

may have a very different volume of water, for some years the oceanic precipitation may reach farther into the interior of the continent than other years.

Several travellers have crossed this river. LITTLEDALE, 1893, does not give any account of it. ROBOROVSKIY crossed it more than once on his journey, 1893—95, but his account is very meagre. He only says that where Noyon-khutul-gol joins it, the breadth is 30 *sashen*; the bed and the banks consist of boulders a half *arshin* in diameter. Lower down the river spreads in some branches, and still lower down in »many branches in a gravelly bed». ¹ It would be easy to prove, by comparing all the different descriptions, that not two are like each other, as different travellers have crossed at different places and seasons. Littledale crossed the Bukhain-gol 55 miles from the mouth. If DUFOUR's map in Huc's book (Pl. XVIII) is in the least reliable, Huc crossed the river some 15 miles from the mouth whereas Prshevalskiy crossed it very near the point where the river enters the Koko-nor. In 1896, November 8th, I crossed the river some 25 miles (42 kilometres) from the mouth. I have described it in the popular account of that journey. ² In the scientific description I give the following details: »At last we crossed the Bukhain-gol at a broad, comfortable place, where the bank terrace was hardly one metre high. The breadth of the main branch was 75 m, the average depth 0.25 m, the greatest depth 0.35 m, and the velocity 0.9 m, that is to say a volume of 17 cub.m a second. The water was clear and free from ice. Then follow two small frozen arms, with very little water. The three following beds were rather broad and mighty, but perfectly dry . . . Some 4 km further down we crossed another branch, being 30 m broad, 0.2 m average depth and 0.7 m velocity, thus carrying a volume of 4 cub.m. in a second . . . Between all these arms are low terraces with steep sides . . . and not inundated during the high water. But the now dry beds are filled in summer and some of them were still moist. The bed of the Bukhain-gol is therefore very broad and spread, and it is possible, as my guide asserted, to cross the river at this season almost at any point.» ³

Thus I measured some 630 cub. feet water a second and the river was spread in seven arms, so there may easily have been twelve lower down where Huc crossed. There is no particular exaggeration in his description. Some accidents may even happen in such a great caravan. Huc seems to have crossed the river in the beginning of November as I did. Once he has »le lendemain» and once »cinq jours» before he comes to the 15th November, from which dates he must have crossed the river on the 9th of November or one day later than I.

Huc continues: »Le 15 novembre, nous quittâmes les magnifiques plaines du Koukou-Noor, et nous arrivâmes chez les Mongols de Tsaidam. Aussitôt après

¹ Trudi Ekspeditsiy Imp. Russk. Geogr. Obshtshestva po tsentralnoy Asiy. Vol. II. p. 290 and 311.

² Through Asia, II, p. 1155.

³ Die Geographisch-wissenschaftlichen Ergebnisse meiner Reisen in Zentralasien 1894—1897, Petermann's Mitteilungen, Ergänzungsheft 131, p. 332.