

the stone troughs of which pieces have been found. To-day, the brook is too small to supply so large a town. The water supply cannot have come from the Karatash River. To bring it to the ruins, two hundred and fifty feet above the stream, would require a winding aqueduct ten miles long, cut much of the way in the face of almost perpendicular cliffs of red sandstone or of gravel, and carried across the mouth of at least one large tributary gorge. Such a piece of work would be out of all proportion to the size of the town, and would be an engineering feat utterly beyond anything, old or new, known to exist in Central Asia. Moreover, if such an aqueduct had ever existed, some traces of it would surely remain, and would be known to the natives. To bring water from the Choka brook, on the other hand, would be an easy matter. The bed of the brook rises rapidly up the valley; the cliffs soon die out; and within three miles of the ruins, water could be led out of the brook and brought to the ruins by means of a simple ditch. The difficulty is that at present the Choka brook suffices for only twelve families of peasants. A little water runs to waste in summer when the snow is melting on the Tikelik plateau, but in spring every drop is needed; and in winter the brook is said to dry up completely except for a few small springs.

Since the water supply of ancient Choka cannot have come from the Karatash River, only two alternatives remain: either the Choka brook was once larger than it now is; or by careful management a little stream, which to-day supports a dozen families of peasants, was made to support fifty times as many families of townspeople, who, of course, would require much less water per individual. The second