

road were great, either from the quantities of stones, or from the waterless tracts of sand which they had to pass.

Acsu is a town of the kingdom of Cascar, and the chief there was a nephew of the king's, and only twelve years of age. He sent twice for our brother. The latter carried him presents of sweetmeats and the like, such as would be acceptable to a child, and was most kindly received. A grand dance happening to be performed before them, the young prince asked Benedict how the people of his country used to dance? and so Benedict, not to be churlish with a prince about so small a matter, got up and danced himself to show the way of it. He also visited the prince's

form of the Persian *Shahr* (city). This is suggested by the fact that *Karashahr* appears in one of the routes in the book just quoted as *Karashagiar* (*R. in C. A.*, p. 527). The journey here is said to occupy twenty-five days, but the stages mentioned are sixteen. The latter is the number of stages according to the Chinese route in the *Russ. in Central Asia*, pp. 531-533, though none of the names correspond. It is also the number of stages assigned by the Tajik itinerary from Semipalatinsk to Kashmir which is given in the appendix to Meyendorff's Bokhara. The Georgian Raphael Danibeg was thirteen days from Yarkand to Aksu. (*Meyendorff*, pp. 314 seq. and 122 seqq.)

² *Aksu*, a city of Chinese Tartary, lying to the south of the glacier pass over the Mus-Tagh (and according to the tables in *R. in C. A.*, p. 521) in long. 78° 58', lat. 41° 9'. According to that authority it contains twelve thousand houses, though Timkowski states the number more probably at six thousand. It stands at the confluence of the Rivers Aksu (white-water) and Kokshal; it is the central point of the Chinese trade, and from it diverge all the great routes towards China, the Ili country, and the cities both of Eastern and Western Turkestan. The tract immediately surrounding it is one of some fertility, producing a variety of fruits including grapes and melons, besides cereals and cotton. There is a manufacture of jade articles, and of embroidered deerskin saddlery. Aksu appears in the Chinese annals, according to Deguignes, as early as the second century B.C. under the Han dynasty, as having a Chinese Governor. Deguignes and D'Anville think it to be the *Auxacia* of Ptolemy. It was at one time the residence of the Kings of Kashgar and Yarkand. From Aksu the high pass, called by the Chinese the "Pass of Glaciers," leads over that lofty part of the Thian Shan called the *Muz-art*, or Icy Mountains to Kulja, the seat of the Chinese General Government of Dsungaria and Turkestan. (*Russ. in C. A.*, pp. 112, 119, 159; *Timkowski* i, 391; *Deguignes* I, 26; II, xxxix; *Ritter* VII, 431, 449).