

upon the heap, and thus contributes to the maintenance of those monuments, which remind us of the *cairns* of the Polar expeditions. When a caravan in want of provisions meets another which is better supplied, the latter shares with the former its stock of water, dates, butter, and barley bread ; this is a custom to which even the Touaregs, the brigands of the Desert, conform.

The ever-increasing progress of modern industry will, perhaps, eventually create in the African Desert a number of oases, which will render a residence therein less dangerous and less painful, and will powerfully influence the nomadic habits of its population.

The Artesian works already executed in the Algerian Sahara have induced a remarkable revolution in the constitution of Arab society, by deciding several nomadic tribes to fix themselves definitively in the irrigated districts, and become cultivators. It is probable that if the Artesian wells be considerably multiplied, the oases will not be long in springing up, under the favouring influence of the waters so fortunately raised from the bowels of the earth. The interior of Africa will then wear a new aspect ; man will have conquered to himself an immense domain ; and there will remain but few of the gloomy details in the picture we have just painted of the "waterless sea."

The Desert of Gobi (Fig. 93) stretches from west to east, from Turkistan to Manchooria, for a length of about 1250 miles ; it forms a great portion of Mongolia. The Chinese call its western part *Chamo*, or the "Sandy Sea ;" its eastern part, *Chachin*.

The Gobi desert does not everywhere present the same aspect. In its eastern districts the shifting sand nearly everywhere covers the soil, which is diversified with sandy hills and projections of granite. In the west, the sandy plains are intersected by marshes. A few oases sprinkle this region of the desert ; the principal is that of *Kami*. There the brooks keep alive an abundance of green pasture, with numerous fine trees and a rich vegetation. Beyond their limits the maps indicate only salt lakes of small extent, nearly always dry, wells, springs, and stations for caravans and the Chinese posts.

The vegetation of this part of the Gobi is poor and scanty. Some small tracts are covered with herbage, above which rise a few stunted bushes, wild apricots, and