



S. H. 2

Fig. 6. The bridge at Gurgur

A cool east wind was blowing in our faces as we pushed off on the morning of April 18th. When gliding along in the shade of terraces 2—3 m high one felt downright cold, and it was good to have a light sheepskin coat at hand. But as the day advanced it grew hot — as much as 25° C. Isolated and sickly poplars grew here and there, and where the terraced banks overhung the stream their roots trailed in the water.

TEMENPU, THE PLACE OF BIFURCATION

It was nearly five o'clock when we landed at Temenpu, a very interesting place. The right bank of the river is here 4 m high and presents a curious appearance because four parallel passages resembling yawning gateways had been dug through it. Below this place, four years before, a dam had been built across the river by order of the *amban*; for it was just at this point that in 1921 the Konche-darya had left its old bed to open a new way for itself along the dry bed of the Quruq- or Qum-darya. In the course of a few years practically the whole river had gone over to the bed of the Qum-darya; and the »ordinary» Konche-darya, which flowed past Tikenliq, had almost dried up. Only in the autumn did some water still come this way to Tikenliq, and this was not nearly enough for agricultural needs.

Meantime, the vain idea was cherished that men's hands could conquer one of Nature's caprices, and compel the Konche-darya to return to its old bed, whence it might water the fields around Tikenliq as before. Four hundred men were called up from Charkhliq, Tikenliq, Yangi-köl, Konche and Ulugh-köl; and in the summer, when the river was at its lowest, five hundred stout poplar stakes