

one in which there is a widespread interest, I may here state that the time of sowing in fall, in a country having such an area and difference of latitude as ours, is somewhat difficult to gauge; but taking the latitude of New York as a basis, the safest time we have found to sow is from the 10th to the 15th of September. Of late years we have inclined rather more to the latter date, and have even sown as late as the 30th September, with excellent success, in warm, well-sheltered positions, in a rich, well-prepared soil. In connection with this subject, I would refer to the evils arising from the two common practice of many of our agricultural and horticultural journals, selecting from English papers articles that often seriously mislead. For example, a Boston magazine not long ago copied a long article from the *English Journal of Horticulture*, telling us, in a very patronizing way, how to propagate the golden tricolor-leaved geraniums. The writer laid great stress on having a sharp knife, and cutting the slip in a particular manner, then to insert it in silver sand, and a lot of other nonsense, that any boy of six months' practice here would have known was absurd; but above all, the operation was to be performed in *July!* He might have got the sharpest knife that was ever made, and the purest silver sand that ever lay on the seashore, but he would have utterly failed in our climate, if he attempted the work in July. This is only one of scores of such absurd selections as we see yearly in some of our horticultural journals. If the conductors of such have not original matter to fill up with, better far that they leave their pages blank than to show their utter ignorance of what is suitable to our climate.

[The above is from the *American Agriculturist*, and from the pen of the celebrated market gardener Peter Henderson. We understand that during the present season some cases analogous to the one described have occurred in Nova Scotia. The only remark we wish to make at present on the above article, is, that while Mr. Henderson shows a needless antipathy to some "Boston Magazine" he at the same time exposes a little bit of ignorance of which no English gardener's apprentice could be guilty, in speaking of "silver sand" being found on the sea shore. The silver sand of English gardeners is quite a different substance from that known to poets, and one would have thought that Mr. Henderson knew something about it. Its efficacy in promoting the rooting of cuttings is such that without it many plants could not be propagated at all.—  
ED. J. OF A.]

RECREATION.—After the harvest is all secured, go a fishing for a few days and take a little rest! A farmer needs it if any one does.

## TALK WITH FARMERS.

### MAPLE SUGAR MAKING.

The following little essay on maple sugar may not be of much interest to some of our backwood friends, but as all are not familiar with the sugar-bush, it is given for the benefit of the uninitiated. The farmer here referred to was a Lower Canadian, well versed in all matters that savour of "home production," rather than from the store.

"What sort of sugar season have you had near Penetanguishene?"

"Oh, fine; there has been a great deal of sugar made."

"Do you work at it yourself?"

"Yes, and that is why I want to get the sugar-bush. The land is bad; it is so stony that it cannot be ploughed, and there are good maples on it, and it will suit well for sugar-making."

"How do you make the sugar?"

"In the spring, as soon as the sap will run, we collect the sap by tapping the trees with the axe, and setting troughs, which we make out of basswood, to catch the sap; we also make buckets for the same purpose. We then rig our camp and kettles, and having got our wood together, and the shanty fixed, we get the team and go round to the trees and collect the sap, which is brought to the camp, and we then fill all the kettles. The sap is carefully strained through woollen cloths, and soon boils. We keep the fire down as soon as the sap boils, and as it boils away we fill up the kettles until the syrup gets pretty strong. We then put all the contents of the kettles into one, to come first into sugar, and fill the others with fresh sap. The one with the syrup is kept well off the fire; the others are made to boil as fast as they can, so that they do not boil over."

"How do you prevent the sap from burning and browning in the kettles?"

"We take care to keep the kettles pretty full, and then the fire does not make the sides of the kettles too hot; it does not burn or brown easily."

"Does it not boil over when it gets thick?"

"Oh, yes, it would; but we take care of that. Some hang up a bunch of twigs or brush over the kettle, with the points of the brush cut off square, and which go just inside the kettle. As soon as the sap boils up the twigs break the bubbles and it stops the boil."

"Is there any other way?"

"Yes; some take a piece of pork, and hang it by a string just so that when the bubbles rise they shall touch the pork; and as soon as they do this they break and go down owing to the fat. Others put a little bit of butter in the kettles, and that keeps down the bubbles; but both these plans make the sugar taste a

little, and for that reason the twigs are best."

"Do you ever use white of eggs, or anything else, to clear the sap?"

"Some do; but if the sap is kept clean and free from dust and other things there is no need of anything of the kind. Nothing makes the sugar so good as the pure, clean sap."

"How do you know when it is done?"

"We judge it by taking a little between the finger and thumb. When it is fit you can feel it, and it sticks in a particular manner. It may then be poured out into moulds, and it will become solid and can be stirred into loose sugar."

"What is the best part of the season, and in which you make the best sugar?"

"The beginning and middle of the season are best. Towards the end we make the sap mostly into molasses, as it does not 'sugar' so well."

"What kind of 'sugar work' do you like best?"

"I like the kettles set in arch best, the sap kettle being the one over the fire, and the sugaring-off kettle farthest off. I always used my potash kettle arch for this purpose, and make excellent sugar in that way."

"How many kettles make a complete work?"

"I like four kettles, and we can then boil down about fifty bushels of sap a day."

The idea of a 'bushel of sap' was new to me, so I asked for explanation as to how the bushel measure came to be applied to liquids.

"You see" (the answer was) "we make our pails to hold half a bushel each, and so we keep count."

"But your pails." I replied, "only hold two gallons each." (I had the common patent pail in mind, but that did not suit Lower Canadian ideas.)

"No," he said, "we make our pails to hold four gallons each, that is half a bushel."

"How do you collect the sap?"

"We use a sleigh with a barrel, and the horses."

"Don't you use cattle?"

"No; not much. It is dangerous for the cattle to get at the sap, which they will do if they can, and drink till they burst themselves. They will also get at the molasses, too, if they can, and a very little molasses will kill an ox."

"Well, but won't the horses drink the sap?"

"Yes, and they are very fond of it, but won't take enough to hurt them. They will always take a little drink every time they come to a trough, if they can; it does them good, and makes the winter coat all come off at once, and leaves them very sleek, with beautiful coats."