

forests yield abundantly of the choicest nectar Nature produces anywhere. I have always thought that bee-culture was a proper and legitimate part of agriculture, and, consistently with that opinion, I have always kept bees on the farm, and am therefore very well acquainted with the little insects through an experience of a quarter of a century. My stock of bees from year to year has ranged from ten to one hundred and fifty colonies, and my crop of honey from one hundred to ten thousand pounds. The bees, I regard as a part of the live stock, and bee-culture a proper part of farm work, and I may say, with me, the most profitable part. I do not mean by this to advise every other farmer to go largely into bee-culture. While the great majority of them might keep a few colonies to advantage to supply their tables with the most wholesome and palatable sweet, only the comparatively few can handle the bee successfully and profitably. Indeed, amongst the small bee keepers of "old box hive" fashion, it seems to be just the other way, the bees handle the man instead of the man the bees. They do about as they like and more than the manipulator likes sometimes. Although the bee is a highly interesting and industrious creature, and fairly peaceable, yet, it always means business, and has a bumptious "business end," always ready to present to interlopers on very short notice. But the honey bee performs an invaluable service in the economy of nature, besides gathering honey for us. For this, if for no other reason, every square league of settled land in Canada ought to embrace within its area at least a few colonies of bees, else the clover seed and fruit crops must fall far behind what they might be. I need scarcely say to you that the bee carries the fertilizing and fructifying pollen from flower to flower in our orchards, gardens and clover fields, thus securing a fruition of fruit in the one and an abundance of seed in the other. This most important function and service of the honey bee is not duly appreciated. Between apiculture, and horticulture especially, there is a close and indispensable connection; and the apiculturist, horticulturist and agriculturist, ought to work hand in hand as being mutually useful to and dependent on each other. Horticulture, our nearest industrial kin, is, I believe, well represented here to-day, and I am pleased to say that the misunderstandings and differences which have sometimes arisen between us as to the alleged injury done to grapes and other ripe fruits by the bees are fast passing away. It has been satisfactorily proved, and is now very generally understood by the fruit growers, that bees do not puncture

or injure fruit, whether mature or immature. The bee will, it is true, sip the oozing sweets from a broken grape, peach or pear, but *never* punctures or injures, in any way, sound fruit; while the benefit the bee brings to the fruit-grower in fertilizing his blooming trees and vines, he would be better able to estimate were the service withdrawn. Indeed, he has found it necessary when growing exclusively under glass where the bees were shut out to introduce them or fail with his crop. Thus it is that the bee keepers and fruit growers are mutually beneficial to each other, and ought, therefore, to understand and appreciate each other better than they do. There is also, unfortunately, here and there, a prejudice in the mind of the farmer against the bee, which is equally unfounded, and ought to be removed. Instead of realizing the great service it renders him, apart from the honey it gathers, he charges that that field of buckwheat of his will not yield as much grain after the bees have "sucked the flowers," as he calls it. But he is greatly mistaken. He has more grain instead of less. Let him get to the leeward side of his buckwheat patch on any fine morning when it is in bloom and his sense of smell ought to convince him without any scientific argument that the nectar of his blooming buckwheat or clover is rapidly escaping into the air by evaporation. Instead of "wasting its sweetness" thus, why not let the busy bee take it up for our pleasure and profit, and fertilize the flowers at the same time. For twenty years past I have been in the habit of sowing buckwheat every season, at several different times, partly for the bees and partly for a crop, and I almost always have a crop of grain as well as honey from each sowing. The notion is general that in order to get a crop of buckwheat the seeding must be done about the end of June or first of July. I sow my first lot about the end of May, the second some three weeks later, and so on till August, each sowing usually producing a fair crop of grain, and some a super-abundant crop. The last sowing is, of course, sometimes caught in bloom by the fall frost, but in that case it can be immediately plowed under for manure, and nothing is lost. I am well aware that in parts of Ontario buckwheat is in bad repute among the farmers, and almost unknown. Nevertheless, it is, all the same, a good and profitable crop. Three years ago, when that terrible drought in the East scorched up other kinds of grain many farmers in Prince Edward and other counties "saved their bacon," not this time for buckwheat, but *with* buckwheat. In desperation they plowed up their scorched fields of