

Cleanness of Wood.—No propolis or scraps of wax should be found anywhere on the wood, either inside or out.

Colour of Capping.—White is preferred.

Thinness of Capping.—To judge this point, break cappings with point of pen-knife.

Colour of Honey.—Judge by removing a little from section and laying it on white paper.

Flavour.—Clover is standard.



Fig. 28. Bee demonstration at North Vancouver.

CHAPTER XVI.

Melting Wax.

In an eight-frame hive the combs contain about 2 lb. of pure wax, but after several years' use they may weigh as much as four times the original weight. The increase is due to dirt in various forms. The cappings that are removed during extracting are almost pure wax, there being usually about 1 lb. of wax to every 50 lb. of honey. Pure wax is always a marketable commodity in a fruit district and in every drug-store. In Victoria the latter pay 45 cents a pound for it. We therefore see that every scrap of comb is worth saving, so that it may be rendered at the end of the season. After making dozens of experiments, the writer believes that for the small apiarist the oven method is the best, and although it produces a little less than half of the available wax in old comb, it is as effective as any other process short of a regular wax-press. To pay the cost of the latter, one would have to work over about 100 lb. of old comb.

Take a bread-pan or similar dish and in one end at the bottom punch a hole a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide, any length. Fill it with comb and set it on the upper shelf of the oven, with a small stone under the unpunched end to tilt it up. On the lower shelf, so as to catch the drip, place another dish containing water. When the oven gets hot enough the wax will run from the old comb into the pan below. To make a nice cake of the wax, melt all the bits in a dish of water, then set aside to cool. A vessel with sloping sides like a lard-pail is good.