

T.R. to the borders of the Kalmák country, "of which nobody knows anything but the Kalmák." Its limit on the north is Artosh, and on the south Khutan. It is a month's journey from north to south, but, if one ride hard from west to east, he passes beyond cultivation and habitation in a single day.

The rivers are all between Káshghar and Khutan, and this is the only fertile part of the country: all the rest is a desert of sand, with thick jangal, and vast saline wastes, and nothing else. Many large cities have flourished on it in ancient times, but of them only Lob and Katak are now known by name. Signs of others are found, and again lost in the shifting sands, by hunters of the tiger, wild camel, and wild ox. The country produces lots of fruits and flowers, but there is no money. All trade is by barter. The soil is poor and unproductive, and requires much toil; consequently it is impossible to support an army in the country. In spring high winds obscure the air with dust, much worse than in India. Káshghar in comparison with Dashti Kapchák and Kalmák is as a populous city, with all sorts of availables; but in comparison with Samarcand it is as a bare desert. As the proverb says, "Ask those from Hell of Purgatory, and they call it Paradise." It is, however, a safe retreat from plunderers and marauders, and well suited as a place of seclusion and spiritual meditation, and has long been noted for its saints, monks, and recluses.

Abábakar now destroyed the ancient capital of this country. He demolished its fort, and levelled its suburbs, and with ten thousand men in seven days built the new fort of Káshghar on the high bank of the Túman river, a little higher up its course. Its area is 150 *jarib* = 50 acres; its walls were twenty yards high, and at top wide enough for four horsemen abreast; the tower and bastions rose ten yards higher, and were all wonderfully strong.

He stored this new fort with provisions, and, leaving a garrison under his General, Yúsufyán, retired to Yángi Hissár. This, too, he put in a state for defence, and then returning to his capital fortified its defences with all haste; and having finished these preparations, he again set out to oppose the invaders, who were pressing on from Atbáshi.

Sáid left his baggage with the families at Túman-báshi, the head waters of the Túman river—the limit between Mogholistán and Káshghar—to follow afterwards, and himself pushing on with the fighting men on the third day reached Artosh. On the next day he seized the defences abandoned by Abábakar on Uch Burhán ridge, and came in sight of the newly built fort, three *farsakh* off to the southward.

Here he mustered his army, four thousand seven hundred men, all experienced soldiers who had seen twelve years' service in Máwaránahar. Amongst them were Doghlát, Carácúlác, Dokhtoy, Birlás, Yarazin, Ordatagi, Atárcchi, Konjí, Jarás, Babarín, Begjik, Cálójí, Cárlúc, Makrít, Shoncár, and other nobles, each with his following of one hundred and fifty to two hundred men. From this Sáid crossed the Túman at the Sarman ford, two *farsakh* from the fort, and meeting the army sent by Abábakar, who himself remained at Sogholúc in support of the garrison, defeated and pursued it up to the walls, under which he camped for the night. During the darkness the garrison abandoned the fort, and fled to Yárkand, and Sáid, pushing on, laid siege to Yangi Hissár, the key to the capture of both Káshghar and Yárkand. The citadel was held by former Generals of Abábakar, who had been taken out of prison to conduct its defence.

The chief of these was Mír Walí who, in the early career of his master, had subjugated for him the country of Bolor to the borders of Cáyrtagin or Carátakin, Badakhshán, Tibet, and Kashmir; who, later, had taken Aksú and Kúsán, and, clearing them of Kirghiz and Moghol, had subdued Mogholistán; and who, finally, invaded Farghána, and ravaged Jagrák, Ush, and Uzkand. In Abábakar's second invasion of Andiján and defeat at Tútlúgh, he suspected his own people of treachery, and executed several hundred of them summarily. He reduced his General, Mír Walí, with ignominy, rooted out his beard, emasculated him and all the males of his family, subjected the females to dishonour, and cast all into prison to labour on the roads.