# Maple Sugar Best Of All Sweetening

## Old Time Industry Gets New Life in Effort to Make Up Cane and Beet Shortage

MORE maple trees than have been tapped for years may give up their saccharine wealth this spring if the prophecies of those who know the trade come true. It may be that there will be a recrudescence of the manufacture of the original American sugar, for the high prices of maple cakes and syrup would warrant the farmer in returning to the days of spiles and boiling pans.

For many years, when this nation was young, we were able to get along very well without the use of the foreign sweets, for sugar from cane was one time as scarce in this country as it was in the Europe of the Middle Ages, when it was dealt out in scruples and drachms by the apothecary. Why, this cane sugar is only an interpolation. The culture of the mammoth grass from which it is derived was not introduced into the United States until 1794, and even now there is no great amount of it cultivated within the actual borders of this nation compared with what we consume.

The Indians were making considerable quantities of maple sugar when the early discoverers reached the New World. They had rather crude methods for the gathering of the sap and the evaporation of the fluid, yet they produced much. The white man improved the kettles and the process of sugaring off, and for a time it seemed as though the maple sweet was firmly established in a land of hominy and samp, with which it was frequently eaten.

The Indians, as did the pioneers, used maple sugar much as we do salt at present. They rubbed it on their meat both as preservative and seasoning. They stored it in cool caves against the coming winter, and drew upon the reserves throughout the summer. They even built up a trade in it which reached to the south and west.

### Had a Fine Start Here.

The maple sugar industry got a fine start in both Canada and the United States, the only countries at the present writing in which it is a factor in agriculture or trade. An effort was made early in the last century to introduce the culture of the sugar maple into Bohemia, but the attempt resulted in rank failure; so did the sugar. The American product has a delicious flavor that cannot be duplicated anywhere on earth. Although the cultivation of the maple once took many thousands of acres both here and in the Dominion to the north, which adopted the leaf of the tree as its emblem, there has been a steady decline in the output of this delectable sweet native to our land.

Various reasons are given, such as the cutting down of the forests and the lack of care bestowed on the woods where the maples grew. Those of us who had the opportunity to be born in the country, say in Vermont or New York State, in Pennsylvania or in Ohio, will remember the maple sugar days, may be, and if not surely we cannot forget the abandoned sugar groves.

Throughout the middle West, well east of Chicago, are the old time woods of the maple which were planted and tended by our ancestors or brought up from stands of tender saplings. Many of those groves, once dedicated as temples to our Saccharisa, were converted into picnic resorts by the original owners or by railroad companies or camp meeting associations which acquired them. What a ghost of its old self is the once lordly clump at Sugar Grove, Ohio, a town formely famed for its sugar through all the country roundabout and far into the East and once the rival of Vermont.

A mighty industry seems arrested when we consider that the entire output of maple sugar in this country in the year 1859 was 52,900,000 pounds. This also includes the syrup, a gallon of which is equivalent to eight pounds of the sugar. The sale of the sugar has decreased since the banner year by one-half, while that of the syrup has trebled. The last time the Department of Agriculture made a survey of the industry of sap boiling was in 1910, when there were 14,000,000 pounds of sugar sold and 4,196,000 gallons of the syrup. Making the conversion from syrup to solid, this would mean 47,568,000 pounds of sugar.

Although the industry has had comparatively little attention and has been practically taken over by four States it sometimes shows surprising signs of life. The number of farms reporting maple sugar or syrup made in 1909 was 87,537, as against 62,718 in 1899, or slightly more than 1 per cent. of all the farms in the United States during both years.

Practically 19,000,000 trees were tapped in 1909. The State of Vermont led all other Commonwealths in 1909 by producing 52 per cent. of the total syrup output, although her production of the sugar has decreased one-quarter in the last fifty years. That the Green Mountain State is holding her own fairly well, however, is shown by the fact that in the years 1913, 1914 and 1915 she tapped annually 5,000,000 trees, with 4,700,000 available, but not tapped. In each of the years mentioned the sugar amounted to more than 7,000,000 pounds and the production of syrup was 500,000 gallons, or the equivalent of 4,000,000 pounds.

Although Americans talk much of maple sugar they eat less than half a pound a year apiece, as compared with the eighty-six pounds of cane sugar, which represents their per capita consumption. The average value of the sugars and syrups produced on the farms is only about $60 annually. This does not take into account the groves managed on an extensive commercial scale.

With the beginning of the European war the price of maple sugar was not much more than that of the cane product, for it could be bought at 8 cents a pound wholesale. The following year it was selling at 15 cents, while the stock still left on the market is bringing 18 cents at wholesale, or from 25 to 30 cents at retail.

