

BEE-KEEPING FOR WOMEN.

Indexed

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Bees have always been connected with the race. For untold generations, they were practically the only source for a supply of sweets and when Moses wished to describe the richness of the promised land, he spoke of it as a land "flowing with milk and honey." Yet it is only within the last 50 years that bee-keeping has been reduced to a scientific basis. I have an old uncle who was one of the pioneer bee-keepers of the country and he tells me it is hardly possible for the people of to-day to realize how little was known of bees 50 years ago. Many people kept them, but the operations within the hives were shrouded in mystery and the methods of securing honey were exceedingly crude and barbarous. All this has changed and knowledge of the habits and instincts of bees has made it possible for honey to be placed on the market in a palatable and economical form.

To remark on the great industrial changes of the last century has become almost trite, yet so powerfully have the changes affected our sex, that women have not yet adjusted themselves. All through the development of the race the home was the centre of industry and the women were proficient in many crafts. The advent of the steam engine changed all this and women have gone out from the home into the store, the factory and the office. But these changes did not affect the women in the country as much as their city sisters. On the farm there were yet many activities left for women, and it was an independent life as well. On almost every farm there were two sources of income which belonged almost unquestionably to the house or the women—these were the cows and the poultry. The income from these might not be large but at any rate it met much of the running expense, besides providing many an extra for the daugh-

ters. But the coming of the cheese factory, and later, the creamery placed the dairy industry on a different footing, butter making passing from the home to the factory. On some farms the tradition that the butter money belongs to the women still lingers but more often than not the monthly cheque is swallowed up in the general expenses. The poultry, however, were still left for the women, but the prevailing high prices of the last few years are drawing the men's attention and it seems likely that they will soon appropriate this last stronghold of women's independence on the farm. Only a few days ago I heard a young farmer remark with much interest and some pride that their turkeys brought them in over \$80. I knew that his taxes amounted to just about half that much and I have no doubt that much of the turkey money went to meet the bill. Now, how are our country women going to meet these changed conditions? Will the girls as they grow up have to leave the farm for shop and store and office in order to maintain some economic independence. Or is there still a chance for them on the farm? Undoubtedly there is; the old order has changed but the new is vastly fuller of opportunity than the old. It is true that more efficiency, more practical training are necessary to meet the situation, but the results to be gained are such as were altogether impossible 20 years ago.

And it is not only our independence which is at stake. Our usefulness in the community depends largely on our ability to do things, and more than this our common place, daily happiness depends upon it. Inefficiency, helplessness and incompetence are the sure seeds of dissatisfaction, discontent and despair. It's a big busy world and we must play our part in it wisely and well; new conditions have been forced upon us and we must face them bravely and squarely, determined that the women of to-day shall in no wise be put to shame by the women of the past.