

a few years ago. In 1891, some villagers were digging above their spring, as one of them told me, in order to get a little more water. When they returned to their work one morning, they found that the spring had visibly increased, and that the stream from it was perceptibly beginning to deepen its channel. In great delight, they sat down to wait for nature to make them rich, for unlimited land was at their disposal if only they had water for it. A flood from the Kara Su came down not many weeks after, and entering their channel, converted it into a broad, deep trench. In the course of a few months, the new stream grew to a size which proved unfortunate for the villagers. The government heard of it and took possession. The officials, with great profit to themselves, founded a new village, called Karakir Achma, or Karakir Opening. There was a rush like that at the opening of an Indian reservation in the United States. In a few years, the place had a permanent population of two hundred families or more, and was deemed important enough to have a bazaar.

The new channel grew steadily wider and deeper, until in 1905, when I saw it, it had a width of two hundred feet or more, and a maximum depth of about sixty feet, which decreases both upstream and down. For some years the amount of water remained fairly constant, but in 1905 it had been decreasing for two or three years, and the people of Achma had begun to move away. Apparently, the water supply of neighboring villages did not suffer, but rather increased. At Shivul, east of Karakir, new springs broke out, so that between 1885 and 1900, a settlement of twenty families was formed. The Dumuka River also in-