Even with cane sugar held down by Government regulation to a retail price of 11 cents, there are many inducements which should cause those who own sugar groves to bestir themselves for this season. Maple sugar on account of its delicious flavor, when properly prepared, is considered a luxury. It has a pervasive taste which is easily imparted to other sugars with which it was formerly blended without notice before the pure food law required a frank declaration of the admixture. It will always be highly prized by those who are fond of griddle cakes, or crave choice confections made from this prince of the sugars.

There are some uncertainties connected with the gathering of a maple sugar crop, but the prevailing prices are so high that risks are well worth taking. The tapping of the maple trees—that is, of the common black sugar maple, which is the best for sugar, and of the red and silver varieties—begins late in February in the southern reaches and early in March in the north. The time for the actual running of the sap varies. Whenever there is a good thaw about this season to break up the thrill of winter there is activity about the sugar groves.

A hole is bored in the trunk with a three-eighths or half inch auger, a wooden spigot or spile is inserted, to which is attached a covered bucket, and the tree does the rest. The sap flows freely if the conditions are favorable, and after that the process in the big sugar camps is simple.

The contents of the buckets are poured into square tanks, which are drawn about the groves either on wheels or sledges. The sap is run into long, shallow pans to undergo evaporation with the aid of a little fire, and then comes the final boiling for reduction to a syrup or the sugaring off, which will produce dark crystalline cakes.

### Why It Is Brown.

The brown tinge of maple sugar is partly due to impurities such as may come from pieces of bark, but the color which is so characteristic is in reality mainly from the caramel developed in the kettles. The scorching of even a small amount of the contents of an open kettle produces the burnt sugar hue such as we see in the raw or brown sugars of trade.

Efforts have been made from time to time to produce a perfectly white crystal from the maple, such as is derived by elaborate vacuum pan refining processes from the cane, but they were halted largely on account of the low price at which it was possible to put the tropical product on the market. The introduction of the beet as a source of sugar in France and in Germany had something to do with the death of the infant maple sugar industry on the other side of the Atlantic, and the competition of the sugar beet has also had its effect in the United States. The cane and the beet practically supply the sugar of the world between them, and sugars from other sources are so small in volume that they are scarcely considered by the trade.

What the maple sugar industry might have become on the North American continent but for the coming of the cane by the way of China and India through Spain is an interesting subject of speculation for the economist. No one in this age and generation considers it commonplace, however, to eat the sugar or the syrup of the maple, and it may be that there will be an awakening of the sluggish currents of what might have been an enormous American industry.

# New Steam Trawlers to Help Conserve Our Food

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MISS JANET SMITH, DAUGHTER of the U.S. FISHERIES COMMISSIONER, and the CHRISTENING PARTY for the "KINGFISHER"

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THE "KINGFISHER" FIRST of the AMERICAN WAR FISHING FLEET.

WHEN the fishing steamship Kingfisher of the East Coast Fisheries Company slipped from the ways into the water at Portland, Me., the other day it signalized a new and important war enterprise. The Kingfisher is the first of a fleet of steam trawlers which will constitute an effective reply to Mr. Hoover's appeal for a greater production of food.

Upon Mr. Hoover's calling the attention of the people of this country to the absolute necessity of conserving the food supply, so that our troops and the Allies could be fed, three men, headed by I. M. Taylor, now a New York banker, but born and raised in New England, resolved to do their bit by heeding the admonition to produce quickly greater stores of food. Mr. Taylor was somewhat familiar with the fishing industry, and he at once organized the East Coast Fisheries Company on a modest scale, with two trawlers, in order to add to the nation's food supply.

The activities of the company came to the attention of Government officials and a conference was arranged. The result of this conference was the expansion of the East Coast Fisheries Company into a $10,000,000 concern and the letting of a contract for the construction of twelve steam trawlers, the combined catch of which will contribute to the nation upward of three million pounds of fresh cod and haddock per week.

Through the efforts of Mr. Hoover and Dr. Hugh M. Smith, United States Commissioner of Fisheries, the company was enabled to secure labor and materials for its ships through priority orders. In fact, the Government turned over steel and other material to the company so that the fishing fleet could be quickly completed and started on its way to help relieve the food situation both here and abroad.

The Kingfisher was the first of the fleet to be completed, and the launching was a notable affair. The spectators included the Governor of Maine, Dr. Smith and many prominent officials of the State. Little Miss Janet Elizabeth Smith, daughter of the United States Commissioner of Fisheries, christened the big trawler as it slid into the water, a feat which was made possible by the breaking of the ice in the river.

