

uj down to the villages of Kara-koschun. Notwithstanding the plentiful and tolerably uniform distribution of the water, and the by no means unfavourable soil, the population of this part of East Turkestan is exceptionally sparse. From what I have already said in vol. I it will be pretty evident, that both agriculture and sheep-breeding are carried on to but a slight extent, and that hunting and fishing may be regarded as the principal means of subsistence that the population possess. Fishing however increases in importance as one advances down the river, and the Lopliks of the south live to a greater extent upon fish than do those of the north. The small degree to which agriculture is carried on in the Tarim delta must be ascribed in an essential degree to the peculiar hydrographical relations. In those places where the Tarim and its ramifying arms have been for a long time constant to their respective beds, these are generally so deeply cut, and the country adjacent is usually so flat, that irrigation is impossible. It is of course an essential condition for the employment of an irrigation canal that there should be some sort of a fall or slope in the surface at not too great a distance, as also that the river from which it is led off should not lie so deep that the labour of cutting the canal is an enterprise of very great magnitude.

The native beks told me, that the number of ujlik in the country of Lop amounts altogether to 535, or 9025 inhabitants, an estimation which gives not less than 17 persons to each ujlik. This total is, it is true, amazingly little, but after travelling, as I have done, across the country in various directions, it strikes me as being not improbable. Dural, the chief town in the country of Lop, is considered to possess only 150 inhabitants. Tscharklik however is gaining in importance, as the fisher population of the lower Tarim and the Kara-koschun are settling there in increasing numbers in order to devote themselves to agriculture.

The grand total of these calculations, all entirely provisional, is therefore as follows:

Villages	1,500,000	inhabitants
Towns	200,000	»
Shepherds	100,000	»
Lopliks	10,000	»
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Total	1,810,000	inhabitants

But this does not quite exhaust the population of East Turkestan; for there are *kara-keschs*, *araba-keschs*, *karavantschis*, beggars, and dervishes — in a word people who spend the whole of their lives on the roads, birds of passage who have no fixed dwelling anywhere. Besides all these there are the Chinese, who may be divided into three chief categories — officials, soldiers, and traders. And then there are merchants from the neighbouring parts of Asia, especially Andischanliks (from West Turkestan), Afghans, Hindus, etc., although each of these classes is relatively few in numbers. In default of any more reliable basis of calculation, I venture to estimate the entire population of East Turkestan, in round numbers, at 1,800,000 to 2,000,000.

If we put on one side the actual Desert of Lop, the region over which these people are distributed contains an area of 450,000 sq. km., or an area almost exactly