

doing any of these things, it tosses its enemy with its tongue twenty *gaz* into the air, and he is dead before reaching the ground. One male *kutás* is a load for twelve horses. One man cannot possibly raise a shoulder of the animal.”—Captain Deasy (*In Tibet*, 363) says: ‘In a few places on lofty ground in Tibet we found Yaks in herds numbering from ten to thirty, and sometimes more. Most of the animals are black, brown specimens being very rare. Their roving herds move with great agility over the steep and stony ground, apparently enjoying the snow and frost and wind, which seldom fail. . . . Yaks are capable of offering formidable resistance to the sportsman. . . .’—H. C.]

The tame Yaks are never, I imagine, “caught young,” as Marco says; it is a domesticated *breed*, though possibly, as with buffaloes in Bengal, the breed may occasionally be refreshed by a cross of wild blood. They are employed for riding, as beasts of burden, and in the plough. [Lieutenant S. Turner, *l.c.*, says, on the other hand: “They are never employed in agriculture, but are extremely useful as beasts of burthen.”—H. C.] In the higher parts of our Himalayan provinces, and in Tibet, the Yak itself is most in use; but in the less elevated tracts several breeds crossed with the common Indian cattle are more used. They have a variety of names according to their precise origin. The inferior Yaks used in the plough are ugly enough, and “have more the appearance of large shaggy bears than of oxen,” but the Yak used for riding, says Hoffmeister, “is an infinitely handsomer animal. It has a stately hump, a rich silky hanging tail nearly reaching the ground, twisted horns, a noble bearing, and an erect head.” Cunningham, too, says that the *Dso*, one of the mixed breeds, is “a very handsome animal, with long shaggy hair, generally black and white.” Many of the various tame breeds appear to have the tail and back white, and also the fringe under the body, but black and red are the prevailing colours. Some of the crossbred cows are excellent milkers, better than either parent stock.

Notice in this passage the additional and interesting particulars given by Ramusio, *e.g.* the use of the mixed breeds. “Finer than silk,” is an exaggeration, or say an *hyperbole*, as is the following expression, “As big as elephants,” even with Ramusio’s apologetic *quasi*. Cæsar says the Hercynian Urus was *magnitudine paullo infra elephantos*.

The tame Yak is used across the breadth of Mongolia. Rubruquis saw them at Karakorum, and describes them well. Mr. Ney Elias tells me he found Yaks common everywhere along his route in Mongolia, between the Tui river (long. *circa* 101°) and the upper valleys of the Kobdo near the Siberian frontier. At Uliasut’ai they were used occasionally by Chinese settlers for drawing carts, but he never saw them used for loads or for riding, as in Tibet. He has also seen Yaks in the neighbourhood of Kwei-hwa-ch’eng. (*Tenduc*, see ch. lix. note 1.) This may be taken as the eastern limit of the employment of the Yak; the western limit is in the highlands of Khokand.

These animals had been noticed by Cosmas [who calls them *agriobous*] in the 6th century, and by Ælian in the 3rd. The latter speaks of them as black cattle with white tails, from which fly-flappers were made for Indian kings. And the great Kalidása thus sang of the Yak, according to a learned (if somewhat rugged) version ascribed to Dr. Mill. The poet personifies the Himálaya:—

“ For Him the large Yaks in his cold plains that bide
Whisk here and there, playful, their tails’ bushy pride,
And evermore flapping those fans of long hair
Which borrowed moonbeams have made splendid and fair,
Proclaim at each stroke (what our flapping men sing)
His title of Honour, ‘The Dread Mountain King.’”

Who can forget Père Huc’s inimitable picture of the hairy Yaks of their caravan,