

placed on a drainage platform of split slabs. By draining water through these when filled with ashes the soluble salts were dissolved, and the alkaline solution, known as lye, when evaporated, furnished the commercial article of potash; when further purified and calcined this was known as pearlash. These substances, together with wheat and furs, constituted the three chief articles of export furnished by the early settlers of Upper Canada. In return for these they obtained their first imported supplies and what little money the early settlements contained.

Summarizing the mass of individual records contained in the diary, we may trace the work of the pioneer through the sequence of the seasons. Early in the spring of almost every year we find our diarist girdling a new section of the forest farm preparatory to bringing it under cultivation. He has already cut out such timber as he requires for fences, fire wood, transport to the sawmill, after its erection. From the timber and lumber thus obtained we find him from time to time constructing such new out-houses and buildings as are most urgently required, or he has the time or means for completing. In the early spring, also, he was accustomed to make a limited amount of maple sugar, the amount increasing with the increase of his family, who were able to render him material assistance in the work of gathering sap and attending to the boiling down or evaporating process. Naturally the maple tree was almost the sole source of sugar for the early settlers. Cane sugar, when first imported, was an article of exceptional luxury. In any case, however, the settlers used but little sugar as compared with later generations. In quite a number of cases farmers with adult families manufactured considerable quantities of maple sugar, disposing of it through the local merchants, who sent most of it on to Kingston and Montreal, although but little of it was ultimately exported.

Immediately the snow was gone, foundation logs were cut and laid for new fences. Above these split rails of basswood or cedar were built up, forming the well-known snake fences of the country. Later we find the straight fence with stakes and rails coming into use. The older fields, as they were cleared of stumps and logs and brought under the plow, were fertilized from the barn yard before the plowing began. From