

obliterate it. Below Basch-arghan the river grows very narrow and deep, with high eroded, terraced banks; scarce any alluvial deposits, but with forest.

2nd June. Ditto, ditto. The river swings away towards the north-east, without forming any abrupt bends. Respectable forest on both banks. Some desiccated lakes bear witness to the hydrographical arrangement having formerly been different. The depth approaches to 5 m. The water is especially clear, owing to the slowness of the current. Here then the dying Tarim is digging for itself a deep grave filled with a considerable volume of water, which literally »crawls» along at an exceedingly slow rate.

At Arghan the waters gather from various directions. Both the Tarim and the Kontsche-darja divide above the Tschivilik-köl, and a partial blending of their branches ensues. Not to plunge again into the mass of details recorded in the last chapter of vol. I, I will content myself with observing, that the Kontsche-darja divides into the two main arteries, the Bos-ilek, which goes to the eastern chain of lakes, beginning with the Avullu-köl, and the Kuntschekisch-tarim, which, after picking up the two branches of the Tarim, the Kalmak-ottogho and the Laschindarja, again divides. But both its eastern arm, which enters first the Tschivilik-köl, and its western arm, the Jätim-tarim, proceed to Arghan. The greater part of the water of the Kuntschekisch-tarim and the Laschindarja enters the large stream of the Ilek, which is situated between the eastern chain of lakes on the one side and the Tschivilik arms and Arghan on the other. The lowermost lake of the chain sends off a channel to the Ilek, which then forms yet another series of lakes — the Sadak-köl, Nias-köl, and several others. Its last surviving water reunites with the Tarim at Schirge-tschapghan. Hence the contribution which the Kontsche-darja should make to the Tarim is in great part dissipated through the numerous branches and lakes into which it flows. To the upper group of lakes I have applied the general name of Maltak-köl, and the largest stream which issues from it to the Kuntschekisch-tarim is the Turkomakte-kok-alasi. Over these several groups of lakes the Maltak lakes, the Tschivilik-köl, and the Kara-köl lakes (the eastern chain) vast quantities of water evaporate in the arid climate, so that the rivers upon issuing from their respective lake-complexes have been robbed of a very large percentage of their volumes. Were it not for these lakes, and did the Kontsche-darja only proceed in a single continuous and connected channel, instead of being dissipated in the way it is, the river, as I have already said, would be able to reach the Kara-koschun, or in other words would be capable of affording a very respectable addition to the waters of the Tarim.

And the same thing holds good of the Tarim itself. The continual splitting up into branches and the repeated formation of extensive shallow lakes do but enlarge the areas over which evaporation and surface absorption take place. The heaviest drain that is made upon the Tarim anywhere throughout its course begins therefore below Jangi-köl. Here again three different lacustrine groups may be distinguished, one, the Tschivilik-köl, being common to both the Kontsche-darja and the Tarim. The other two groups are the 35 marginal lakes in the sandy desert and the flat kamisch lakes above Arghan. Thus it is also true of the Tarim, that if it possessed one single definite, decided bed, its effectiveness at Kum-tschapghan