

them for a distance of thirty miles. From Safarbáy a caravan road goes north over the Bedal Pass to the head waters of the Nárin river, and beyond, across the Zauka Pass, to Isigh Kol. The Bedal Pass marks the north boundary of U'sh Turfán and the Amír's territory, and at the entrance to the gorge leading up to it is an outpost called Bedal Karáwul.

From Safarbáy eastward the valley widens, and is studded with little farm settlements on the streams coming down the glens on either side. They form two streams called Aksáy and Táoshkán which unite and join the Aksú River south of that city. The population of this division is altogether agricultural, and estimated at 2,000 houses, or 14,000 souls at seven per house.

The capital had formerly a strong little castle, but it was destroyed with the town in 1765 A.D., and its people massacred by the Chinese for revolt in favor of the Khoja rebellion. It is now an open market town of 800 houses commanded by a fort on a hill overlooking it from the north-west. The garrison consists of 300 men, and the townspeople are the descendants of *taranchi* or "labourers" planted here by the Chinese after the massacre.

Farmsteads are scattered all over the valley, but the principal settlements are Safarbáy, Karáwul, Akyár, Achítágh, and Aral. Sheep, cattle, and horses are very numerous. The fine wool of the first is woven by the Kirghíz into a variety of materials for home use, and with the tobacco and cattle of the town find its way to the Aksú market. The limits of the division are Kákshál on the west and the Aksú River on the east, the Bedal mountain on the north, and the Balauti ridge on the south. Its communication and trade are entirely with Aksú of which by some it is considered to form a part.

*Aksú.*—This is the central division of the country, and is situated at the base of Alátágh or Tangrí Ula at the southern entrance to the Múzárt or "Glacier Pass." Under the Chinese it was an important military post at the junction of the roads from Ila by the Múzárt, and from Kánsúh by Khánil and Turfán. It was the centre of the Chinese trade and formed the division between the eastern and western cities of the province, and was the limit of the trade privileges accorded by the Chinese Government to the Khokand Khan over the cities of the western division.

Its limits are from the Aksú River on the west to the Kizil or Nárinj stream beyond Sáyrám on the east, and from the water-shed of Tangrí Ula on the north to Sáy Arik, and the Aksú and Tárim rivers on the south. Its population is reckoned at 12,000 houses, of which 6,000 are allotted to the city and immediate suburbs. The rest are distributed thus. Settlements to the north—Chodá 60 houses, Kázghán 100, Sirilmá 40, and other homesteads 300. On the west—Aykol 20, Sáyarik 40, Kálpín 60, Chílán 60, Súgat 40, Marákala 20, Besh Digarman 60, and other homesteads 400. On the south—Súbalik 80, Sagfarcha 50, Daulatbágh 200, Kará Moghcha 20, Bálaríng 20, Amarjama 50, Kúmbásh 200, Dolán 50, and others 630. On the east—Jám 100, Tázlung 100, Kará-yúlghún 150, Yakka Arik 150, Koshtami 250, Báý 600, Karábágh 100, Sáyrám 800, and others 1,250. Total of all 12,000 houses, at seven per house 84,000 souls.

Aksú is a very ancient city, and was formerly called Arpadíl or Ardabíl. It covers two ridges of gravel heights on the left bank of the Aksú river where it is joined by the U'sh or Kákshál river, and has a citadel on each. The city is surrounded by fortified walls, and has two gates—that on the west Sú Darwáza or "Water Gate," and that on the east Tumurchi Darwáza or "Blacksmith's Gate." The climate is described as very salubrious, though the winter is an extremely rigorous season; and the natives I have seen bear testimony in confirmation by their clear healthy looks and robust frames. The citizens are said to be peaceable and industrious, to be very sociable, and fond of gaiety and the pleasures of life generally. They are more purely Turk in physiognomy, judging from the few I saw in the Amír's service, than the citizens of either Yárkand or Káshghar, and are supposed to be the purest representatives, together with the people of Artosh north of Káshghar, of the ancient Ayghúr or Uighúr conquerors.

Aksú is celebrated for its manufactures of saddlery and harness, its pottery, and its raw hide jars called *dabba* for oil, butter, &c. Its tobacco also is considered the best that is produced in the country. All these, together with cattle and the shawl wool of U'sh Turfan, are