The Dark

All Fig. 1992.

All

FLEECE OF THE ANGORA.

MILLION POUNDS ANNUALLY PRO-

Statement Issued by the Department of Agriculture Respecting Grades and Val-ues — Goat Meat Is Much Better Food Than Mutton — Tastes Like Venison.

The department of agriculture annually receives thousands of letters of inquiry concerning Angora goats, and in view of the interest taken in the subject Mr. P. E. Samon, chief of the bureau of an indistry, recently made some investigations con the subject. It is estimated, he says, that there are about 400,000 Angora goats in the United States, and that their annual production of fleece is over a million pounds.

The history of the Angora goat in the United States, and that their annual production of fleece is over a million pounds.

The history of the Angora goat in the United States, Mr. Salmon says, as been marred by the carelesaness or indifference of occasional writers for the press, who have often been inaccurate as to dates or facts, and also yothers whose interests have doubtless led them into exaggerations. The real facts of its history, however, are so few and so simple as to prompt that venerable breader, William M. Landrum, to say that they unit fleat the recommend some one who would experiment in the culture of cotton in Turkey. Accordingly, Dr. James B. Davis of Columbia, S. C., was recommended, and he received the appointment. The work done by Dr. Davis appeared to be highly gratifying to the Sultan, and so, upon his return. In 1849, the Sultan, desiring to reciprocate the courtesy of the President presented him with mine of the holeest goats in his dominion. Col. Richard Peters, writing in 1876, says of these animals: "These doubtless were selected from the herds of Angora, a district of country lying among the East of Constantinople." It doesand seems of the Cashmere shawl was made, Mr. Wm. M. Landrum, who was probably the first in this country to discover that our so-called Cashmere goat was the Angora Landrum, who was probably the first in this country to discover that our so-called Cashmere goat was the Angora land the post of the first product from the common whothalted goats, and guite practically a useful and the product from the common of the product from the country and his Angora base

ughbred or high-grade Angoras, as will yield merchantable mo-

such as will yield merchantable mohair, will not need to consider markets, as the increase will be employed to produce mohair; but a large number of flocks will be built up in the future, as they have been in the past, by the use of does of the common breed. It will be ascertained that the fleece of low grades is barely worth the cost of clipping it; that the skin is not so valuable for leather as that of the common goat; and that, as a rug or robe, the pelts are not so valuable as those of the higher grades. Therefore, if there is to be any profit from this part of a flock, there must be a market for the meat.

"The reason goats are not seen oftener in the market reports of receipts and shipments is that they pass as sheep. It is stated, however, that increasing numbers are seen in the larger markets. In the Union stock yards of Chicago as many as 8000 were received in one week last year. While the goats pass as sheep, they are also sold to consumers as sheep. The difference is very slight in some places. In Kansas City, for instance, the sheep bring about one-half a cent per pound more than goats. The packers buy them as goats and sell them as sheep in the form of dressed meat or canned."

In one week recently 8000 goats were received at the Union stock yards in Chicago. They were slaughtered and sold, and yet no butcher bought anything but "sheep" and no housewife served anything at dinner but lamb or mutton.

The agricultural department wrote to many goat raisers and asked them if they had any difficulty at all in selling goats for food. No joke for which Billy was ever the but thad more genuine humor than had this extract from a letter written in answer to the question by Thomas H. Mastin of Kansas City:

"You ask if I have any difficulty in disposing of goats for meat. None at all. The packers buy goats as well, as sheep. They make a difference of about half a cent a pound in favor of sheep when buying, and as they never sell goats they save that difference in selling."

sheep when buying, and as they never sell goats they save that difference in selling."

The government's goat expert declares that goat meat is much better food than mution, and that nothing except the prejudice against the goat born of the paragraphers' lokes prevents there being a demand for goat's flesh as food and a willingness to pay a higher price for it than for mutton. If this publication of Uncle Sam, which really should be called "In Praise of the Goat," is widely read and believed in there doubtloss will soon be an extraordinary demand for goat flesh and no one need yearn in vain at any time of the year for a bit of venison. It is the opinion of half a dozen goat authorities quoted that Billy's flesh, when Billy is properly fed, cannot be distinguished from venison. In fact, some of the enthusiasts say that goat is gamier and better than deer, provided the animal gets its entire subsistence by browsing.

One correspondent of the agricultural department living in New Mexico tells of a certain St. Louis community which ate Angora "venison" and never knew that it was killed by the knife of a butcher instead of by a rifle ball of the hunter,

Another correspondent tells of a woman who kept a boarding-house in the country for summer sojourners from New York, and who fed them regularly twice a week on goat meat and was complimented by her boarders on the prime quality of her mut-hour was complimented by her boarders on the prime quality of her mut-hour was complimented by her boarders on the prime quality of her mut-

ton.

One Texas enthusiast says: "Anybody who has ever tasted a roasted or barbecued plece of Angora mutton will find it better than any meat he ever before ate."

ever before ate."

Still another goat advocate says that the flesh is 50 percent better than mutton, and yet it sells to the butchers for less money. So much for prejudice.

dice.

In view of these encomiums it is not so hard to forgive one's butcher for delivering an occasional bit of Billy in lieu of a ram.

lieu of a ram.

Artificial Fertilization by Chemicals.
The American Journal of Physiology contains an account of the progress of Prof. Loeb's experiments in artificial parthenogenesis. He has been able to develop eggs of chaetopterus, an annelid or species of worm, into free swimming larvae, by placing them in solutions which caused them to lose water. Chloride of potassium solutions and hydrochloric acid, when added to he sea water, are effective in causing the eggs to develop. The artificially developed larvae do not differ from those produced by natural fertilization, and it was concluded that the processes of segmentation are a function of the constitution of sea water. Observations were also made in the production of giant embryos by the fusion of two or more eggs. These experiments have an important bearing on the theory of fertilization and other phenomena of life.

A Feat Reyord Him.

A Scottish prison chaplain, recently appointed, entered one of the cells on his first reund of inspection, and with much pomposity thus addressed the prisoner who occupied it: "Well, my man, do you know who I am?" "No, nor I dinna care!" was the nonchalant reply. "Well, I'm your new chaplain." "Oh, ye are? Then I hae heard o' ye before!" "And what did you hear?" returned the chaplain, his curiosity getting the better or his dignity. "Well, I heard that the last twa kirks ye were in ye preached them baith empty; but ye willna find it such an easy matter to do the same wi' this. one."—The King.