

want to be informed, say a man should not keep bees unless he cares to keep fifteen or twenty colonies. But better not have any one run up to more than fifty or seventy-five. With less than fifteen colonies a man will not give enough attention to them to care for more literature on the subject than he will get from the general apicultural paper. If the apiaries of one hundred to a thousand each are cut up into apiaries of fifty each, and the scattered colonies, one to half a dozen in a place, are bunched together in apiaries of twenty each, our subscription list would be at once trebled."

But are publishers of bee-journals the ones to be chiefly consulted? As compared with the bee-keepers, publishers are the few and bee-keepers the many. Let us ask a bee-keeper. He replies, "When I had only five colonies my honey cost me twice as much per pound as it does now with two hundred colonies. I now devote my entire time to the business, study our best plans and appliances, and am constantly aiming to secure results at less expense. Of course, the less it costs me the lower price I can sell at. Let apiaries at proper distances be established all over the land, each apiary containing 100 or more colonies, and more honey will be obtained, and at a lower price, than to have the business all cut up as it is now. You see this thing of having a farmer here and there with half a dozen colonies, putting his honey on the market at any price he can get, just knocks the market all to pieces for those who make a business of honey-raising, and its no wonder that many leave the business in disgust. By all means increase the size and lessen the number of the apiaries."

If we are to seek the greatest good to the greatest number, the bee-keeper's word should be taken before that of the publisher. But what about the consumer? And what about bees as fertilizers? For we bee-keepers are all the time saying that the chief mission of the bee is to fertilize the blossoms, honey coming in as a by-product. Every farm should have bees enough visit it to do all the fertilizing needed, whether the homes of those bees be on the farm or a mile away. So when we come to largest classes, the farmers whose flowers are to be fertilized and the general public whose tables are to be supplied with the pure and healthful sweet, the question takes this shape: What is the best way to get bees evenly distributed all over the land, and to have an abundant supply of honey at so low a price that it may be an article of daily

consumption on the tables of the great middle class, and that it may even be many times enjoyed by the very poor?

I confess, I don't know the right answer to that question: The problem is complicated. Prof. Cook is a fair man, and he is in a position to look at the matter with a more impartial view than either publishers or bee-keepers. To be sure, he is an enthusiastic bee-keeper, but before that he is a teacher, especially of the future farmers, and as such has their interests deeply at heart. But how would his plan work? How *did* it work? What stopped the farmers from keeping bees on a small scale on many farms? Was there anything except that they found it unprofitable? And is there anything more to induce them to go into bee-keeping now than there was when they dropped it? If all the apiaries of 100 or more were wiped out of existence, would it make any more bees kept on a small scale by farmers? Confessedly, farmers in general don't keep bees as formerly, else why should Prof. Cook advocate a return to the former way. And is there anything to hinder every farmer now from keeping bees, even if large apiaries are planted all around him?

On many accounts it seems that it would be a good thing to have bees on every farm, but if farmers will not look after the nectar that is yearly secreted, then it may be a good thing to encourage some one person in every few square miles to do so, leaving the matter largely in the hands of the specialist.

A question, however, remains back of that. Is it not possible to have the rising generation so educated that every farmer will want to keep bees, both as a matter of pleasure and of profit? That is a question more easily asked than answered. In some countries the government takes the matter in hand, giving encouragement to bee-keeping, and only lately I read of one country, I think it was Finland, where at one time a farmer was punished if he did not keep bees. Proper instruction and encouragement at all the agricultural colleges might have something to do with it. If there was a Prof. Cook in every agricultural college, very likely there would be a large increase in bee-keepers among farmers.

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I find your Journal very interesting as well as instructive, and I enjoy reading it.

JOHN HUNTER, Riceville, Ont.

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