

on the natural disposition, is not essentially different from that of the sheep. These two animals, whose internal organization is almost entirely similar, are nourished, grow, and multiply in the same manner; and their diseases are the same, excepting a few to which the goat is not subject. The goat fears not, like the sheep, too great a degree of heat. He cheerfully exposes himself to the sun, and sleeps under his most ardent rays without being affected with the vertigo or any other inconvenience. He is not afraid of rain or storms; but he appears to feel the effect of severe cold. The inconsistency of his disposition is marked by the irregularity of his actions. He walks, stops short, runs, leaps, approaches or retires, shows or conceals himself, or flies off, as if actuated by mere caprice, and without any other cause than what arises from an eccentric vivacity of temper. The suppleness of his organs, and the strength and nervousness of his frame, are hardly sufficient to support the persistence and rapidity of his natural movements." It is difficult in this genus to determine what are species and what are varieties. The common or domestic goat (*Capra hircus*) has existed as a domestic animal from the earliest ages; it is frequently mentioned in the books of Moses, and formed a large portion of the flocks of the patriarchs. The goat thrives under the care of man in the hottest parts of India and Africa, and in the northern districts of Scandinavia. Amid such diversity of circumstances, considerable diversity of breeds might be expected, and accordingly, besides the common variety, there are the Syrian goat, the Angora goat, the Chinese goat,—all remarkable for the greater length and fineness of their hair; a beautiful dwarf variety from West Africa, called the Guinea Goat, and many others. Some of these, as the Syrian goat, (Fig. 1170,) have large pendent ears. In nothing does variation seem more readily to result from the influence of climate and other circumstances, than in the quantity and quality of the hair, and in the relative abundance of the two kinds of it, both of which are well exhibited in the common goat, the long, soft hair, and the softer woolly hair beneath it. But in many other respects, also, the domestic goat is subject to variation, more than perhaps any other domestic quadruped except the dog. The uses of the goat are numerous. The flesh is good; that of the kid, or young goat, is in most countries esteemed a delicacy. The milk is very rich and nutritious, more easy of digestion than that of the cow, and is often useful to consumptive patients. Some goats yield as much as four quarts of milk daily, although the average quantity is more nearly two. Both cheese and butter are made of goat's milk; they have a peculiar but not disagreeable flavor. Goat's milk is still very much used in Syria and other parts of the East, as it was in the days of the patriarchs. The skin of the goat was early used for clothing, and is now dressed as leather for many uses, particularly for making gloves and the finer kinds of shoes. The hair, which may be advantageously clipped annually, is used for making ropes which are indestructible in water, and for making wigs for judges, barristers, and ecclesiastical dignitaries. For the latter purpose, the hair of white goats is used. The use of the hair or wool of certain varieties of goat for making valuable fabrics is noticed in the article ANGORA GOAT. The horns are used for making knife-handles, &c., and the fat is said to be superior to that of the ox for candles. The Rocky Mountain Goat (q. v.) ranks on a par with the Cashmere goat for the excellence of its fleeces;—but as it is now considered an antelope, it results that the genus *Capra* is not represented in America. The origin of the domestic goat is with greatest probability traced to the *Agagre* (*Capra aggre*), the Persian *Pasarg*. See *BOAZAR*.



Fig. 1170.  
HEAD OF SYRIAN GOAT.

**Goat,** (gōt,) n. [A. S. *got*, *gont*; A. Serr. D., and *gōt*, *gōt*; Gr. *gōt*; Goth. *gōt*, a young goat; Heb. *gōt*, a kid, from *gōt*, to cut, to crop. See *KID*.] (*See*) The distinguishing characters in the genus *capra* (a Linnaean group of Ruminants, which includes all the species of goats) are,—that the horns are hollow, turned upwards, and annulated on their surfaces; that there are eight cutting teeth in the lower jaw, and none in the upper; and that the male is generally bearded. In its domestic state the goat is found in almost every part of the globe, bearing the extremes of heat and cold, and differing in size and form according to various circumstances; the horns generally having a curvature outwards towards the tips. Buffon's account of this animal is strikingly descriptive. "The goat," says he, "is superior to the sheep both in sentiment and dexterity. He approaches men spontaneously, and is easily familiarized. He is sensible of caresses, and capable of a considerable degree of attachment. He is stronger, lighter, more agile, and less timid than the sheep. He is a sprightly, capricious, wandering, wanton animal. It is with much difficulty that he can be confined, and he loves to retire into solitude, and to climb, stand, and even sleep, on rugged and lofty eminences. He is robust and easily nourished, for he eats almost every herb, and is injured by very few. His boistly temperament, which in all animals has a great influence



Fig. 1169.  
THE COMMON GOAT, (*Capra hircus*.)