America's supply of fish is believed to be ample to feed the world if there existed the proper equipment to bring it in from the banks. At the present time our fishing fleet is hardly worthy of that name when one considers the great demand for fish to take the place of beef and other foodstuffs which must be conserved for our troops and our allies. And as the demand for beef for our ever increasing army in France and at home grows, so will the demand for fish become greater.

America's consumption of fish, which had averaged but 20 pounds per capita per annum before the war as compared with England's 100 pounds, Holland's 130 and 190 pounds in Italy and Belgium, has increased 100 per cent. because of the Government's appeal to the people to conserve meat. The exportation of fish to England and other allied countries is also growing rapidly, owing to the destruction of hundreds of England's trawlers.

This condition of affairs has caused an almost unprecedented condition of prosperity in the fish industry, and the Government officials are encouraging not only the consumption of fish but the entrance of more business men into the industry. An idea of the enormous increase in the industry may be had from the orders for cod and haddock received by one concern. One order picked from several others arriving at the same time called for several thousand tons of cod, aggregating nearly $700,000.

The fishing industry of America is believed to be entering a new era. In a recent speech Secretary Redfield said:

"Fisheries are the last great undeveloped resource of the country. What the beef industry has become to the country so will American fisheries develop into the vast commercial sphere for which it was predestined, and millions of American dollars will pour into the pockets of the people who early turn their attention to this oldest of industries."

# Sheepshead Club Boon to Motorists

## Men and Women Prominent in Sport Have Become Members and Will Participate in Races

THE Sheepshead Speedway Motor Club, Inc., promises to become a permanent institution and judging from present indications, may develop into the largest sporting club in America. Although incorporation papers were approved only a week ago, more than 100 members are already in the fold, with prospects that the first quota of 1,000 members will be filled before April 15.

The names of many men and women prominent in sport and in the professions are included in the list of those holding membership in the new sport club de luxe. There are a number of incentives for joining, chief among them being free use of the Speedway track, free tickets for the big automobile races to be held May 30, Aug. 17 and Sept. 21, and access to the palatial clubhouse, and the trap shooting ranges, tennis courts and golf course.

Amateur speed drivers will get their first opportunity to test their nerve and ability on a racing track in the series of matinee races planned for the coming season. Prizes will be offered for competition and a final championship event, to introduce the Motor Club champion to the public will be held on Sept. 21, the date of the running of the Harkness cup race, which will determine the world's professional champion driver.

A new clubhouse is being constructed on the infield of the two mile inclosure, and the shooting ranges, tennis courts and golf course will be ready for the members about May 1. The track is in good racing shape and will be at the disposal of the members after April 1.

Speed enthusiasts from New York, Brooklyn and Jersey are among the first members to join, and a majority of these have announced their intention of competing in the matinee races. Rivalry among the members promises to be as keen as that among the professional pilots, and it is likely that a number of real speed demons will be developed during the coming season.

Motor car dealers are heartily in accord with the project, for the Speedway affords them the chance to show prospective car purchasers the speed possibilities of the car they are selling. A number of dealers are among the first members of the Speedway Motor Club, as they realize the trade value of belonging to the organization.

Members will be permitted to drive their cars on the Speedway at any time, except on race days and when the professional pilots are at practice. There is no speed limit at the Bay track, and the throttle may be thrown wide open, with no fear of breaking any city ordnances.

Dr. George H. Muth, chairman of the membership committee, reports a heavy membership list, and applications may be had from him at the club's New York headquarters, 114 East Twenty-eighth street, or at the Speedway.

William H. Wellman, who promoted the two big race meets there last year is president of the Sheepshead Speedway Motor Club and is at present negotiating with the world's greatest drivers to compete in the three banner events the coming season.

# GETTING READY FOR BIG DRIVEAWAYS

## Poertner Tells of Plans After Returning From a Trip West.

That the value of the motor car is being more and more emphasized each day and that because of its value as a vehicle of transportation there will be a shortage of cars are some of the interesting facts gathered by William C. Poertner, president of the Poertner Motor Car Company, Inc., distributers of National cars in the metropolitan territory, who has just returned from a six weeks trip spent on the Pacific coast.

"Owing to the poor railroad transportation facilities in the West and the middle West, especially on passenger trains, the motor car has been a boon to the people there," says Mr. Poertner. "Motor cars and trucks are being used throughout California and Arizona to carry water and feed to the cattle that were rapidly starving. The cars throughout Arizona and New Mexico are equipped with extra water tanks, and it seems as if every one possesses a car. Cowboys on the ranches have forsaken the broncho for the 'gasgo,' as they call the machines, and the way some of them drive the cars would make De Palma and Oldfield green with envy.

