

annual report of the Fourth Assistant Postmaster General for 1903. Although the table referred to by Mr. Spilman is somewhat old, the information it contains is interesting. It shows that at that time, five years ago, when the department was not nearly so strict in enforcing the requirements of the service as it is now, the average



THE BEGINNING OF THE SEASON

Note the long shaped pail, which is not easily blown from the tree

number of routes in 50 States and Territories, was 315. The average number of houses on each route was 127. The average population on each route was 585; the average number of boxes, 70; the average number of patrons, 381; and the average cost of each route, \$897.80. These figures show that the average number of families on the routes was high, although the number of boxes was small. The small number of boxes in proportion to the number of houses, shows that many families were not using the service.

In some cases the carriers allowed families to place a joint box at the side road. When the carrier passed, he placed the mail for the families living along the side road, in these boxes. The people living along the side road took turns in getting and distributing this mail to their neighbors. Some of the patrons used a "colony" box, made with compartments, to hold the mail of several families. This latter kind of a box, I was informed, had not proven very successful, as it generally was not long before the joint owners were quarrelling among themselves over its management.

EXPENSES OF THE SYSTEM

Those people who oppose the introduction of free rural delivery in Canada upon the ground of expense, should find the foregoing figures interesting. They show that the average expense of the service, based on the average number of houses on each route, was only a little over three dollars a year for each house. Based on the average number of patrons, the cost of the service was considerably less than two dollars a year a person. Based on the number of boxes, the cost was \$8.55 a year, or 70 cents a month. If there is taken into consideration the saving in the expense of the general post office service, that is effected by the cutting off of local post offices, and star routes, as well as the increased revenue that is derived from the increased amount of mail that is handled wherever the service is introduced, the cost of the service, as given, is still further reduced. Against this expense must be set, also, the increased value of the farms along the routes, the saving effected by the farmers through not having to go for their mail, and the great convenience of the service. Since 1903, the cost of service has increased considerably. So, however, has the number of families on each route. Looked at in the light of the foregoing figures, it will be seen that the "tremendous expense" of the service that we have heard so much about, is not such a serious matter as some people have tried to lead us to believe.—H. B. C.

Brood Sows Need Exercise

W. R. Bowman, Wellington, Co., Ont.

We endeavor to give our brood sows plenty of exercise. After the litter is taken off, we feed sparingly on grain and after the milk dries up, we feed liberally on roots and a little grain. Within a few weeks of farrowing we gradually slacken up the root ration, and add grain and bran, which puts on a good quality of flesh.

After the sow has farrowed feed sparingly for the first twenty-four hours and gradually increase the feed until she is consuming about all she can stand and continue the full ration until pigs are five weeks old, when they should be taught to eat, and not depend altogether on their dam. Then commence slackening off the feed of the sow until the end of six weeks, at which time her flow of milk will be greatly diminished and the pigs will be ready to wean.

Sugar Making on the Farm

Andrew Reichart, Iroquois, Ont.

The sugar making business is a profitable one, from the farmer's standpoint, if he abandons the old-time method, and equips his sugar bush with the latest improved machinery. There will be a profit in it when he makes a good article, for which there is quick sales and good prices. The market is never over-stocked with the right class of goods. Sugar making comes in the time of year



THE EVAPORATOR ROOM

The only way to make a first-class article is by the use of modern apparatus

when there is very little other work to be done on the farm. The best results in tapping are obtained from a 7-16 inch bit. Bore one inch to one and one-quarter inches deep. I find a bore that size will give as much sap as a larger bore, at the same time it does not injure the tree as much. The smaller the bore the quicker the tree will heal up. I have used a good many different kinds of spouts, but prefer the No. 2 Grimm spouts. I have found it to be the best. Last year I had 1100 Grimm spouts in use, and 500 of the old metal spouts. For nearly two weeks the trees that were tapped with the metal spouts did not run a drop of sap, while those tapped with the Grimm spouts were running well. This year I am using all No. 2 Grimm spouts. I use a 10 quart pail, made of good heavy tin. The pail should be made almost straight. It will then stay on the hooks much better. I am fully convinced that it will pay to use covers for the pails. It will pay also when the season is partially over to re-tap or ream out the holes.

The sap should be gathered once every day, twice a day if possible. It has been my experience that the quicker sap is put into syrup the better grade of goods it will make. I never allow it to stand over night, if it can be avoided.

I use a Champion evaporator, and prefer it to any I have ever used or seen. It is a shallow boiler, easy to operate, and the siphons and interchangeable pans do away, to a great extent, with

the lime and silica, and it is thus easier to keep clean. I use a Grimm gathering tank. Anyone who has any sap to gather should use one, as it strains the sap through a double sieve. This latter is one of the secrets in making first-class goods. Keep every particle of dirt out of the sap. Boil the sap as fast as it leaves the tree, and draw your syrup off every ten minutes. An evaporator that you cannot draw your syrup out of every ten minutes is no good. Long-continued boiling injures the vitality of the goods.

A word about results. Last season I tapped 1,700 trees, hired all my help, and when the season closed, I had \$400 to the good. I certainly think there is a profit in maple syrup, if a man keeps up with the times, and makes a good article. My syrup was all sold as fast as I could make it, and I had not enough to supply the demand. Maple sugar making is like everything else—unless a man does his best he will not make a success of anything. Before marketing, I put my name and guarantee of purity on every can that I send out. That shows that I am not ashamed of my goods, and the purchaser has confidence in them.

An Essential in Egg Production

Wilbur Bennett, Peterborough, Ont.

The American breeds of poultry, Rocks, Wyandottes, or Orpingtons, are probably the best as egg producers, especially for our climate. It is not so much to the breed as to the strain that one must look for success. Whatever breed one fancies, however, is the best for your purpose, but see that the stock has been bred for utility, and has a good laying record. When you have made your start, hatch the chicks in March or April, so that they will have matured and started laying before the cold weather sets in in the fall. If a pullet or hen does not start laying then, in most cases it will not do much till near spring.

The eggs from which the chicks are hatched must be from stock that is full of vitality. Otherwise we are up against it at the start. The chicks must be kept growing by liberal feeding right from the incubator, and not allowed any setback. It pays always to replace our stock each year, hatching more pullets than one needs to allow for vigorous culling for off-color, and lack of vitality, and selling the old stock as soon as their profitable laying season is over in the fall. Generally, about the first of October, we sell the last winter's layers. Then they bring us more as roasters than their cost of raising, which about balances that item of expense.



GATHERING THE SAP

Two pails may be hung on large trees to advantage

Old hens of the American class, if forced in order to get the eggs, as one can safely do with the pullets, are apt to get overfat, and it is sometimes a difficult matter to get them over the molt and down to business again before the cold weather.