

hill is of bare rock and, as before stated, presumably volcanic, but the ruins are of earth of a deep yellow color quite unlike anything on the hill itself; there are besides a large number of caves, excavated for residence; from below a high wall is visible, which is said to be the wall of an old palace. The city is said to have existed previous to the first Chinese occupation; the current story is that the city was consumed by fire sent down from heaven owing to the refusal of its ruler to adopt the Mahomedan faith, the blackened appearance of the rocks having given rise to this tale.

From the Karawul to Kuchár proper is 3 *tash*. *Kuchár* is a walled city of a circular form with four gates two of which have been lately closed.

The garrison of Kuchar is as follows:—There are two Panjsads, 20 Yuzbashis, 50 Panja Bashis, and about 600 soldiers; there are two schools and three Madrassas. The present Dadkhwah is Mahomed Tokhta Beg.

There are 205 principal shops inside the walls, 100 of which are always open, the remainder being closed except on bazar days. Four serais inside the wall; the city wall is surrounded by a ditch, which is kept full of water; there are 140 shops outside the wall, 15 serais outside. The Túnganí have a separate quarter; they have 45 shops and have 9 serais; corn is ground by mills in which horses are worked; these are kept by Túnganis; the suburbs of the city are large in proportion to the rest of the town, there being only some 400 houses inside the walls, and 1,300 houses outside. The population of the district is said to be considerable, there being, according to calculated accounts, 22,000 houses in the district.

Alum and salammoniac are brought from Kuchar, and Pushum of a superior quality; it is considered the best obtainable.

Rice is grown in small quantities, but this is produced in large quantities at Shah Yart, the south of Kuchar, some 8 *tash* distant.

About 16 *tash* to north of Kuchar a large idol is said to exist, which is cut out of the rock; it is reported to be from 40 to 50 feet in height, it has 10 heads and 20 hands, and it is carved with the tongue hanging outside the mouth; the mountain behind this idol is exceedingly difficult of ascent; rumour says that it is resorted to by game of all kinds, but that the animals, owing to the protection of the idol, cannot be killed by the huntsman. A mountain lake of considerable size is said to exist in this neighbourhood, the drainage of which falls into the Yulduz and makes its way to Karashahr. The idol referred to above is said to grow thin during the daytime, but to increase in size during the night.

Salammoniac is obtained in large quantities from the neighbourhood of a volcano, which is at a distance of eight *tash* from Kuchar; this sells in Kuchar at 3 *tangas* the *jing*. The people of Kuchar declare that a description of rat circulates freely in the flames of this volcano without being injured; it goes by the name of Salamander. *Surrundoo* (*alum*) is also obtained in this neighbourhood, and sells for a half *tanga* the *jing*. The farming of the salammoniac and alum is let out for 4 *kurus* yearly.

There are copper mines between *Yagh Arik* and *Bai*. There is no monopoly with reference to the mining for copper ore; there are regular miners who can be hired by any one who chooses to try for copper, the agreement with them being that they are to receive one-half of what is extracted.

The copper is found in a low range of hills, and at a depth of from 30 to 36 feet; there is a smelting furnace on the spot, which is under Government supervision; the charcoal and the wages of the smelters are paid for by the finders of the ore, and from the copper extracted one-seventh goes to the Government.

It is usually calculated that the ore yields from one-ninth to one-eighth of pure copper which sells in *Bai* for 3½ *tangas* the *jing*.