

Musk'-ox, n. (Zööl.) The *Ovibos moschatus*, a ruminating animal which by some naturalists has been considered as intermediate between the sheep and ox, inhabits the more northern parts of America, where the country is mostly rocky and barren, except on the banks of the larger rivers. When they are fat, the flesh is well flavored, but smells strongly of musk. They herd together in flocks of twenty or thirty. The Musk-ox is about the height of a deer, but of much stouter



Fig. 1894. — MUSK-OX.

proportions. The horns are very broad at the base, covering the forehead and crown of the head; and curving downwards between the eye and ear, until about the level of the mouth, when they turn upwards. The head is large and broad, and the nose very obtuse; the ears are short, and not very conspicuous. The hair of the body is in general brown; on the neck and between the shoulders it is long, matted, and somewhat curled; and this bushy state of the hair on those parts causes the animal to appear humped. On the back and hips the hair is also long, but lies even and smooth; and on the shoulders, thighs, and sides, it is so long as to hang down below the middle of the leg. The tail is so short as to be concealed in the fur. Beneath the long hair, on all parts of the animal, is a fine kind of soft ash-colored wool, which, if it could be procured in sufficient quantity, would be highly useful to the manufacturer. The legs of the Musk-ox are short and thick, and furnished with narrow hoofs, resembling those of the Moose. The female is smaller than the male, and has also smaller horns, whose bases do not meet. Her general color is black, except that the legs are whitish, and between the horns there is a tuft of white hair intermixed with rust-color; an elevated ridge or mane of dusky hair runs along the back, and on the middle of the back is an oblong patch or bed of white hair, shorter than the rest, and which has been termed the *saddle*. The Musk-ox runs nimbly, and climbs hills and rocks with great ease. When pursued by the hunter, they seek for safety by instant flight; but the bulls are sometimes dangerously irascible when closely pressed.