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**George Sibley Saturday Evening Post Article on Sugar Culture,
November 15, 1856**

George Champlin Sibley

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SUGAR CULTURE.—It appears that during the past season, experiments with sugar-cane have been made in other parts of the country beside those we recently mentioned. Major Sibley, of St. Charles, Mo., and Mr. Geyer, of St. Louis, experimented with the seed of the Japanese and Chinese sugar-cane, and they exhibited at the recent St. Louis Fair specimens of the cane and seed, together with samples of the syrup obtained by processes of their own. Major Sibley read a paper on the Chinese cane, before the Missouri Agricultural Association, in which he stated that it could be cultivated anywhere south of latitude forty-two degrees north. This is confirmed by experiments made with the same variety of cane at Newton Centre, in Massachusetts. Several other experiments have been made in New England, all of which have proved successful, and have satisfied parties there that this sugar-cane may be cultivated in that latitude as easily and successfully as corn. In Georgia, Mr. Peters, of Calhoun, experimented with it, and made over three hundred gallons of syrup. He gives as the result, that four hundred gallons of syrup may be made from the produce of an acre of the cane. The St. Louis Republican, in speaking of this subject, says:—

“Taking the three latitudes of Massachusetts, middle Missouri, and Georgia, it would seem that the climate and soil of every portion of the United States, are adapted to the culture of this import-staple, and may yet be reported, with wheat and corn, as the staples of States heretofore regarded as physically incapacitated for the growing of sugar.

“The high rates at which sugar has rated for some time past, and the poor prospect of an abatement for many months, if not years to come, indicate to agriculturists, that here is an inviting opportunity to enter largely into the culture of an article which yields liberally to the hand of the farmer or planter, and promises him a generous remuneration, while some hope might be indulged by consumers, of relief from the ruinous prices we now pay for our sugars. The introduction of new machinery dispenses with the necessity of retaining a large force for growing the cane and manufacturing the sugar, and places those who have not from one hundred to a thousand negroes, on an equal footing with those who have, with less expense to encounter.

“If the large wheat and corn growing States should undertake to cultivate sugar, and the North and South both be the source of supply, the probability of a general failure of the crop and consequent rise in prices till the affluent and poor together complain, would be so diminished as to be of comparatively slight weight in price current calculations.

“As it is now, a drought or freshet, or frost, over but a small portion of the southern country, spreads a panic throughout the United States market, and a loss of but a quarter of a crop advances prices, till housewives economise in preserves, and the poor drink unsweetened coffee.

“No general failure of the wheat crop is ever likely to occur, because of its general diffusion throughout all latitudes, and the probability that if in one State, the drought, or rust, or fly destroys the harvest, it will escape these elsewhere, and the general average be not greatly changed. The same might be expected of sugar, if grown in every State, and all expensive fluctuations be escaped.

“This matter is worthy the attention of agriculturists, who may become producers of this indispensable family article, and one of no inconsiderable cost even to small families, for themselves and for the sugar markets of the country. Scores engage every year in the maple districts, in the manufacture of sugar, as a matter of profit. Let them, and hundreds of others make the experiment with the Japan and Chinese Sugar Cane.”