

Kúbenán, Páriz, and others, Surmah is the soot of the Gavan plant (Garcia's goan). This plant, a species of *Astragalus*, is on those mountains very fat and succulent; from it also exudes the Tragacanth gum. The soot is used dry as an eye-powder, or, mixed with tallow, as an eye-salve. It is occasionally collected on iron gratings.

"Tútía is the Arabicised word dúdhá, Persian for smokes.

"The Shems-ul-loghát calls Tútía a medicine for eyes, and a stone used for the fabrication of Surmah. The Tohfeh says Tútía is of three kinds—yellow and blue mineral Tútía, Tútía-i-qalam (collyrium) made from roots, and Tútía resulting from the process of smelting copper ore. 'The best Tútía-i-qalam comes from Kermán.' It adds, 'Some authors say Surmah is sulphuret of antimony, others say it is a composition of iron'; I should say any *black* composition used for the eyes is Surmah, be it lampblack, antimony, iron, or a mixture of all.

"Teixeira's Tútía was an impure oxide of zinc, perhaps the above-mentioned Tútía-i-saffid, baked into cakes; it was probably the East India Company's Lapis Tútía, also called Tutty. The Company's Tutenague and Tutenage, occasionally confounded with Tutty, was the so-called 'Chinese Copper,' an alloy of copper, zinc, and iron, brought from China."

Major Sykes (ch. xxiii.) writes: "I translated Marco's description of *tutia* (which is also the modern Persian name), to a khán of Kubenán, and he assured me that the process was the same to-day; spodium he knew nothing about, but the sulphate of zinc is found in the hills to the east of Kubenán."

Heyd (*Com.* II. p. 675) says in a note: "Il résulte de l'ensemble de ce passage que les matières désignées par Marco Polo sous le nom de 'espodie' (spodium) étaient des scories métalliques; en général, le mot spodium désigne les résidus de la combustion des matières végétales ou des os (de l'ivoire)."—H. C.]

CHAPTER XXII.

OF A CERTAIN DESERT THAT CONTINUES FOR EIGHT DAYS' JOURNEY.

WHEN you depart from this City of Cobinan, you find yourself again in a Desert of surpassing aridity, which lasts for some eight days; here are neither fruits nor trees to be seen, and what water there is is bitter and bad, so that you have to carry both food and water. The cattle must needs drink the bad water, will they nill they, because of their great thirst. At the end of those eight days you arrive at a Province which is called TONOCAIN. It has a good many towns and villages, and forms the extremity of Persia towards the North.¹ It also contains an immense plain on which is found the ARBRE SOL, which we Christians call the *Arbre Sec*; and I will tell you what it is like. It is a tall and thick tree, having the bark on one side green and the other white; and it