

Natural History.

THE OX.—HISTORY, MANAGEMENT, &c.

THE IRISH CATTLE.

Before we enter on the consideration of the two remaining breeds of English cattle, the long and the short-horns, we will take a very rapid glance at the Irish cattle.

They are evidently composed of two distinct breeds; the middle and the long-horns.

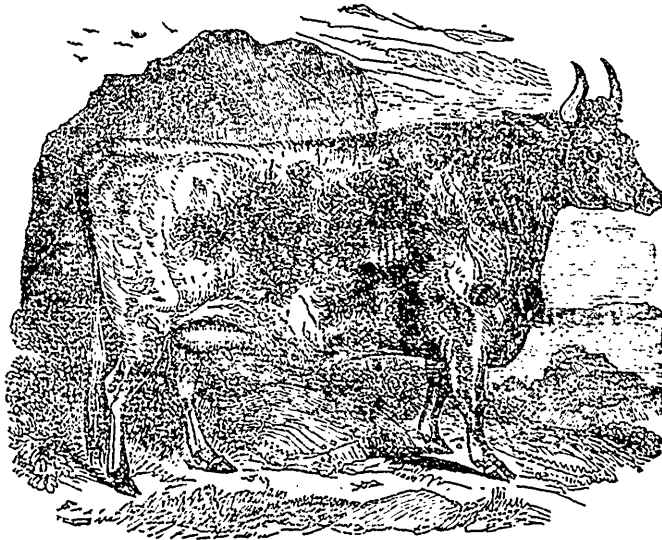
The middle-horns are plainly an aboriginal breed. They are found on the mountains and rude parts of the country, in almost every district. They are small, light, active, and wild. The head is small, although there are exceptions to this in various parts; and so numerous, indeed, are those exceptions, that some describe the native Irish cattle as having thick heads and necks; the horns are short compared with the other breed, all of them fine, some of them rather upright, and frequently, after projecting forward, then turning backward. Although somewhat deficient in the hind-quarters, they are high-boned, and wide over the hips, yet the bone generally is not heavy. The hair is coarse and long; they are black, brindled, and black or

brindled, with white faces. Some are finer in the bone, and finer in the neck, with a good eye, and sharp muzzle, and great activity.

They are exceedingly hardy; they live through the winter, and sometimes fatten on their native mountains and moors; and when removed to a better climate and soil, they fatten with all the rapidity of the aboriginal cattle of the Highlands and Wales. They are generally very good milkers, and many of them excellent. The cow of Kerry, a portrait of which is here presented, is a favorable specimen of them.

The cow of Kerry is truly a poor man's cow, living everywhere hardy, yielding, for her size, abundance of milk of a good quality, and fattening rapidly when required. The slightest inspection of the cut will convince the reader of the difference between this breed and both the larger and the smaller long-horned Irish one.

These cattle usually are small, and are confined to the hilly and moor grounds. Some are of considerable size, elsewhere, and are improved in form as well as in weight. The horns, usually of middle length, turn up; as do the horns of those on the mountains; they are shorter in the leg, shorter in the body; their loins and haunches are heavy and wide; although the hair is thick, the hide is mellow, and they thrive with rapidity.



KERRY COW.

This breed is now not to be met with pure, except inland on the mountains; being nearly gone out elsewhere by the repeated crosses with the Leicester, Hereford, and Devon; but for the any, all the farmers still prefer those cows with most of the native Irish blood.

The other breed is of a larger size. It is the North or partially improved Craven or Lancashire beast. It is the true long-horn; the horns not taking a direction outward, then forming a curve, and returning toward the face, sometimes threatening to pierce the bones of the nose, at

other times so to cross before the muzzle that the animal is unable to graze.

There are at the present two kinds of these cattle in Ireland, in character essentially different; the larger, which we have described, and a smaller, prevailing principally in the north of the island. At first view, perhaps, these would appear to be the same cattle, only smaller from poor keep and bad management; but their horns, long out of all proportion, clumsy heads, large bones and thick hides, bulkiness of dewlap contrasted with their lightness of carcass, in fine, an