

THE CASHMERE GOAT AND SHAWLS. — It is not as yet generally known that the Thibet goat, from whose wool the famous Cashmere shawls are made, has been introduced successfully into the United States. This enterprising undertaking was achieved a few years since, after many difficulties, by Dr. J. B. Davis, of Columbia, S. C., at that time employed by the Ottoman Porte, in experimenting on the growth of cotton, in the Sultan's dominions. Dr. Davis succeeded, at vast expense, in securing eleven of the pure breed, which, on his way home, he exhibited in London and Paris. Since that period, the goat has been introduced from South Carolina into Tennessee, where it is said to thrive. The value of a flock may be estimated from the fact that no real Thibet goat has ever been sold for less than a thousand dollars. This enormous price, moreover, is not a speculative one, for no fleeced animal has wool of such fineness, softness, and durability. The wool of all the Thibet goats in Tennessee, for example, has been engaged, at New-York, this year, at eight dollars and a half per pound, the purchasers designing to send it to Paisley, in Scotland, in order to be manufactured into shawls.

The prices paid for the real Cashmere shawls, or those woven in India, have sometimes been almost fabulous. A full sized shawl, such as is called in America a long shawl, ordinarily commands in Paris or London from five hundred to five thousand dollars, according to the quality. Scarfs and square shawls, being smaller, sell for less. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that all these shawls are manufactured in India, in the shape in which they are sold here. Generally, indeed, the centres and borders come out separately, and are put together afterwards in sizes, and often patterns, to suit purchasers. Moreover, a large portion of the shawls sold as real India ones are actually made in France, for the Thibet goat was introduced into that country more than thirty years ago, and the Cashmere shawls

imitated with considerable skill. Judges of the article pretend to say, however, that the real India shawl can be detected, by its having a less evenly woven web, as also from its brighter colors. It is likewise said, that the border of the genuine Cashmere shawls is invariably woven in small pieces, which are afterward sewed together, as the whole border is subsequently sewn on to the centre. But other authorities deny that the skill of India is insufficient to *broche* a shawl; in other words, to weave the border and centre in one piece, or run the pattern of the former over the latter.

Notwithstanding the successful imitation of these shawls, fashion and luxury still prefer the apparently ruder original. Just as laces, woven by hand, bring a price more than five times as great as the same pattern woven by machinery, so a Cashmere shawl, known to have come from India, will fetch vastly more than the cleverest imitation. Probably, however, this is not all. Persons familiar with both the article and the imitation, assert that the former is softer than the latter, and that this softness arises partly from the way the thread is spun, and partly because the Thibet goat, when exported from its native hills, sensibly deteriorates. There is also a shawl known popularly as the French Cashmere, which is an imitation of the imitation; but this has none or very little of the wool of the imported Thibet goat. The animal from which this valuable fleece is taken is a hardy creature, at least in its original locality; and their fine curled wool lies close to the skin, just as the under hair of the common goat lies under the upper hair. Eight ounces for a full-sized goat is a large yield, but the yearlings, from whom the best wool is taken, give less. About five pounds is required to make a shawl of the largest size and finer quality; but three or four pounds is sufficient for an inferior one. — *Philadelphia Ledger.*