"The motor car has certainly been a great help to the railroads, in so far as relieving freight is concerned. For example, at least 540,000 cars will be delivered to distributers and dealers throughout the United States under their own power this year, an average of approximately 3,000 daily in the six months of spring and summer.

"The automobile driveaway is the logical method of delivering cars this year. The motor car makers cannot depend upon the railroads, especially those lines running east to the Atlantic seaboard. Their first duty is to move the food supplies and military materials, and to do this efficiently they must use all the rolling stock on which automobiles were shipped in previous years.

"Automobiles nevertheless are an essential factor in American business, an indispensable ally of the production that will help win the war, and for that reason they must reach their millions of users. If the railroads cannot transport motor cars a substitute means of delivery must be employed. The one and only substitute is the driveaway.

"We are already planning to send out daily caravans of Nationals from the factory as soon as the highways dry up after spring rains. The cars will be covered with a wax preparation as a protection against travel stains. Distributers and dealers have been cautioned to select expert drivers to handle the machines and we hope to make a reciprocal arrangement with an Eastern automobile company whereby the same crew of chauffeurs will make deliveries on both the Eastern and Western trips, thus economizing on railroad fare. The driveaways will be systematically conducted to save time and expense, the routes being carefully charted, for example, and special hotel rates secured if possible.

"With an expert driver in charge of a car the automobile should reach the owner's garage in better condition than had it been shipped by freight. All new cars are stiff when they leave the factory, but on the road will receive the initial workout that should make them more efficient when the owner gets behind the steering wheel for the first time."

# UTILITY GAUGE OF MOTOR CAR'S VALUE

## Automobile's Wide Use Only Possible Because Profitable, Says Liberty Man.

By JOSEPH E. FIELDS, Director of Sales, Liberty Motor Car Company.

When an industry has grown to the proportions of that of the manufacture of automobiles it should become apparent even to those least familiar with its progress that it is founded on something more substantial than the mere gratification of pleasure.

It is generally accepted that the term "pleasure" car is a misnomer. And, strangely enough, that term was applied to it when the automobile was furthest from being a "pleasure" vehicle. Neither had its utility at that time been demonstrated, so it is presumed that the name "pleasure" car was given it because no one thought of owning one unless he had money to burn, ample time to spend in getting the thing started and in keeping it going, and who only sought to provide himself with an aim in life and occupation for his spare time.

If he had plenty of time to play then he could afford an automobile. Hence the term "pleasure" car.

The development of the industry rapidly outdistanced that small demand which came only from those who only bought automobiles for the pleasure they afforded. To-day they represent such a feeble minority of motor car buyers as to be almost negligible.

During its first popularity as a novelty certain people began to sense the possibilities of the motor car. A few far sighted manufacturers gradually acquired a realization of its usefulness. The appeal to them was so strong that their belief in the future of the automobile prompted them to invest real money in its improvement and manufacture.

Its rapid betterment brought about an even greater increase in the market for the motor car. Greater reliability resulted in the purchase of motor cars by those who could not have considered using them for pleasure alone. Less and less was the demand from pleasure seekers and more and more cars were bought for their practical utility and because their use was profitable.

The capacity of the industry as it was ten years ago would still be ample for supplying the needs of those who want "pleasure" cars, while the industry as it is will be kept busily engaged for years in meeting the requirements of those who want cars for their practical value.

### Situation in Detroit.

The actual necessity for the automobile could hardly be better illustrated than by the transportation situation in Detroit, where its manufacture is centered. The street railway systems are utterly unable to care for all those who have reason to go from one part of the city to another. Were it not for automobiles and their use in transporting countless thousands of passengers each month, the effect upon the industrial life of the city would be indescribable. Certainly there could have been no such growth and prosperity as the city has seen in the past five years.

A return to the conditions of fifteen years ago would be sufficient to speedily convince anyone of the plain worth of the motor car and its time saving, money making, commerce stimulating value. Most owners regard the automobile as an adjunct to their daily business life without giving more than a passing thought to the tremendous advantage it gives them over conditions as they used to be.

So naturally we have the greatest faith in the future of the automobile. We believe that it was created and developed in answer to a definite need. We do not believe this need will become less evident as time goes on.

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"It has been said time and again that 75 per cent. of the automobiles in service to-day are used almost entirely for business purposes, but I want to add to that," says Manager George H. Stone of the Mitchell Motor Company, "I give it as my opinion that within six months over 90 per cent. of the motor cars will be used for strictly business purposes or for purposes that are necessary to an ultimate victory in the war.

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