

working for us who offered to contract for the lot by the job—to take up the turnips, cut off the greens, and cart to the barn—we agreeing to find the necessary tools. In accordance with this arrangement, we provided a sharp steel hoe or two, and a sort of prong grapnel, shaped like a pitchfork, but having the tines of the fork about three inches apart, and bent close to the ferule, at an angle of 90 degrees to the handle—or rather inside this, say something within a right angle. With this machine he and his boy went to the field. He himself, with the sharp hoe, sheared off all the green close to the turnip smooth and clean, sometimes, indeed, rather too close. The boy followed, and by pecking the bent fork under each turnip, and pulling slightly backward, he pulled up the turnips with great rapidity. His father, however, beat him in cutting off the green tops.

When pecking out the turnips, the son first went lengthwise of the piece, and pecked up about one yard wide all through, leaving about three feet on one side untouched. On reaching the end he turned broadside, facing the piece left, and as each turnip was pulled up, he pitched it on towards the piece he had previously done. When he reached the end, he again picked up and jerked in towards the row thus formed, about three feet on the other side. This, when repeated, left the turnips in rows about nine feet from centre to centre. When they came to hauling, they drove the waggon down close to the row thus formed, and, with ordinary steel forks, loaded the waggon, generally with two turnips each time on the fork, and a most rapid and excellent plan it proved.

MAKING POTASH.

Our next care was to protect and collect the ashes out of which to manufacture potash.

After our great burn, of nearly 150 acres, there were of course vast quantities of ashes, exposed to the weather; and as soon as the heat of the burning brush had subsided all hands turned to, and raked the ashes into small conical heaps, usually containing about two bushels each.

This must be very carefully done, and also attended to before the ashes are cold, for unless they are raked before the heat is extinguished it is quite impossible to avoid drawing together some earthy and vegetable matter with them, which greatly injures the quality.

The weather looked unsettled; we therefore hurried our operations as much as possible, and all the ashes were raked together before any rain fell, and the heat of the unextinguished coals consumed the remains of any unburnt wood or charcoal.

We had at that time no place to store the ashes, and therefore had to construct an ash shanty, that is, to build a square log house

about 15 feet square, with a floor of logs to prevent the ashes being injured by the damp from the earth, and also a roof of a temporary kind, to prevent any very heavy rains from leaching the ashes from the top, thereby spoiling them. Our two teams, well attended to, soon hauled 700 bushels of ashes, and we were now ready to commence potash making.

We had previously received five potash kettles from Toronto; four were set in an arch, and one was used as a reservoir for lye. We built our leaches in the ordinary way, but took the precaution of so constructing the bottom that a complete filter of lime and straw caused the lye to be as free from impurities as possible, and as fine as wine, it was so perfectly clear. Unless this is done the quality of the potash will be inferior.

Having taken the precaution of ascertaining the fact that plenty of water was to be had on the spot selected, before locating our potash works, a pump was speedily made, and a well dug. Everything worked well, and we soon had two barrels of black salts, that is, crude uncalcined potash; and now came the melting off.

This is the climax of potash making. If the work up to this time has not been well done, the potash will not melt, and seconds or thirds in quality are the certain result. If, on the contrary, all has been carefully done, and all extraneous matter carefully kept out of the lye, nine times out of ten the melt will be easy. I have often seen people, who have neglected these points, fire away for hours to effect a melt, and actually honeycomb their kettle in their endeavours to accomplish this; and after all, when the potash was dipped out and cooled, it was only seconds or thirds. And all this extra trouble, and often the loss of a kettle, was caused by the presence of extraneous matter amongst the lye or ashes. Before we finally gave up potash making we had constructed a filter of lime through which all the lye was passed on its way to the kettle, and thus all difficulty of a good melt was avoided.

“Potash boiling,” as it must be conducted nearly all night as well as day, is quite a jubilee time. In fine nights the brilliant fire attracts all the neighbours round, and songs and stories are plentiful and amusing. Many a good story I could tell that was related to me whilst boiling potash; but I must not trespass on the space devoted to agricultural matter by such narratives. I may perhaps be allowed to describe one or two adventures in which I was personally engaged.

COON HUNTING.

We had planted about four acres of corn, and the locality happened to be near the potash works. Raccoons were very plentiful and committed great ravages amongst our best roasting ears. Night after night we hunted them without dogs, fearing the mischief the dogs would do, but although we saw by the destruction in the morning that

there must be several coons engaged, we could not catch one, they all seemed to make for one spot, and there we lost them. We procured good coon dogs and put them on the scent, but we still lost the game about one locality. One morning after the last unsuccessful hunt, I carefully examined the ground and all the old stumps about there, and was certain signs of “Coon” having ascended one large old elm tree, partly dead. I at once sent for some axes, and in half an hour the giant of the forest was laid low. It proved quite hollow near the butt, with a slight hollow all the way to the first large branches. I had a thorough-bred English bull-terrier dog, and I told him to jump on the stump and from thence into the hollow below, and of all the fusses you ever heard, that which issued from the stump's interior was the greatest. I pulled out the dog by the tail, and with him a fine large raccoon, and as he was splendid pluck and his blood was well up, next time I pulled him out with a coon in his jaws; he again jumped in, until we had eleven large and small raccoons. They fought hard, and my dog was considerably defaced in countenance, but no amount of punishment would daunt him. He never refused, if allowed again to go in, or gave bark until he had fastened on a raccoon, when we twitched him out by the everwhisking tail, coon and all. Of course a blow finished each of the poor wretches the moment they appeared in the dog's mouth. Our corn was safe from further molestation for that season.

BEAR HUNTING.

I recollect a desperate fright one of our men got about that time from a bear. Bruin thought corn good for him also. We had previously noticed some marks of a bear visiting the field. We were going our rounds one fine evening, and heard a rail fall off the fence. Of course we were instantly aware that some animal, tame or wild, had leaped into the corn field, and we at once suspected that we had arrived just in time to catch the bear in the act. I determined to go home for a rifle, and as we always carried a gun when prowling round the clearings at evening, anticipating some small game, I gave it to my man to hold, bidding him stay where he was and watch whilst I went for the rifle. He told me he had dropped a ball into one barrel, when loading the other with small shot before leaving the house; but as we had no more ammunition with us, I preferred getting another gun and some more powder and ball.

My man was impatient in my absence, and consequently crept along the fence, until he judged he was about opposite the place where we heard the rail fall. Not a sound was heard, and he concluded to jump over the fence where the fallen rail lay and see; possibly we were both mistaken, and no animal whatever was there. He cocked both bar-