

speedily dry up, and all the salt contained in its water would be precipitated in a vast bed of rock-salt. Then, should a depression of the isthmus connecting this low salt formation with the sea take place, there would be a new influx of the sea. The sediments of its waters would be deposited upon the bed of rock-salt; and new precipitations of salt would occur. The site of the Karabóghaz would then be a great salt-bearing formation, like those formed in ancient times in various ages of the world.

On other portions of the Caspian shores, the process has been brought nearly or quite to completion. On the peninsula Apsheron, on the west side nearly opposite the Karabóghaz, are ten salt lakes, in one of which, evaporation has gone so far that ten thousand tons of salt are annually removed from it. Again, in the neighborhood of Novo Petrovsk, the deep indentation on the east shore was once a large bay, which is now divided into a number of basins presenting every degree of saline concentration. One of these still, occasionally receives water from the sea, and has deposited on its banks only a thin layer of salt. A second, still full of water, has its bottom covered by a thick crust of rose-colored crystals like a pavement of marble. A third exhibits a compact mass of salt on which are pools of water, whose surface is more than a yard below the level of the sea. A fourth has lost all its water by evaporation, the stratum of salt left behind being uncovered by sand. A similar concentration is taking place in the Karasu, or long inlet setting southward from the north-eastern extremity of the Caspian.

The whole Caspian is greatly dwarfed from its ancient dimensions by the process of evaporation, and it would be naturally expected that the salinity of the water would be intensified, as in the Dead Sea, instead of diminished. The intensification has really taken place, but, under such circumstances that only marginal portions have increased in saltiness, while the main body has been weakened by the influx of the great rivers Volga, Ural, Kuma and Terek.

This account of changes taking place on the borders of the