

it, that I might not suffer the scum to boil into the sugar. A few minutes before it comes to a boil, the scum must be carefully removed with a skimmer or ladle—the former is best. I consider that on the care taken to remove every particle of scum depends, in a great measure, the brightness and clearness of the sugar. The best rule I can give as to the sugaring-off, as it is termed, is to let the liquid continue at a fast boil: only be careful to keep it from coming over by keeping a little of the liquid in your stirring-ladle, and when it boils up to the top, or you see it rising too fast, throw in a little from time to time to keep it down; or if you boil on a cooking-stove, throwing open one or all the doors will prevent boiling over. Those that sugar-off outside the house have a wooden crane fixed against a stump, the fire being lighted against the stump, and the kettle suspended on the crane: by this simple contrivance (for any bush-boy can fix a crane of the kind), the sugar need never rise over if common attention be paid to the boiling; but it does require constant watching: one idle glance may waste much of the precious fluid. I had only a small cooking-stove to boil my sugar on, the pots of which were thought too small, and not well shaped, so that at first my fears were that I must relinquish the trial; but I persevered, and experience convinces me a stove is an excellent furnace for the purpose; as you can regulate the heat as you like.

One of the most anxious periods in the boiling I found to be when the liquor began first to assume a yellowish frothy appearance, and cast up so great a volume of steam from its surface as to obscure the contents of the pot; as it may then rise over almost unperceived by the most vigilant eye. As the liquor thickens into molasses, it becomes a fine yellow, and seems nothing but thick froth. When it is getting pretty well boiled down, the drops begin to fall clear and rosy from the ladle; and if you see little bright grainy-looking bubbles in it, drop some on a cold plate, and continue to stir or rub it till it is quite cold: if it is ready to granulate, you will find it gritty, and turn whitish or pale straw colour, and stiff. The sugar may then safely be poured off into a tin dish, pail, basin, or any other utensil. I tried two different methods after taking the sugar from the fire, but could find little difference in the look of the sugar, except that in one the quantity was broken up more completely; in the other the sugar remained in large lumps, but equally pure and sparkling. In the first I kept stirring the