

The most widely diffused industry in Sin-Chiang is the weaving of a coarse cloth, the poorest quality of which, in texture, may be compared with a fine sieve. This cloth is used to make the garments of the poorer classes, but it is so inferior that it has to be doubled, and a lining of cotton wool inserted between the folds. The richer inhabitants buy Russian cloth, which, though of good appearance, is of poor quality and wears badly. In Sarikol a thick cloth is woven, but the output rarely exceeds the wants of the inhabitants. At Khotan cotton and silk carpets and numnahs or felt rugs are produced, and jade is cut and polished. These industries are in general carried on in the homes of the workers. Leather of poor quality, resembling brown paper, is prepared, and coarse paper is manufactured. For paper-making the bark of the mulberry-tree is boiled and mixed with wood ashes, then placed on a large stone and beaten into pulp. It is next put into a large cylindrical vessel sunk, for convenience, into the ground; a little water is added, and the whole is churned. When thoroughly mixed the contents are ladled into a fine cord sieve immersed in water, and are evenly distributed with the help of a cross-shaped piece of wood, rotated between the palms of the hands. The sieve is gently lifted out of the water and placed in a sloping position, so that the moisture which does not run off evaporates in the sunshine. The paper thus made is in sheets about double foolscap size, which are sold at the rate of 1 tonga 20 dachen per 100.

The only mineral worked in Sin-Chiang, so far as I ever heard, was gold, and the washing was carried on in a very primitive and careless manner. In watching the men and boys at work I observed that some of the precious metal was lost, but they only laughed at my solicitude in the matter. Then I washed some handfuls of their tailings and showed them a few bright grains of