



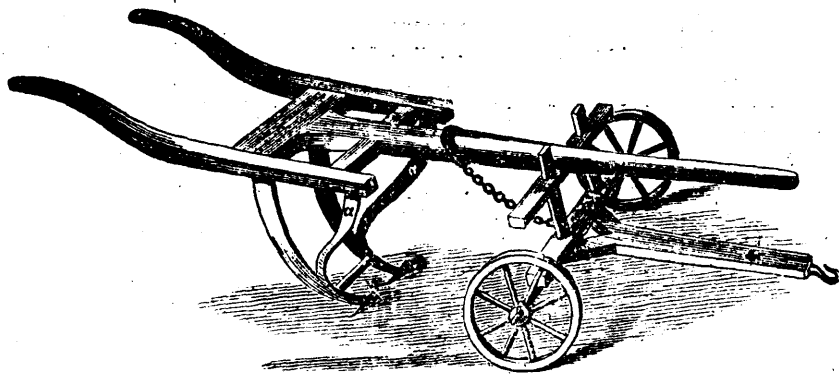
## The Field.

### The Silesian System of Harvesting Mangolds.

A RECENT issue of the *Mark Lane Express* contains the appended particulars of the method pursued in Silesia of harvesting the mangold crop. We have transferred the illustration from the same source:—

"In Silesia, where the cultivation of mangolds is carried on to a large extent, it is customary to commence harvesting the crop about the month of October, as soon as the leaves of the plants have begun to assume a yellowish tinge. For the purpose of extracting the roots, the above instrument is universally used. As may be seen from the engraving, it is of the simplest construction. It consists of two shares, similar to those of a plough, but possessing a length of 15 to 20 inches. These shares are situated at a distance of 15 inches apart at the top, and gradually near each other towards the points, where the distance between the two is not more than 6 inches. The shares are connected at the bottom by means of a perfectly round iron bar, and in order to ensure the requisite firmness (the resistance to be met with being considerable), they are further connected with the body of the instrument through two flat pieces of iron (a and a on the figure.) As fore-wheels, those of a common plough may be used. This instrument is driven down the row of plants, and in such a manner that each root comes between the two shares of the plough. The soil around the roots being thus loosened, and the roots being pressed partly upwards by means of the aforementioned round iron bar, the plants can now be removed with the greatest ease by gangs of women or children. With this instrument one man with a pair of oxen is able to plough up 3 Prussian morgen (equal to nearly two acres) of sugar-beets per day; and 6 or 8 women following him can pull, clean, and cut off the leaves, and place in the buries about one morgen. The plants are not in the slightest degree injured by this instrument (as is often the case when forks, &c., are used). Besides this, the saving of labour must be borne in mind, which is of the greatest importance at the present time, when the cost of labour is continually increasing. Another advantage resulting from the application of this instrument is, that it obviates the necessity of ploughing for winter corn after wurzel, the land having already been sufficiently broken up by means of the two shares, and only requiring harrowing. In Silesia the land intended for winter

corn after wurzel is exclusively prepared by means of the harrow; and the rye-wheat there stands as well after wurzel as after any other crop. An additional reason for this, however, is that the wurzel crop is always strongly manured. The preservation of the wurzel crop there is nearly the same as in other parts of Germany. If there is sufficient time to spare, the roots are carted to one end of the field, and there placed in long buries about 8 feet broad and 5 feet high; they are then covered with straw, and sufficient earth to prevent the straw being blown away. At the commencement of the cold season another layer of earth of several inches in thickness is spread over the whole bury, with the exception of the comb, which remains open. In order to complete the covering of the buries, a ditch of about 1½ feet in depth is dug round each mound, and the soil here excavated provides the necessary layer of earth. Boards are placed along the top of the bury during this operation, in order to prevent the filling up of the comb. After the roots have been left in this state for about three weeks, they are again covered with a layer of earth of about 1 foot in thickness. At the top of the bury wisps of straw are then inserted at from intervals of



from 5 to 6 feet. If there is a scarcity of working cattle during the harvest, the following method of preservation is observed: The wurzels, after having been cleared by women, are thrown into large baskets, and then placed in small heaps in different parts of the field; they are then covered with earth in a perfectly air-tight manner. Many farmers in the neighbourhood maintain that this method is preferable to the first, but it has, at any rate, the disadvantages, first, of preventing the carting off the field in wet weather; and, second, the roots become very dirty through the contact with the soil. For these reasons the first method is the one more generally adopted. The leaves of the wurzel are used as fodder, either in a green state or else dried or soured. The latter mode of preparation is the one most adopted. For this purpose all large farms are provided with pits for the preparation of this food. In these pits layers of chaff

and leaves are alternately placed, and sometimes a small amount of salt is added. During the laying of the leaves they must be trodden down tightly. These pits must be provided with a shelving roof, in order to prevent the penetration of moisture. The last layer of leaves in the pit is covered with a one-inch layer of soil, thus preventing the circulation of air."

We have never had an opportunity of seeing the implement here figured; but, judging from the description, we are of opinion that such a contrivance might also be applied with success to the harvesting of turnips.

### Familiar Talks on Agricultural Principles.

#### COMPOST HEAPS.

FARM yard dung may be preserved from loss by the action of the sun and air, and made to go a great deal farther, by composting it; that is, by mixing it with a variety of substances that will absorb liquid manure and combine with that which is solid. Or, if it is preferred to keep the stable manure by itself, an additional source of supply may be provided by the compost-heap, into which every description of vegetable refuse should be gathered.

Most Canadian farms have some low place upon them where black swamp muck is to be found. Many farms have acres of swamp upon them where this material can be had. These parts of a farm are generally looked upon as worthless, or nearly so, but they are in reality storehouses of wealth. There is nothing better for mixing with stable manure, or any matter capable of decomposing, than this black muck. Indeed so great is the value of this material that a farm is hardly complete without a bit of swamp or a muck-hole from whence it can be gathered. Mud from the bottom of lakes, ponds, or pools, is useful for the same purpose, and the longer it has been lying the richer it is in fertilizing matter. Many animal and vegetable substances will have collected and been decomposed in it. The scourings and washings of hill sides and roads, which find their way into bodies of still water, form rich deposits which it will pay to cart out, if the water can be let off so as to scrape the bottom.

A compost heap is a sort of *omnium-gatherum* into which all manner of substances capable of rotting are collected, and from time to time intimately mixed until they form one fertilizing mass. Vegetable refuse, weeds, leaves, turnip-tops, road-scrappings, old mortar, turf, sods, kitchen waste, and the like, all