the river.

The same observations hold good for the section traversed on the 21st May, except that the river was a little more winding.

22nd May. Still the same observations apply.

23rd May. The river is frequently inclosed between high terraced and bare banks. Below Bulung-su the delta grows still more intricate, the old beds increasing in number. Along certain stretches the river inclines to the left as well as to the right. At Eski-tarim the forest is both thick and old.

24th May. The river is here perfectly new, and resembles an inundation which is gradually eroding a definite channel for itself. Great velocity, amounting to 1.4 m. in the second. It now quits the bed in which it has flowed during the last stadium of its history, and is forming a great number of flat, reed-grown lakes. This description applies also to the next day's section. The old river-bed is thus in this region situated between on the one hand these new lakes, in which the river now loses its identity, and on the other the older lakes wedged in between the dune-accumulations on the right bank. These new lakes are in general very shallow, though in one of them I obtained a sounding of 14 m., the greatest depth in all the Lop country. Generally, the river in this region is vacillating and hesitating, as though it had not yet decided where it will make its permanent bed. During the last few days it had exhibited a strong inclination to press towards the right; here on the contrary, after having for a time flowed to the south-west, it manifests a tendency to return towards the east. Thus it leaves, as I have said, an old bed along the foot of the high sand. And not only does the present river form a series of lakes, it also sends off to the left, that is to the east, several branches, which for the most part join the old river-bed at Arghan, after having emptied themselves into the Kuntschekisch-tarim. The most important of these branches is the Laschin-darja, which will probably become the principal bed of the Tarim when the long chain of lakes have become for the most part filled with mud and sand.

After traversing the chain of characteristic kamisch lakes, the remainder of the lake water re-enters the Tarim, which by that has dwindled to quite an insignificant stream, for it has given up the greater part of its volume to the Laschin-darja.

28th May. The course winding; the velocity slight; the depth approaching 5 m.; the banks relatively well clothed with poplar forest. The bed bore evidences of having been traversed by a large stream not very long before our visit.