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THE GRUNTING OX OF THIBET.

This singular species of cattle feeds in a cold narrow strip of the country of which it here bears the name, that is to say, between 17 degrees, and 18 degrees North latitude, on the northern borders of Thibet. It however is in extensive use among the Duckra Tartars, as a beast of burthen, and a milch animal, from whose milk great quantities of butter are annually made by them for commerce. It resembles, in certain points, several other species of the genus *Bos*, and is still but imperfectly known to us. The description, given by Captain Turner, of the English embassy to Thibet, is sufficiently particular for our present purpose; and we will give it in an abridged form.

The *Bos Grunniens*, or Grunting Ox, or Yak of Tartary, called by Turner the Bushy-tailed Bull of Thibet, bears the name of Soora-goy in Hindostan, and is about of the same size as a common En-

glish bull, which it resembles in the form of its body, head and legs. It differs from it chiefly in its coat, being covered all over with thick hair. The head is rather short, and the horns round and curving. The ears and nose are small, and the forehead so covered with curled hair as to appear convex. The neck is short, and curved equally above and below; withers high and arched, and legs short. Over the shoulders rises a thick muscle, which seems to resemble that of the Hindoo Ox, but is overgrown with a profusion of soft hair, generally longer than that on the ridge of the back; and the tail is covered with a prodigious quantity of long, glossy, flowing hair, by which it is totally concealed.

The hair on the superior parts resembles thick, soft wool; but on the inferior is strait and pendant to a remarkable degree. Capt. Turner saw some animals, in high flesh, whose hair trailed on the

ground. On the chest is a long, tapering bunch of coarse hair, which shows a different texture from the rest of the covering. The only noise it makes is a low grunt, which is seldom heard, except when the animal is irritated.

This animal, so distinguished by the thickness and warmth of its coat, as might be expected, is found to prefer cold regions, and is pastured with the greatest success on the bleak elevated plains and mountain tops of Thibet in the summer, and among the neighboring vallies in the winter. The Tartars who possess the Yak find it invaluable, in their nomadic life, and not only make great quantities of butter from its milk, which they sell in skin bags and bladders, in which it may be kept good for a year, but form their tents and ropes of its hide. They however do not employ the Yak in agriculture, though it is very useful to them for carrying burthens. Its temper is less kind and gentle than that of most other oxen; it has a lowering look and a suspicious disposition.

The Musk Ox of North America bears some resemblance to the Yak, and we add a description:

THE MUSK OX.—This animal, so rare in civilised countries, indeed so wholly confined in its range to inhospitable and almost uninhabited regions, has yet something agreeable in its appearance, as well as mild and harmless in its nature. It is found only in the northern parts of our continent, above the 46th degree of latitude: but it appears that its range is extensive in the cold and repulsive regions lying between that part and the Arctic Ocean, where it finds but few enemies to interrupt the scanty enjoyments the climate and soil afford.

An observer, at first view, might hesitate to decide to what order or species of animals it belongs; and De Blainville has made a name for it, which expresses a similar doubt. He calls it "Ovibos moschatus," or Sheep Ox with the smell

of musk; and truly, as the Naturalist's Library remarks, while it resembles the sheep in its long hair or wool, and in its plain and innocent expression of face, it is as much like the cow kind in the horns and general form and proportions of body. It therefore is regarded by the authors of the beautiful popular work just quoted, as holding an intermediate place between the Bovidæ and the Tauridæ, or the sheep and oxen; while other writers find it names and places accordant with their views. A more intimate acquaintance with it may hereafter be obtained, when less difficulty may be found in determining how to name and where to place it in the scale of the animal kingdom.

The Musk Ox is of small size for one of the cow-kind, being rather smaller than a common Scotch Highland bullock, having shorter legs. The front of the head is covered with hair, with the muzzle and part of the upper lip; while long hair hangs down from the lower jaw, which, with that of the neck, forms a thick, flowing mass, covering the whole forepart of the animal, and falling like a dewlap, down to the middle of the leg. The back and sides also, are thickly covered; and although the hair on the hips is not so long, the tail, which is short, is entirely concealed by it; and the general aspect is like that of a large sheep, or a Lama or Alpaca burthened with an abundant fleece. At the same time, as we before remarked, it corresponds, in some points to the Grunting Ox, figured and described above.