

The Devons.

From time immemorial a distinct and beautiful breed of cattle has existed on the southern side of the British Channel, comprehending the whole of the higher lands of North Devon and a portion of Cornwall. Much of

this district resembles Wales in its physical character, as does also its native cattle, modified by lower elevations, a milder and more uniform climate, and consequently richer pastures. The Devons constitute one of the best defined breeds of the British Islands. They are found in the greatest purity along the high slopes of that county, where the strict attention has been paid for many years to their breeding and management, hence they are sometimes designated the North Devon to distinguish them from animals of a larger and coarser form found on the lower and richer pastures of that and adjacent counties.

The true North Devons belong to the breeds of

the higher country. They are somewhat heavier than the improved and hardier races of the Welch and Scotch hills, and fall considerably short in weight and early maturity as compared with the Darham, Hereford, or even the old Longhorn. Their general form is light and graceful; their skin is of an orange yellow

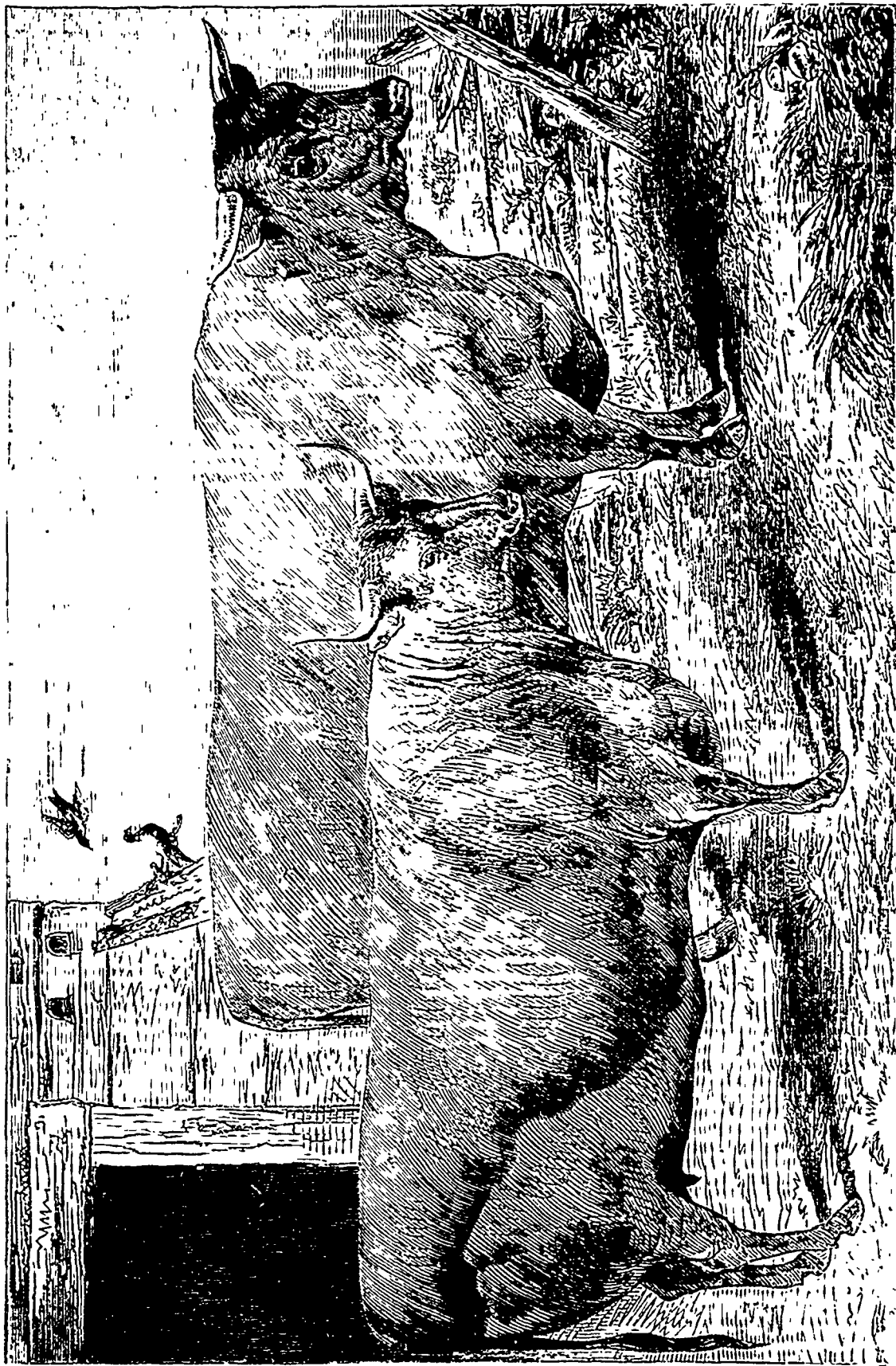
colour; and they are distinguished by having the hair of a bright red and by their eyes being surrounded by a ring of the colour of the skin. The nose is likewise of the same colour, and the inside of the ears is orange red. Their horns are of medium length, very fine, and bending upwards in the manner

skulder and long, the chest is only of moderate width, the back is long, and the distance large between the last asternal rib and the pelvis. These are the most marked characteristics of the true Devons, taking as the type of the breed the variety proper to the elevated district of North Devon. As we recede from

and the comparative smallness of the cow is a remarkable characteristic. This is, no doubt, as it has always been considered a disadvantage. But it should be borne in mind that the cows internally are really larger than they appear to an ordinary observer. The roundness and projection of the two or three last ribs, so characteristic of this breed, afford considerable room for the full development and acclimation of the most important vital organs.

The ox of this breed stands unrivalled for all purposes of farm labour, and for this object he is extensively employed throughout his native district. Oxen are trained to the yoke when about two years old, and after working four or five years they are usually sold to graziers for the purpose of the fattening. They are gentle, agile and above all other races adapted to active labour in quickness of step even surpassing the heavier breeds of horses. Their shoulders have that obliquity which enables them to lift freely their fore-extremities and their quarters behind are relatively long, which is a characteristic connected in the ox, as in the horse, with the power of active motion. Youatt in his excellent treatise on Cattle, remarks:—

"When the ground is not too heavy the Devonshire oxen are unrivalled at the plough. They have a



DEVON BULL AND COW.

of the wild cattle of the parks. Their skin is unctuous and soft to the touch, and the hair is fine and tending to curl, like that of other cattle inhabiting a humid climate. The neck is long, and the chest has little dew-lap. The shoulders are oblique, the hoofs and bones of the extremities are small, the limbs are

this centre, the size and form of the animals deviate more or less from the pure type. In the countries of richer herbage they become enlarged in size, and lose somewhat of the delicacy of shape which they exhibit in their native pastures.

The Devon bull seldom attains to the size of the ox,