

the air-way. I have spoken there of taking out *one* fire bar, but I am not sure that where the shoulders of the bars are narrow or the furnace large, this would be enough; yet to take out two would perhaps leave the spaces so wide, that the small coal would fall through before it was burnt? and it should not be forgotten that these questions, though without very accurate experiments and measurements we can only estimate them roughly, are really questions of nice adjustment.

Notes on Kokán, Kashghár, Yárkand, and other places in Central Asia.—By Lieut. H. G. RAVERTY, 3rd Regt. Bombay, N. I., Assistant Commissioner, Multán.

About six years since, the Right Hon'ble B. Disraeli, M. P., at the prayer of the sisters of the unfortunate Lieutenant Wyburd of the Indian Navy, at that time supposed to be in slavery at Kokán, the capital of one of the petty states of Central Asia, had, by a motion in the House of Commons, endeavoured to rouse the British Government to effect his release.

This officer had been despatched from Persia to Bokhárá for the purpose of making enquiry into the fate of Stoddard and Conolly, and had never returned. He appears to have been sold into slavery by the ruler of Bokhárá.

Some months previous to the motion of Mr. Disraeli, an agent, said to have been despatched by the reigning chief of Kokán, had arrived at Pes'háwar, with information, that a European calling himself Wypárt, was then in confinement in that city under the suspicion of being a spy of the Russians (with whom the Kokán chief was at enmity); but that he protested he was an Englishman and had escaped from slavery at Bokhárá. The agent in question, I was informed, had stated the readiness of the Chief to release the unfortunate man, if any British officer were sent for that purpose, and would satisfy him as to his being a British subject.

As soon as I became aware of these circumstances, I tendered my humble services, both to the Government of Bombay, and the

Supreme Government, and offered to proceed through Kashmír and endeavour to effect the release of the officer in question.

Quite by accident I met with a Jew at Bombay, who had accompanied Dr. Hoff on his journey to Bokhárá, and who readily offered to accompany me; and two respectable natives of Kokán itself, who were returning to their native land from the pilgrimage to Mekkah, were ready to attach themselves to me, and answer for my safety, if necessary.

I was therefore sanguine of success, but, I am sorry to say, my services were not accepted; and it appears that a native was despatched on the mission, who, as might naturally have been expected, failed. He has lately returned, and from the exceedingly meagre account of his journey, published in the *Journal of the Society*, No. IV. of 1856, he appears to have gone to very little trouble in the matter, and to have confined himself to asking questions in bazars, and in despatching natives of the country to the adjacent districts for the same purpose. Whether he was duly accredited to the Chief of Kokán or otherwise, does not appear.

There is very little chance of the unfortunate officer, or European whoever he may have been, being still in the land of the living; the unfulfilment of that hope, so long deferred, which maketh the heart sick, must long since have brought to a termination the earthly troubles of the wretched captive.

For a number of years, I have made it a rule to collect every item of information respecting the geography, inhabitants, and resources of the little known parts of Central Asia. What I had already gleaned, at the time I offered to proceed to Kokán, and information furnished by the two Kokánies, I have referred to, I now submit, as giving a better and more minute, although still very meagre, account of this important and little known country, than that furnished by the unsuccessful agent, Khwája Ahmad, Nakshbandí.

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Kokán, originally called Kokand, Korán, and Khoká, the capital of Audjían or Ferghánah, the native country of the Emperor Báber, is a large, populous, and well built city, surrounded by numerous

gardens, for which it is celebrated throughout Túrkestan. The city has considerably increased under the rule of the present Khán, Muhammad Omar,* son of Muhammad Alí Khán, during whose reign the city of Khojend became depopulated.

The houses of the city are generally built of wood, of several stories in height, with a foundation of burnt bricks. There are several large and well supplied bázárs, many of which, according to the general fashion in oriental cities, are covered in. It has one college, and several large Kárawánserais for merchants.

The Arg or citadel, in which the Khán resides, a small city in itself, is situated west of the city, being divided by a large rivulet, a feeder of the Sirr, Jihún or Jaxartes river, which divides the two from north to south. The city is therefore amply supplied with water, which is considered to be one of the principal causes of its prosperity, its present population being at present computed to be about 100,000, half of whom dwell in houses, the remainder are nomades who dwell in tents.

