

LESSON XCIII.

SMALL FARMS IN BELGIUM.

The small farms of from five to ten acres which abound in many parts of Belgium, closely resemble the small holdings in Ireland; but the small Irish cultivator exists in a state of miserable privation of the common comforts and conveniences of civilized life, whilst the Belgian peasant farmer enjoys a large portion of those comforts.

The houses of the small cultivators in Belgium are generally substantially built, and in good repair: they have commonly a sleeping room in the attic, and closets for beds connected with the lower apartment, which is convenient in size: a small cellar for the dairy, and a store for the grain, as well as an oven, and an outhouse for the potatoes, with a cattle stall, piggery, and poultry loft. The house generally contains decent furniture, the bedding is sufficient in quantity, and although the scrupulous cleanliness of the Dutch may not be everywhere observable, an air of comfort and propriety pervades the whole establishment. The cattle are supplied with straw for bedding; the dung and urine are carefully collected in the tank; the ditches are scoured to collect materials for manure; the dry leaves, potato tops, &c., are collected in a moist ditch to undergo the process of fermentation, and heaps of compost are in course of preparation. The premises are generally kept in neat and compact order, and a scrupulous attention to a most rigid economy is everywhere appa-