

GOAT (a common Teut. word; O. Eng. *gát*, Goth. *gaitis*, Mod. Ger. *Geiss*, cognate with Lat. *haedus*, a kid), properly the name of the well-known domesticated European ruminant (*Capra hircus*), which has for all time been regarded as the emblem of everything that is evil, in contradistinction to the sheep, which is the symbol of excellence and purity. Although the more typical goats are markedly distinct from sheep, there is, both as regards wild and domesticated forms, an almost complete gradation from goats to sheep, so that it is exceedingly difficult to define either group. The position of the genus *Capra* (to all the members of which, as well as some allied species, the name "goat" in its wider sense is applicable) in the family *Bovidae* is indicated in the article BOVIDAE, and some of the distinctions between goats and sheep are mentioned in the article SHEEP. Here then it will suffice to mention that goats are characterized by the strong and offensive odour of the males, which are furnished with a beard on the chin; while as a general rule glands are present between the middle toes of the fore feet only.

Goats, in the wild state, are an exclusively old-world group, of which the more typical forms are confined to Europe and south-western and central Asia, although there are two outlying species in northern Africa. The wild goat, or pasang, is represented in Europe in the Cyclades and Crete by rather small races,

more or less mingled with domesticated breeds, the Cretan animal being distinguished as *Capra hircus creticus*; but the large typical race *C. h. aegagrus* is met with in the mountains of Asia Minor and Persia, whence it extends to Sind, where it is represented by a somewhat different race known as *C. h. blythi*. The horns of the old bucks are of great length and beauty, and characterized by their bold scimitar-like backward sweep and sharp front edge, interrupted at irregular intervals by knots or bosses. Domesticated goats have run wild in many islands, such as the Hebrides, Shetland, Canaries, Azores, Ascension and Juan Fernandez. Some of these reverted breeds have developed horns of considerable size, although not showing that regularity of curve distinctive of the wild race. In the Azores the horns are remarkably upright and straight, whence the name of "antelope-goat" which has been given to these animals. The concretions known as *bezoar-stones*, formerly much used in medicine and as antidotes of poison, are obtained from the stomach of the wild goat.

Although there have in all probability been more or less important local crosses with other wild species, there can be no doubt that domesticated goats generally are descended from the wild goat. It is true that many tame goats show spirally twisted horns recalling those of the under-mentioned Asiatic markhor; but in nearly all such instances it will be found that the spiral twists in the opposite direction. Among the domesticated breeds the following are some of the more important.

Firstly, we have the common or European goats, of which there are several more or less well-marked breeds, differing from each other in length of hair, in colour and slightly in the configuration of the horns. The ears are more or less upright, sometimes horizontal, but never actually pendent, as in some Asiatic breeds. The horns are rather flat at the base and not unfrequently corrugated; they rise vertically from the head, curving to the rear, and are more or less laterally inclined. The colour varies from dirty white to dark-brown, but when pure-bred is never black, which indicates eastern blood. Most European countries possess more than one description of the common goat. In the British Isles there are two distinct types, one short and the other long haired. In the former the hair is thick and close, with frequently an under-coat resembling wool. The horns are large in the male, and of moderate size in the female, flat at the base and inclining outwards. The head is short and tapering, the forehead flat and wide, and the nose small; while the legs are strong, thick and well covered with hair. The colour varies from white or grey to black, but is frequently fawn, with a dark line down the spine and another across the shoulders. The other variety has a shaggy coat, generally reddish-black, though sometimes grey or pied and occasionally white. The head is long, heavy and ugly, the nose coarse and prominent, with the horns situated close together, often continuing parallel almost to the extremities, being also large, corrugated and pointed. The legs are long and the sides flat, the animal itself being generally gaunt and thin. This breed is peculiar to Ireland, the Welsh being of a similar type, but more often white. The short-haired goat is the English goat proper. Both British breeds, as well as those from abroad, are frequently ornamented with two tassel-like appendages, hanging near together under the throat. It has been supposed by many that these are traceable to foreign blood; but although there are foreign breeds that possess them, they appear to pertain quite as much to the English native breeds as to those of distant countries, the peculiarity being mentioned in very old works on the goats of the British Islands. The milk-produce in the common goat as well as other kinds varies greatly with individuals. Irish goats often yield a quantity of milk, but the quality is poor. The goats of France are similar to those of Britain, varying in length of hair, colour and character of horns. The Norway breed is frequently white with long hair; it is rather small in size, with small bones, a short rounded body, head small with a prominent forehead, and short, straight, corrugated horns. The facial line is concave. The horns of the males are very large, and curve round after the manner of the wild goat, with a tuft of hair between and in front.

The Maltese goat has the ears long, wide and hanging down below the jaw. The hair is long and cream-coloured. The breed is usually hornless.

The Syrian goat is met with in various parts of the East, in Lower Egypt, on the shores of the Indian Ocean and in Madagascar. The hair and ears are excessively long, the latter so much so that they are sometimes clipped to prevent their being torn by stones or thorny shrubs. The horns are somewhat erect and spiral, with an outward bend.