The ruler, Muhammad Omar Khán is very popular. He hears all the complaints of his subjects, and administers justice to them in person every day, and settles their disputes.

This city is remarkable for the number of its public women, called in the Kattai (Northern China) language, Aghchha. They amount to about 4,000; and may be seen driving about the city, in carriages drawn by horses, at all times of the day.

Great quantities of opium, *chirs*, an intoxicating drug made from hemp flowers, and a decoction made from poppy-heads (different from opium), are made here. In every bázár numbers of people may be seen in all states and degrees of intoxication, and no one interferes with them; indeed people may do just as they choose here, with the exception of acting tyrannically, such are the Khán's commands. Tyranny and oppression in this city will not answer.

The ruler is on friendly terms with the Khán of Khwárazm, but no intercourse takes place with the Russians, Bokháráians, or Chinese. He has a standing army of about 55,000 men, with thirty

* Said to have been dethroned since the above was written. His son Khuda Yar, is the present ruler.

guns, the whole of which, however, are not mounted. The private soldier's pay amounts to about ten tillahs, each tillah being worth about fourteen shillings English.

The country is small in extent, and surrounded by mountains on all sides, with the exception of the south-west, in which direction the city of Khojend is situated. Round about the city the country is densely populated, and well cultivated and fruitful. All kinds of grain, fruits, and other necessaries are plentiful and exceedingly cheap. Flocks and herds are also numerous.

The principal taxes levied from the agriculturists are ten per cent. on grain; on the value of sheep, goats, and cattle five per cent.; on the sale of a camel three tangas; on a horse two; on a sheep one. Merchandize is subject to a duty of two and a half per cent., and as the trade is very extensive, it yields a large revenue to the Khán. The inhabitants have to pay a yearly tax of one tillah on each house.

The chief towns of the Khánát of Kokán are; Murghelándaht, distant about thirty-six miles; Kársandasht, thirty-five miles; Muangándaht, about the same distance; Takht-Súlmán-dasht or Ush, thirty-four miles; Karghar-kohistán, sixty miles, and other places of less size.

The road lies through a desert tract of country, and no signs of habitation or cultivation are seen except in the vicinity of the different *manzile* or stages. The range of mountains, called the Takht or throne of Súlmán, lies to the west of the city of Kokán, distant about one hundred miles. It has two peaks.

On the arrival of a Kárawán at the *Ourtang* or Custom-house, the chief revenue officer who is stationed there, personally inspects the merchandize, and makes out two lists of the contents. One copy he transmits to Azím Khán, the Kattai chief, and retains the other himself. After due examination of the goods he grants a pass to the merchants, and they can then proceed on to Káabghár.

On approaching any *Ourtang* or Custom-house, on a journey, it is necessary for the Káflah Báshí, or leader of the Kárawán, to proceed there on foot, and show his pass; as it is considered insulting to approach a government establishment on horseback or mounted.

In cases where any doubt may arise respecting the goods being more or less than specified in the pass, the trouble these revenue authorities give is most vexatious; nevertheless, should any article mentioned in a pass be lost or stolen on the road they are prompt in recovering it. On such a circumstance occurring the conductor of the *Kárawán* must report it at the nearest Custom-house, giving a description of the goods whatever they may be. The authorities have a stated time for the decision of such matters, and in case the articles are not recovered within the prescribed period, some compensation is allowed, but in kind, not in money.

On a *Kárawán* or *Káflah* reaching the city, or any other place in the *Khán's* dominions, where duties are leviabie, the conductor must report his arrival at the chief Custom-house, stating all particulars, from whence he has come, together with the value, and description of goods he may have brought. On this an officer proceeds to inspect the merchandize, and on goods of superior quality five per cent. on the value is levied, and on commoner descriptions half the above rate.

The city of *Táshkend* is subject to *Kokán*, and lies ten stages or *manzils* to the north-west. It was once a very large and rich city, but is now gone to decay. The numerous ruins of mosques and other buildings shows what its former extent must have been.

