

and Karghálík. Copper comes from Aksú and is worked into vessels, in great favor throughout the country. Rice is obtained from the same place.

Khotan is the great silk-producing province. Its gold mines and supply of jade are sources of wealth, the population, however, remain poor owing in a great measure to their indolence, work being taken up only as there is immediate necessity for the supply of daily wants. The immorality of the women of Khotan is proverbial, and the excess of women over men leads to much licentiousness. The inhabitants are chiefly artizans as distinguished from the cultivators of the other provinces of the Amír's kingdom. The resources of this province may be best arrived at by reviewing them separately.

Gold mines	{ Sorghák. Kappa. Chuggulaka. Charchand. Kárátagh.
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There are said to be altogether 22 places in which this mineral is found, but the above are those which are regularly worked.

3,000 people are employed at Sorghák; the mine at this place is said to be 400 feet deep.

4,000 people are employed at Kappa; the mine is said to be 100 feet deep.

At the other places there are no more than 40 or 50 workers.

The Sorghák gold is obtained in small beads and is of a red color.

At Kappa, large nuggets are obtained, but the gold is of a light color and mixed with sand. Gold is also obtained in the Yúrúng Kásh sands after the flood of the hot season has passed. The only tools used are a pick and shovel; no sieve is in use, but the soil is dug out in blocks and disintegrated by the heat of the sun.

The sieve is used in extracting gold from the sand of the Yúrúng Kásh river. On this last there is no tax paid.

The working of the mines is thus conducted. The workers are the poor of the country who sell the gold they obtain to established buyers, who keep a supply of utensils of food, &c., to meet the requirements of the workers. From these gold purchasers one-fifth of the yield is at once confiscated as the property of the Amír, who retains the right of purchasing any further quantity he may require at 120 tangas per ser (the market value being 138 tangas the ser). The whole of the gold obtained is indeed supposed to be purchased for the Amír, but a large amount finds its way surreptitiously into the market. On the road between Keria and Khotán there is a regular searching house where men are stripped if they are supposed to have concealed gold about them, women are examined and are then made to jump over a ditch, in order that any gold they have concealed may fall out. No large guard is kept at the mines, but a small detachment of soldiers watch the proceedings of the buyers.

The officials, however, even to the Beg of Keria, who is in charge, are said to be open to bribes and to study their own advantage.

The punishment for secreting gold is very light. The probable yearly yield of gold in the Khotan District is said to approach 7,000 sers, of which 5,000 sers, reach the Amír and about 2,000 are smuggled into the market.

The sale of gold is winked at, though disallowed. If a merchant is discovered to have obtained gold, no more than one-fifth will be confiscated, and the remainder is purchased at the fixed price.

Gold is readily bought up by merchants from India and Andiján.

A profit of one-eighth may be realized by conveying Khotan gold to either country.

Silver is also found in the province, but the yield was found insufficient to pay the working expenses and the mine opened has been abandoned.