

exported to the neighbouring cities and countries. The mineral resources of the country are considerable, and in the time of the Chinese mines of lead, and copper, and sulphur were systematically worked, whilst coal was generally used in the city as fuel. The lead mines are in Tájik Tág, five tásh north-east of Jám, and those of copper at Onbásh on the Múzárt river. The sulphur mines are on a low ridge of hills bordering the Aksáy river at Kálpín, and the coal is found in the hills near Karábágh, where are hot sulphur springs which are resorted to by the inhabitants for medicinal purposes. Coal is also found in the adjoining hills drained by the Kizil or Nárin river; and further on is an active volcano from the base of which are collected alum, and salammoniac, and blue vitriol or sulphate of copper. The asbestos mentioned by Marco Polo as a utilized product of this region is not now so known in the country.

The Múzárt pass connects this division with Ila or Kúlja. The road is described as very difficult now, though in the time of the Chinese it was kept open for troops and caravans by a regular establishment of labourers posted at intervals of three miles along the road across the glacier, which is within the Amír's territory. The glacier is four days' journey from Aksú, and two days obliquely across it to a clump of trees and a post house which mark the limit of Káshghar territory. Beyond this is a journey of eight days to Ila down the valley of the Takas River. The glacier is said to fill a long winding valley which extends three or four days' journey east and west. In the latter direction it gives rise to the Narin river, and in the former it gives rise to a river which ends in a swamp at Sháhyár and is called Múzárt Daryá. The road across the glacier is interrupted by vast fissures and moraine banks, and is covered with snow till the beginning of July. The Chinese kept the road clean swept and marked by piles of stone, but these are now all destroyed, and the road is almost impassable. It is closed to caravans by the Amír, who has built a fort for a garrison of 500 men in the Yakka Arik glen at the entrance to the defile leading up to the pass, and has diverted the current of trade to the route through Káshghar by the Nárin passes to Almati or Vernöe.

That portion of this division which skirts the base of the mountains is said to be populous and productive, and to abound in gardens and rivulets. The population is mostly employed in agriculture and the breeding of cattle, and, towards the east of the capital, are massed in the two principal market towns of Báý and Sáyrám, which are only 15 miles apart on the course of the Múzárt river. In the midst of the farmsteads of the latter is a square fort built by the Chinese. It is now the residence of the Amír's Governor with a garrison of 300 men. To the north-west of Sáyrám is the Karábágh settlement and its hot springs. The place is said to be one of the most delightful residences in the whole country, and its gardens wonderfully productive.

The southern portion of the division partakes much of the character of the desert beyond, and its saline sandy soil is covered with great wastes of reed grown marsh and impassable tracts of swamp which are bordered by a brushwood of poplar and tamarisk bushes.

*Kúchá.*—This is a small State situated at the foot of the mountains in continuation eastward from Aksú. In ancient times it was an important little principality, and a flourishing seat of Buddhism. On a hill to the north of the city are the ruins of an ancient temple and monastery. They are described as of considerable extent, and very substantially built of stone on the ledges and rocks of a precipitous hill. Fragments of sculptures are found among the *débris*, and in some galleries sunk in the rock there are said to be paintings of men and animals on the walls as fresh and bright in colour as if new. Precious stones, gems, and trinkets are occasionally found in the rubbish of the crumbled walls, and marvellous tales are told of the lustre and size of some that have been picked up here by wandering shepherds. A large figure is said to exist here, carved on the face of a rock overlooking the road to Kúrla. It is described as having the tongue lolled out and right shoulder depressed with extended arm, as in the fashion of Kalmák salutation. It acknowledges the salutes of passers by a return wag of the tongue and wink of the eye, and has often been seen to smile, by credulous Kalmáks at least.

In the mountains to the north is a volcano, and from its base a river called Zamcha issues. On its banks are dug alum and a salt of zinc called *zamch*, which is used as a mordant with alum in dying. The rocks at the foot of the hill are hot to the touch, but the water of