

explanation was that the latter were draining strata saturated with subsoil water far lower than those feeding the sources of the Domoko stream some eight or nine miles higher up on the Sai.

The observations thus gathered at the great dam of Domoko helped to bring out clearly two facts of wider geographical interest. It became evident that the opening of the Malak-alagan colony was the direct result of a movement by which the Domoko stream had endeavoured to carry its water once more towards the old village site abandoned about 1840 A.D. Had it not been for the timely construction of the dam, practically all the available water would have turned into the Yar, leaving the canals irrigating the present village lands to run dry. In that case, it is safe to assume that the settlement would have been shifted back again to the position occupied by 'Old Domoko.' In proof of this it is sufficient to point out that, as I convinced myself on the occasion of a subsequent visit in 1908, the old village lands are now being gradually approached again by the surplus water of Malak-alagan brought northward along the old canal alignment, still traceable, even without any aid of water from the Domoko stream.

The fate of abandonment which threatened the extant oasis and was averted only by an engineering feat of unusual importance for this region, shows plainly that changes in the cultivated area may take place on ground peculiarly situated without necessarily being occasioned by desiccation and a consequent diminution of the water-supply. But more important still is the lesson we may draw from it as to the influence which a quasi-historical factor, the assertion of human energy, must have in respect of such changes. Had it not been for the effective administration introduced on the Chinese reconquest of the country and the economical development which it has fostered, the damming up of the Domoko Yar would certainly have proved too great a task to be attempted with local resources. The villagers of Domoko would have been left to face their calamity as best they could, and everything points to the probability of their adopting