

lake towards the north. In fact at a former stadium in the river's history the Tokus-tarim was the principal channel; on its banks the forest is dead, the living forest of tall trees comes to an end at Schirge-tschapghan.

11th June. The river is in part very winding. The few poplars that occur are quite young.



Fig. 245. THE TARIM AT SCHIRGE-TSCHAPGHAN.

Finally the Tarim, divided into a number of arms, enters a series of extremely shallow lakes belonging to a group to which the common name of Kara-buran may be given. The actual Kara-buran has for the most part disappeared since Prschevalskij's time, or has at all events dwindled to an excessively small basin. The autumn flood does indeed fill it, but in summer it dries up entirely. The river, in its passage across it, has fenced itself in between pier-like ramparts. The exceedingly changeable and restless delta land of the Tschertschen-darja is intimately connected with this lake. The river last-mentioned carried on 21st June a volume of only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cub.m. in the second.

In the last stage, between the Kara-buran lakes and Kum-tschapghan, the bed is deep and narrow, and entirely free from alluvial deposits. Indeed alluvium occurs but seldom below the upper chain of lakes. Its absence furnishes an indirect proof, that the river deposits its sediment in the lakes, and thus is filling up their basins instead of forming sedimentary deposits in the latest stage of its own channel. The terminal delta of the Tarim begins at Abdal. There the river divides into numerous arms, which have greatly increased in both size and number since Prschevalskij's time. They have been caused by the river gradually raising its side-ramparts simultaneously with the filling up of the Kara-koschun, so that its mean level is higher now than it was formerly. In this way both the lake and the river now lie at a higher level than the circumjacent country, which is almost inconceivably flat. Hence a breach at a weak spot in one of these side-ramparts is all that is required to originate a fresh arm. It is to this cause that we must attribute the existence of the great number of shallow lagoons on both sides of this the lowest stage of the river, all having a more or less direct connection with the Kara-koschun. These newly-formed lagoons, together with the desert lakes, which during the last few years have formed to the north of the Kara-koschun, and which in the near future will almost certainly increase in area, represent or correspond to those parts of the Kara-koschun which are no longer able to find room in its basin in consequence of the sedimentation which has taken place in it. If only the Tarim