

Mohair.

MOHAIR is the product of the famous Angora goat, from Asia Minor, where the raising of these goats and the preparation and sale of their hair was for many years the principal branch of industry among the population. The great value of this hair is due to several qualities: thread spun from it is so strong that it will outwear all other, while at the same time it is the most lustrous of all fibers, equalling in this respect the best silk, and besides it is adapted to take the most brilliant dyes. It is now used in place of silk in the so-called Irish poplins. England imports yearly some six million pounds of Angora fleeces in their natural

condition, and spins nearly all the mohair woven into fabrics in other countries. The hair or wool of this goat sells in the markets from 50 cents upward to \$1.25 per pound, according to its quality. There are only three manufactories in the United States where this hair is used, and their products as yet do not amount to much, by reason of the scarcity of the raw material, of which the demand far exceeds the supply.

It is very fortunate that the raising of the Angora goat had been commenced and succeeded to a certain extent in other countries before the fatal disease broke out among the goats in Asia Minor, which at last accounts has carried off there more than half a million of these valuable animals, for which reason the price of mohair has recently risen.

It was as early as 1848 that one Dr. Davis imported the first Angoras into South Carolina for breeding purposes. He received nine of the finest of the animals from the Sultan, as a present, for having successfully superintended experiments in cotton culture in Turkey. Dr. R. Peters of Atlanta, Ga., bought in 1849 two of them, and in crossing them with the best goats of Georgia, he had such great success that in five years with proper care of the breed, his goats were so similar to the full blooded imported goats that experts could not tell the difference. Dr. Peters himself had in 1871 a stock of goats which surpassed the original stock in beauty and amount of hair or wool produced, which was

partly due to the extreme care taken in breeding, and partly to the colder winters on the North American continent, which tends to increase the woolly covering of quadrupeds.

Mr. W. M. Landrum took, in 1861, two young bucks to California, of Dr. Davis's original full-blooded stock. One of these bucks lived in California until 1871, and became in ten years the sire of 2,000 kids, while now his progeny is scattered over California, Nevada, Oregon, and New Mexico, half the goats on the Pacific slope having some of his blood.

Since 1870 a large number of pure bloods have been imported into California, and the beautiful fleeces-bearing Angora goats are now quite common throughout the states and territories of the Pacific, where their number is now estimated at about two millions, while it is doubling every year. They do not thrive well in the Northern States, and in the South only when great care is taken of them; but in the Pacific States they multiply most wonderfully, while the high grade animals even surpass their Asiatic progenitors. Of great importance is the fact that it costs almost nothing to keep them; they live on brush when grass gives out, and digest even herbs poisonous for other animals; they can do even better without moisture than sheep, for while it is well known that sheep will not thrive at a greater distance from water than

three miles, the Angora goat will graze and keep fat six miles from the nearest water.

On Guadaloupe Island, situated off the lower coast of California, ninety miles from the main land, a company is engaged in herding them; also there they double yearly, and have now nearly 100,000 goats, old and young.

England also has not been idle in the meantime to secure for herself independence from the Turkish product. In 1866 there were 400 of these goats shipped from Smyrna to the Cape of Good Hope, where however only 100 arrived alive; then 300 more were shipped, and the result was that only five years later there were shipped nearly 1,000,000 pounds of mohair from the Cape to England, which quantity has since been increasing.

These animals are very prolific, while, if well kept, they have kids when only one year old. The second cross from a good Angora buck and an ordinary short-haired goat always pays to shear, while the fourth cross often yields a fleece equal to the original pure breed. It is also said that the flesh of the Angora goat is far superior to that of the common goat, and even better than mutton, veal, or venison, according to the testimony of some who have lived on it in California.