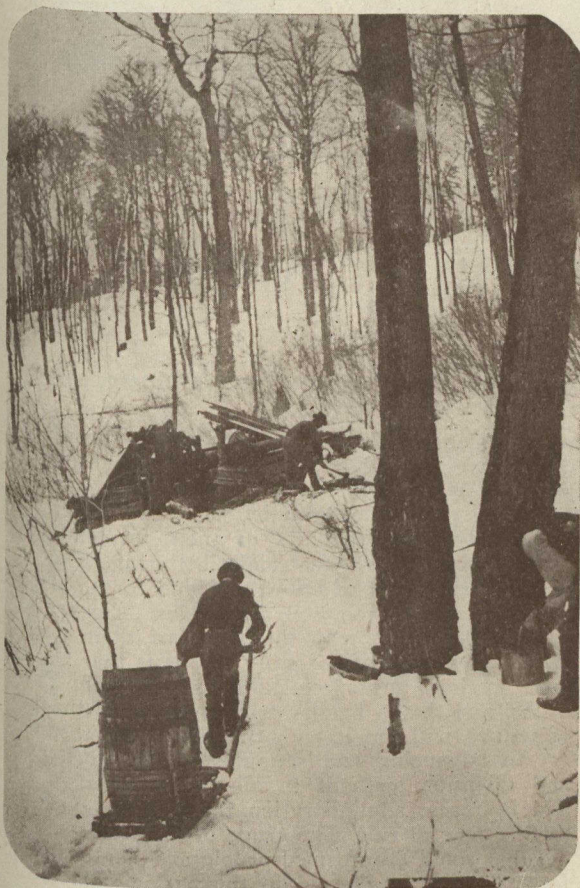




A combination of Old and New, in as pretty a bit of sugar bush as ever was tapped in Western Ontario.

THE MOON OF MAPLE SAP

If the Piano Agent calls, 'Dad' and the Boys are Back in the Sugar Bush



Hauling Sap on a Man-lugged Jumper in Quebec.

THIS is the month of sap. A week ago a certain literary agriculturist who has a sugar bush promised to send down a gallon of maple syrup; saying that he must hurry home and get tapping his trees which would be running riot in his absence. The weather took a spasm since then and we presume that he is only just getting his spiles driven and his pails hung on the hard maples over on the old beech ridge—the sugar bush. This is the only backwoods factory that is left in Canada; the last touch of the industry primeval. They say that the old-fashioned kettle is out of date; that the tin evaporator set in the brick arch in the shanty has taken its place. But there are a few kettles left still and we are glad of it. There's more fun in a kettle. There's probably more money in a vat. Maple syrup nowadays is made mainly to sell. Like everything else the ancient pastime of our forefathers has become professionalised. They no longer have the wooden buckets hung on the human neckyoke; neither the old-fashioned spile whittled with an axe right in the woods. No, they have "Grimm" spouts sheeted with white metal and four-barrel circular collecting tanks with strainers and hopper tops, and patent pails holding each eighteen quarts—and at the last the new-fangled, corrugated, compartmented, bulk-headed evaporator which does the trick as scientifically as a modern pork factory makes pork of a hog. The thing nowadays is to save the trees and to make as much money as possible out of one tree. Because in the old days if one sugar bush ran out or a small cyclone blew it down, all the farmer had to do was to blaze a trail to another on his own hundred; which in the days of reforestation has become a lost art. Nevertheless the maple syrup when you get it right is still the unexplainable glorified nectar of the wood-gods; and the sooner that rural correspondent gets that gallon



New style Spout and Modern Patent Pail.

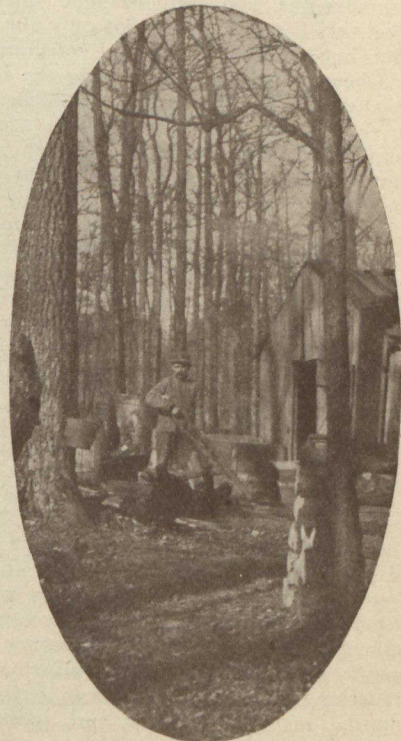
down here the better. If on chemical analysis we find that it contains 40 per cent. of ordinary brown cane sugar and other ingredients not discoverable in hard maple sap, we shall procure an indictment under the Pure Foods Bill. To adulterate maple syrup is a crime beneath the dignity of a savage.



Woodpile Drying in the Wind



The old-fashioned style, Kettle and Pole in the windy open.



A Shanty in the Sugar Bush.