

have seen reason to believe that a change of climate caused the people to give up pastoral nomadism and to adopt the sedentary pursuits of agriculture. Such a change must have vastly increased the number of inhabitants. We cannot say exactly what its influence may have been upon their character, but it must have been great. In the far more arid region of Endereh, a change of climate of precisely the same nature caused a reversal of the process. Physical conditions became less favorable, the habitability of the country was diminished, and the dense population of an agricultural community gave place to a few scattered shepherds. If similar results have taken place in other regions, history may have been influenced most profoundly thereby.

From Endereh eastward for two hundred and fifty miles to Charklik, our journey was uneventful. We followed the zone of vegetation quite closely, but zigzagged more or less. Everywhere, in this remote region, there are unmistakable evidences of a great change of climate. For scores of miles where no man lives, we found great tamarisk mounds, dead poplars, or vast beds of dead reeds. All of the few previous travelers who have visited the country have strictly followed the road, which naturally keeps along the southern edge of the zone of vegetation, where alone water is available in shallow saline wells, and where, of course, the vegetation is more vigorous than elsewhere. Hence they have not noticed the unmistakable evidences of desiccation which abound elsewhere.

A hundred miles east of Cherchen we came to the Vash Sheri River, which rushes swiftly down from the mountains, and, after losing most of its volume in the piedmont