

When the Sweet Sap Drips.

Once more they're making ready for the drip, drip, drip

Of the sugary sap that trickles from the bare limbed maple trees; Ere long the farmer boys'll turn the buckets up and sip

The nectar Nature gives to them she wishes most to please.

I can see the wood smoke curling,
I can hear the brook that's purling
Past the sugar house that's standing on the little grassy knoll;

In my fancy I can hear
The first robin singing near,
And an old, delightful longing takes possession of my soul.

Ah, those were happy mornings when the old mare dragged the sled,
With the barrel standing on it, where the leaves lay thick and wet.

When the clear drops fell from branches lightly swaying overhead
And I whistled out so loudly that the tunes may echo yet!

How I slopped the sap around
On myself and on the ground,
How the barrel used to teeter as the old sled bumped along!

Oh, I wonder where the mare is,
And I wonder if out there is
Still some boy who gathers sap and makes the woods ring with his song!

My brother, do you ever in your fancy seem to see

The wet snow on the bushes where we crossed the little stream?

Do you ever hear the simmer of the sweets that seemed to be
So glad to tender freedom to the vagrant clouds of steam?

And the sirup dripped in snow
That was spotless long ago,
Can you fancy that you taste it as it tasted to you then?

Oh, to see the embers brightly
Glowing where we watched them nightly,
And to hear you playing on your old accordion again!

Once more they hear the music of the drip, drip, drip,

Where the pails, propped up on billets, lean against the maple trunks;
There are marks that wooden runners leave behind them as they slip

Where the woodland ways are soggy and the moss comes loose in chunks.

Ah, the soft west winds are blowing,
And the sap is flowing, flowing,

Where the farmer's boy goes spilling sweet elixir here and there:

The smoke is drifting blue,
And the brooks are singing through

The woods where once I whistled, full of visions that were fair.

—S. E. Kiser in Chicago Record-Herald.

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