

BEEKEEPING IN MANITOBA

TO be a successful beekeeper one must have a fair understanding of the domestic life within the hive and must understand how bees are reared, how the comb is built, honey stored, etc. A knowledge of these things enables the beekeeper to understand what operations may be performed without disturbing the domestic economy of the colony. Nature has endowed the bees with certain definite instincts. Man cannot change these instincts, but he can work in accord with them, and the bees thus aided by their master's intelligence can accomplish far more than they could without it.

HONEY AS A FOOD

Honey is a wholesome food and one that is not without medicinal value. Dr. C. C. Miller says: "It is only within the last generation that refined sugars have become so low in price that they may be commonly used. Formerly honey was the principal sweet and it would be greatly to the health of the present generation if honey could be restored, partially at least, to its former place."

We all know that children long for candy. This longing voices a need and is an evidence of the necessity of sugar in our diet. There can be no doubt but that in eating honey our digestive machinery is saved work; because cane sugar must first be changed to sugar similar to honey before it can be used by the body.

The importance of bees in fertilizing the blossoms of fruit trees and other plants (such as clovers, alfalfa, cucumbers, strawberries, etc.) should not be lost sight of.

MODERN METHODS

Most of the unpleasant features of beekeeping have been eliminated by the perfection of methods of handling bees. Still more has been done by perfecting the bees themselves. If one secures a gentle strain of Italians he can, with only a few hives, go practically a whole season without a sting; and there is not a particle of danger if he wears a good bee veil. With a good smoker to quiet the bees and with proper protection it is "Just fun to handle bees."

BEEES ON THE AVERAGE MANITOBA FARM

The West is essentially a land of hustle. "Wheat, Wheat, Wheat," has been our watchword. However, this is changing, as it has done in every other country under the sun. People are going in for mixed farming or the keeping of cattle, sheep, hogs, etc. This does not mean that we will grow less wheat but that while wheat will have its place on the farm, so will cattle, sheep, hogs, etc. Why not bees?

Two questions arise. Does a farmer have time to look after a few colonies of bees? Will it pay to keep bees on the average farm in the West?