

METHODS OF UNITING

By F. Dundas Todd

During the swarming season the man who wanders among bee-keepers as I did last last summer has many funny experiences. For instance, his first question, just to break the ice, is apt to be "Well, how are the bees getting along?" and not infrequently the answer is, "Fine! I have had lots of swarms, and so expect to get lots of honey." Or, he may come across one who has had experience enough to catch a glimmering of the truth, and he will reply, "Lots of swarming, a perfect nuisance; just tell me a simple easy way of stopping it." Here and there we meet the expert, the man who gets a crop almost every season, and he is the tit-bit of the day for the inspector, for he will proceed to explain clearly every step in his bee-keeping methods. Let me try to tell a few of the tales told to me.

Bee-keeper number one is in the irri-

gated region, and keeps bees, first to ensure the pollination of his alfalfa fields, as a very important part of his income is derived from the sale of alfalfa seed. His land is naturally of little value for cereal crops, but after a good crop of alfalfa has been ploughed under it does well. So for these two reasons he keeps about a dozen acres under this plan all the time. He is far from "the madding crowd," but being a man of mental activity, he wants a little brain zest, and this he finds in apiculture. Bees are recreation to him, so when he wearies of the steady routine of the ranch, he breaks the monotony by working among the bees. He has on hand most of the modern books on bee culture, subscribes to the bee journals, and enjoys his winter evenings in planning new methods of management. Lastly, it pays, for year by year, he gets a hundred pounds of honey from each acre of alfalfa, an interesting fact by the way, for it indicates fairly well how many colonies his district can support. His



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judgment is that the one colony per acre count. Each fall he just four hives more acreage, and in spring will be equal. For in 1910 he had 18 colonies of 1911 he had 15 colonies of alfalfa. The season pounds. In August 1 colonies on the stand.

Now this bee-keeper his work in a very serious having every detail in contrast with him I can who bought a colony in first of July 1911 she seven more; worse still with the vision of the years to come. "I get seven swarms from year, I will have the whole with bee-hives at five dollars not a cent's worth of loss cost."

Spending the evening