

A Maple Bush Pays Better Than Pine

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MAPLE lumber has long been a valuable commodity that has doubled in price within little more than a decade. It is only reasonable to expect that ten years hence will see it much more valuable than at the present time. For this reason reforesting with maple should prove a very remunerative enterprise, yielding in a few years an annual crop of sugar and a heritage in timber of no mean value.

Unfortunately the stripping of even our rocky lands of their trees has gone on to an unprofitable degree. A maple tree that will cut two cords of wood is worth on the stump for that purpose about ten dollars at the present price of wood and lumber.

The annual interest on this sum is from 60 to 70 cents. The tree, if left to grow into considerable value for itself, will yield an average of three pounds of sugar, worth anywhere from 75 cents to \$1, according to the intelligence of the maker. To clear off the maple timber from stony land unsuitable for farming purposes is like killing the goose that lays the golden egg. It should not and would not be a crime to cut mature trees; but the sin lies in not allowing others to grow. Reforesting with maple is undoubtedly as important as with pine or spruce. In view of the returns to be expected from each of these kinds of timber there can be no doubt of the real economy of not only conserving the maples on rough lands but also in taking action to reclothe those rugged districts that have been made utterly barren by the loss of the forest.

Reforesting With Maple

In the opinion of Mr. R. H. Campbell, Director of Forestry in the Department of the Interior, it is more profitable to reforest with maple than

with white pine. In response to an inquiry as to the relative cost of reforesting with maple as compared with pine Mr. Campbell writes as follows:—

In determining the cost of producing any merchantable timber, there are seven points to be considered, viz:—

- The value of the land.
- Taxation.
- The cost of plant material.
- The cost of planting.
- The cost of management and protection.
- The rate of interest on money invested.
- The time for the trees to reach the desirable size.

3½ per cent. The total cost worked out to \$165.34 per acre. This does not include the thinnings which would probably yield a revenue after the twentieth year and somewhat reduce the cost.

Sugar maple grown under normal forest conditions would yield from one hundred and fifty (150) to one hundred and seventy-five (175) per acre, having an average diameter of eighteen (18) inches in about one hundred and fifteen (115) or one hundred and twenty (120) years. Provided all the other items, i. e. cost of land, taxes, etc., were the same, this increase in the length of time alone would raise the cost of

growing maple considerably above that of growing pine. The cost of the plants and planting would probably be 50 per cent. more than the \$10 figured on for pine. This is partly due to the heavier nature of the soil in which the maple would be planted and partly due to the higher price for maple seedlings.

It would appear then that if the price of white pine and maple lumber keeps the same relative position, it would hardly be a paying proposition to grow maple for lumber alone. However, when one considers the revenue derived after the thirtieth year from the sap and the high-

er price obtainable for thinnings as fuel, or making acetic acid, wood alcohol, and charcoal, there seems but little doubt that the maple would in the end be the more profitable tree. This is particularly true in case of the small wood lot owner or farmer, who has many uses for the wood, and especially where the maple already exists in the stand and natural reproduction can be secured.



Through metal pipes the sap flows from the bush to the sugar house. Such equipment is being more and more adopted by the progressive maple bush owner where the size of his business warrants it.

It has been estimated that white pine planted on sandy waste lands in Ontario will yield, in sixty years, two hundred (200) trees averaging eighteen (18) inches in diameter, or about eighty thousand (80,000) board measure, per acre. In this estimate the land was valued at \$5 per acre; taxation figured at 17 mills; the cost of plants and planting \$10 per acre; the cost of management and protection at 15 cents per acre per year and the rate of interest charged was