The city of *Kashghár* lies south-east from *Kokán*, and is distant from it ten *manzils* for *Kárawán* camels. It belongs to Chinese Tartary, is populous, and contains about 50,000 inhabitants. It is surrounded by a fortified wall, which is very strong and lofty, and said to be very ancient. The citadel, which is within the *enceinte*, occupies an area of about two miles, and is garrisoned by 2,500 soldiers, with several pieces of artillery. An army of Chinese troops is also stationed here as being a frontier city. It formerly amounted to 10 or 12,000 men, but lately the force has been considerably augmented, and at present is computed at 30,000 men. The chief cause of this increase, however, appears to be for the purpose of overawing the *Muhamadans*, who constitute the majority of the inhabitants. Some time previously they created a serious disturbance, in which a great number of Chinese were killed and an immense amount of property

plundered. A strong body of celestial troops was sent to quell this revolt, and the faithful were severely punished.

The residence of the governor, who is styled Umbán, is called the *Gúl Bágh*, distant about two miles from the city, between which a portion of the troops are encamped.

The city gates are closed from sunset to sunrise, as is the custom throughout Northern China. Each soldier of the city police, which is a well-organized body of men, is provided with two pieces of wood called a *chang*, and at the termination of each watch of about three hours, he produces a sound by striking them together in a peculiar manner, and afterwards calls out the hour of the night or day. These soldiers go by the general name of *Hállátts*.

The country is very productive, and the city, the houses of which are regularly laid out, is surrounded by numerous gardens. There are six gates which are defended by cannon, and a number of mosques. The chief fiscal authority is vested in a Muhammadan who bears the title of *Hákim Beg*.

The people are a lively comely race, and the women are remarkably handsome. Merchants may take temporary wives, as in Persia, by entering into a contract for a specific sum during the period of their sojourn in the country. The *Káshgháris* are also great wine-bibbers, and are very old women in their fondness for a "dish of tea."

The lands depend in a great measure on rain for irrigation, but artificial irrigation is also extensively adopted, and this, from the number of streams running through the country, is by no means difficult. Snow lies on the ground in winter to the depth of two, and sometimes three feet, but never for more than a few days together.

The distance from *Káshghár* to *Yárkand* is three *manzils*, of about seventeen miles each. As the country all along the line of route is highly cultivated and exceedingly populous, the different stages are not prescribed to certain places, as between *Káshghár* and *Kokán*. The *Yárkiang* river, also called the *Eergo-ú*, flows past the city to the north.

Yárkand, which is the largest city of *Moghalistán*, has two citadels within its walls, one in which the Muhammadan gov

vernor dwells, and the other, on the southern side, where the Chinese chief, who commands the army quartered here, resides.

This force, which is intended to overawe the Yárkandis amounts to about 40,000 men with several guns. This is the largest force the Chinese have in this direction of their empire, and the best and most efficient, being picked men. They are relieved yearly. Of this force, 10,000 are quartered within the city, the remainder in the vicinity.

The police arrangements are similar to those of Káshghár, with this exception, that an equal number of Chinese soldiers are associated with the police in their duties; and one celestial accompanies each of the *oháng nawázán* (ringers or strikers of the *oháng*) as the watchmen already described are called, in his rounds.

Russian Kárawáns come here, and bring all sorts of European manufactures, consisting of hardware in a greater proportion. They take back with them teas, silk, and other articles of Chinese manufacture, but they are not allowed to proceed further east.

From Yárkand, distant fifteen *mansils* or stages to the north-east is Aksú (*ák*, white, *sú*, river), a city whose wealth and population increase steadily every year. All descriptions of food are excessively cheap, and even when prices are at their maximum, a *maund* and a half of grain, Kábul measure, (about one hundred and twenty pounds English) may be obtained for two shillings. The governor of this city is appointed by the Chinese, but the people are chiefly followers of Islám.