The Angora goat is often confounded with the Kashmir, but is in reality quite distinct. The principal feature of this breed, of which there are two or three varieties, is the length and quantity of the hair, which has a particularly soft and silky texture, covering the whole body and a great part of the legs with close matted ringlets. The horns of the male differ from those of the female, being directed vertically and in shape spiral, whilst in the female they have a horizontal tendency, somewhat like those of a ram. The coat is composed of two kinds of hair, the one short and coarse and of the character of hair, which lies close to the skin, the other long and curly and of the nature of wool, forming the outer covering. Both are used by the manufacturer, but the exterior portion, which makes up by far the greater bulk, is much the more valuable. The process of shearing takes place in early spring, the average amount of wool yielded

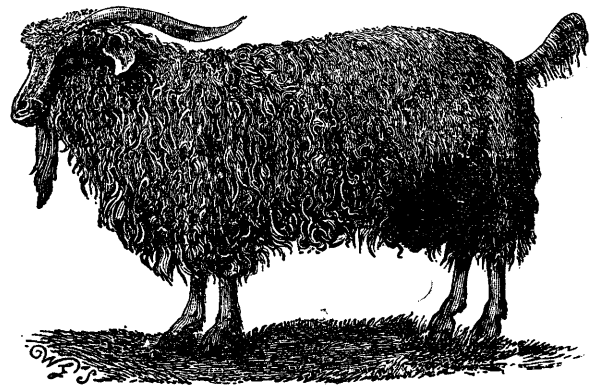


FIG. 1.—Male Angora Goat.

by each animal being about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb. The best quality comes from castrated males, females producing the next best.

The breed was introduced at the Cape about 1864. The Angora is a bad milker and an indifferent mother, but its flesh is better than that of any other breed, and in its native country is preferred to mutton. The kids are born small, but grow fast, and arrive early at maturity. The Kashmir, or rather Tibet, goat has a delicate head, with semi-pendulous ears, which are both long and wide. The hair varies in length, and is coarse and of different colours according to the individual. The horns are very erect, and sometimes slightly spiral, inclining inwards and to such an extent in some cases as to cross. The coat is composed, as in the Angora, of two materials; but in this breed it is the under-coat that partakes of the nature of wool and is valued as an article of commerce. This under-coat, or *pushm*, which is of a uniform greyish-white tint, whatever the colour of the hair may be, is beautifully soft and silky, and of a fluffy description resembling down. It makes its appearance in the autumn, and continues to grow until the following spring, when, if not removed, it falls off naturally; its collection then commences, occupying from eight to ten days. The animal undergoes during that time a process of combing by which all the wool and a portion of the hair, which of necessity comes with it, is removed. The latter is afterwards carefully separated, when the fleece in a good specimen weighs about half a pound. This is the material of which the far-famed and costly shawls are made, which at one time had such a demand that, it is stated, 16,000 looms were kept in constant work at Kashmir in their manufacture. Those goats having a short, neat head, long, thin, ears, a delicate skin, small bones, and a long heavy coat, are for this purpose deemed the best. There are several varieties

possessing this valuable quality, but those of Kashmir, Tibet and Mongolia are the most esteemed.

The Nubian goat, which is met with in Nubia, Upper Egypt and Abyssinia, differs greatly in appearance from those previously described. The coat of the female is extremely short, almost like that of a race-horse, and the legs are long. This breed therefore stands considerably higher than the common goat. One of its peculiarities is the convex profile of the face, the forehead being prominent and the nostrils sunk in, the nose itself extremely small, and the lower lip projecting from the upper. The ears are long, broad and thin, and hang down by the side



FIG. 2.—Nubian Goat.

of the head like a lop-eared rabbit. The horns are black, slightly twisted and very short, flat at the base, pointed at the tips, and recumbent on the head. Among goats met with in England a good many show signs of a more or less remote cross with this breed, derived probably from specimens brought from the East on board ships for supplying milk during the voyage.

The Theban goat, of the Sudan, which is hornless, displays the characteristic features of the last in an exaggerated degree, and in the form of the head and skull is very sheep-like.

The Nepal goat appears to be a variety of the Nubian breed, having the same arched facial line, pendulous ears and long legs. The horns, however, are more spiral. The colour of the hair, which is longer than in the Nubian, is black, grey or white, with black blotches.

Lastly the Guinea goat is a dwarf breed originally from the coast whence its name is derived. There are three varieties. Besides the commonest *Capra recorta*, there is a rarer breed, *Capra depressa*, inhabiting the Mauritius and the islands of Bourbon and Madagascar. The other variety is met with along the White Nile, in Lower Egypt, and at various points on the African coast of the Mediterranean.

As regards wild goats other than the representatives of *Capra hircus*, the members of the ibex-group are noticed under IBEX, while another distinctive type receives mention under MARKHOR. The ibex are connected with the wild goat by means of *Capra nubiana*, in which the front edge of the horns is thinner than in either the European *C. ibex* or the Asiatic *C. sibirica*; while the Spanish *C. pyrenaica* shows how the ibex-type of horn may pass into the spirally twisted one distinctive of the markhor, *C. falconeri*. In the article IBEX mention is made of the Caucasus ibex, or tur, *C. caucasica*, as an aberrant member of that group; but beside this animal the Caucasus is the home of another very remarkable goat, or tur, known as *C. pallasi*. In this ruminant, which is of a dark-brown colour, the relatively smooth black horns diverge outwards in a manner resembling those of the bharal among the sheep rather than in goat-fashion; and, in fact, this tur, which has only a very short beard, is so bharal-like that it is commonly called by sportsmen the Caucasian bharal.

It is one of the species which render it so difficult to give a precise definition of either sheep or goats.

The short-horned Asiatic goats of the genus *Hemitragus* receive mention in the article TAUR; but it may be added that fossil species of the same genus are known from the Lower Pliocene formations of India, which have also yielded remains of a goat allied to the markhor of the Himalayas. The Rocky Mountain goat (*g.s.*) of America has no claim to be regarded as a member of the goat-group.

For full descriptions of the various wild species, see R. Lydekker, *Wild Oxen, Sheep, and Goats* (London, 1898). (R. L. *)