

different from those which I afterwards saw at Yarkand, which had been brought in from the Pamir. Those I found in the Gobi were considerably thicker at the base, there was a less degree of curve, and a shorter length of horn. A full description of the *Ovis Poli*, with a large plate drawing of the horns, may be seen in Colonel Gordon's *Roof of the World*. (See p. 81.) (*Proc. R. G. S. X.* 1888, p. 495.) Some years later, Captain Younghusband speaks repeatedly of the great sport of shooting *Ovis Poli*. (*Proc. R. G. S. XIV.* 1892, pp. 205, 234.)—H. C.]

As to the pasture, Timkowski heard that "the pasturage of Pamir is so luxuriant and nutritious, that if horses are left on it for more than forty days they die of repletion." (I. 421.) And Wood: "The grass of Pamir, they tell you, is so rich that a sorry horse is here brought into good condition in less than twenty days; and its nourishing qualities are evidenced in the productiveness of their ewes, which almost invariably bring forth two lambs at a birth." (P. 365.)

With regard to the effect upon fire ascribed to the "great cold," Ramusio's version inserts the expression "*gli fu affermato per miracolo*," "it was asserted to him as a wonderful circumstance." And Humboldt thinks it so strange that Marco should not have observed this personally that he doubts whether Polo himself passed the Pamir. "How is it that he does not say that he himself had seen how the flames disperse and leap about, as I myself have so often experienced at similar altitudes in the Cordilleras of the Andes, especially when investigating the boiling-point of water?" (*Cent. Asia*, Germ. Transl. I. 588.) But the words quoted from Ramusio do not exist in the old texts, and they are probably an editorial interpolation indicating disbelief in the statement.

MM. Huc and Gabet made a like observation on the high passes of north-eastern Tibet: "The *argols* gave out much smoke, but would not burn with any flame"; only they adopted the native idea that this as well as their own sufferings in respiration was caused by some pernicious exhalation.

Major Montgomerie, R. E., of the Indian Survey, who has probably passed more time nearer the heavens than any man living, sends me the following note on this passage: "What Marco Polo says as to fire at great altitudes not cooking so effectually as usual is perfectly correct as far as anything *boiled* is concerned, but I doubt if it is as to anything *roasted*. The want of brightness in a fire at great altitudes is, I think, altogether attributable to the poorness of the fuel, which consists of either small sticks or bits of roots, or of *argols* of dung, all of which give out a good deal of smoke, more especially the latter if not quite dry; but I have often seen a capital blaze made with the *argols* when perfectly dry. As to cooking, we found that rice, *dál*, and potatoes would never soften properly, no matter how long they were boiled. This, of course, was due to the boiling-point being only from 170° to 180°. Our tea, moreover, suffered from the same cause, and was never good when we were over 15,000 feet. This was very marked. Some of my natives made dreadful complaints about the rice and *dál* that they got from the village-heads in the valleys, and vowed that they only gave them what was very old and hard, as they could not soften it!"

NOTE 3.—*Bolor* is a subject which it would take several pages to discuss with fulness, and I must refer for such fuller discussion to a paper in the *J. R. G. S.* vol. xlii. p. 473.

The name *Bolor* is very old, occurring in Hiuen Tsang's Travels (7th century), and in still older Chinese works of like character. General Cunningham has told us that Balti is still termed *Balor* by the Dards of Gilghit; and Mr. Shaw, that *Palor* is an old name still sometimes used by the Kirghiz for the upper part of Chitrál. The indications of Hiuen Tsang are in accordance with General Cunningham's information; and the fact that Chitrál is described under the name of *Bolor* in Chinese works of the last century entirely justifies that of Mr. Shaw. A Pushtu poem of the 17th century, translated by Major Raverty, assigns the mountains of *Bilaur-istán*, as the northern boundary of Swát. The collation of these indications shows that the