From Aksú to Yilih or Ileh is ten days journey to the north-east. The road is difficult on account of the traveller having to cross the glaciers of the Tiánchán or snowy mountains. A body of fifty men are maintained here by the authorities for the express purpose of assisting travellers over the mountains, and for making roads for their passage through the ice. When a party of travellers reach the foot of the mountains, they proceed in front, and make a road over the ice as they advance, the travellers following close at their heels; and it generally occupies a whole day in crossing the range. So quickly does this track become impassable, that the pioneers, who return on the following day, have generally to clear a new path for themselves. This place is called by the people of the country,

Makán-i-Sarwar jádúgar, or the "dwelling of Sarwar the magician." Showers of rain, and snow storms are of daily occurrence in this vicinity.

Yílih or Ileh contains about 8,000 houses and 40,000 inhabitants, consisting of Chinese and Muhammadans in about equal numbers, whose quarters are quite separated from each other.

The chief authority of the province is styled the Ján Jang or Governor-General, who resides at Kowrah or Kowreh, one stage from Yílih. It contains upwards of 60,000 inhabitants, and a Chinese army of about 40,000 men are located there. The authority above named, is the supreme head of the Muhammadans of Moghlistán, to the west; eastward is the country of Khattai, or Chinese Tartary.

From this latter city to the Russian frontier town of Semí Pulád Oská (Semipolatinsk) the most southerly town of any consequence in Southern Siberia, is twenty-five days' journey through a difficult country almost uninhabited. This mountainous district is rich in silver mines which are profitably worked by the Chinese. They also produce a metal known here by the name of yámbú. Some years since the Russians demanded a share in the profits from these mines on account of their being situated mid-way between the two countries. The Khattais, as the Chinese are called, refused, however, to accede to the demand, giving answer (I here use the very words of my informant) "If you Orús have six laks of soldiers altogether, we have six laks in one place alone, then what occasion is there for us to let you have a share in the mines?"

The town of Semí Pulád Oská contains a population of between 7 and 8,000. It is situated on the right bank of the river Irtisch, which forms the boundary between the two countries, and at the foot of the Altai or golden mountains.

From the frontier city of Kowreh, or Kúrá, distant fifteen stages, is Karán-sheer or Kára-sheer, beyond which, there is a most stringent order not to permit Yáwabs (barbarians), as the Chinese term all foreigners, to pass into the interior. This is a large and populous city with a numerous garrison, or army rather for its protection.

Muliyán is distant from the above place five stages, Kután or Kotán fifteen, and Táfán twenty. To reach Má-chín, from whence

the tea is chiefly brought, it occupies two months and half with a *Kárawán*; and to reach *Jánán*, where the China-ware is manufactured, it takes another three months. Beyond the last mentioned place is the ocean.

The Chinese are much given to pleasure, and once a year, in the first month, they hold a grand festival which lasts for ten days, during which time they give themselves up to all sorts of pleasure. The festival is called *Chághán*.

Cottrell in his "Recollections of Siberia," refers to this style of commencing the new year in the following terms: "They (the Chinese merchants at *Mai-má-chín*, the small hamlet where they and the Russians meet to trade, and in which merchants are allowed to reside) have, however, learned from their Russian neighbours to appreciate the merits of champagne, which is drunk in torrents in the *white month*. This white month is the beginning of the Chinese year. * * * * The scene of carousing and gaiety during this month is described as most amusing, and would be doubtless the best opportunity of seeing the Chinese under the most favourable colours."

The dress of the men of Chinese Tartary is of various colours, one suit over the other; and their caps they ornament with a tassel like the girls of *Orgunge*, to which according to their means, they attach jewels. Their shoes are of silk with soles of cotton. The women dress much in the same style as those of *Kashmir*, and their head-dress consists of a cap or turban, which they ornament with flowers made of coloured silks. All the people use chairs, in fact they cannot sit comfortably otherwise.

They are of two tribes, the *Akh Khattai*, and *Karah Kattai*, which signifies in the *Turki* language, the White and the Black Chinese. The former shave all round the head, but leave a tuft in the centre, the hair of which when sufficiently long they twist and allow to hang down like a cow's tail. They also shave off the beard but retain the moustache. The latter, on the contrary never shave.

There are two routes from *Kashmir* to *Yárkand* and *Kokán*. The most direct one is by way of *Iskárdoh* and along the banks of the *Shighún* river, and over the *Musták* range of mountains by the *Hauzí* pass. The other, a more round about road, is by way of

