

lot of time and trouble, as the droppings may be easily and quickly scraped out of it. The roosts, which are of strong planed material so there are no cracks for vermin to find shelter in, are in the east end, hung by wires from the ceiling and reaching to within an inch or so of each wall. The dropping board is of inch lumber about 3 feet from the floor, and projecting out far enough to catch all the droppings from the roosts, and having a raised edge to prevent hens from scratching the droppings off. The nests are made of planed lumber in the form of a long box fastened to the north and south walls, the walls forming the back of the box. The top is hinged so that it may easily be raised in getting eggs out. There are holes cut, one for two nests, in the top and front sides (half out of each) of the box to admit the hens. We find these good nests to prevent egg eating, and they are easily cleaned and disinfected. The loft overhead makes a fine place for storing corn stalks or such material, and it was for this purpose the house was built higher than necessary. The house is painted inside down-stairs and outside all over. The inside painting filled up cracks and crevices, and so any application for vermin is applied more easily and is more effective. The floor is of earth, level with the top of foundation. There is a covered grain bin in one corner, also a drinking fountain and feed hopper of three compartments, which in winter is kept filled with bran, shell and meat scraps; another hopper is filled with oat chop. A supply of gravel and a dust bath were also kept for the fowl during winter. A litter of straw was kept on the floor in which to feed the hens. We have had no trouble whatever with the house as yet, and the hens look and seem to feel healthier and are more active and productive than before being housed in this building. A good hen-house is certainly a profitable investment.

Northumberland Co., Ont.

H. E. C.

THE APIARY.

Farm Beekeeping and Notes on the Apiary.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Beekeeping is practiced both in the cities and in the country. That it is suitable for a city occupation has been widely debated, but there can be no question that the country offers suitable surroundings for the bees. There is, however, much to be said on whether the farmer should keep bees or not.

At the present time the greater number of bees in Ontario are kept by farmers. The apiaries vary in size from five to possibly fifty hives. With some, who understand something about the peculiar habits of the honey bee a fair revenue is obtained; but with many—the greater number of farmer beekeepers—the beekeeping industry and the farms would be better off if this side-line were dropped.

The equipment and stock required to commence beekeeping are small and inexpensive compared with the other branches of farming. Five hives, bees, supers, smoker, foundation, veil and hive tool will barely cost more than fifty dollars. Given average attention these five colonies would have increased to eight, and given about 275 lbs. of honey this past season. (The average yield of white honey in Ontario last season was 55 pounds per colony.) This gives a return in one season of practically the whole investment. Lured by the immense returns, many farmers invest small amounts in bees and oftentimes count their chickens before they are hatched.

As a side-line, when given proper attention, beekeeping will compare favorably with any other line of farming, but they must have proper attention. If neglected the profits soon turn to losses, the equipment deteriorates and the bees dwindle away, and finally either swarm out, are destroyed by the wax moths, succumb to disease, or do not survive the winter. Such farmer beekeepers who neglect the bees are not only keeping bees at a loss to themselves, but may also be a menace to their neighborhood. A neglected apiary may serve as a disease-spreading centre for many years. The strong colonies from a neighboring apiary start robbing the weaker ones from the neglected apiary, and they do not stop robbing when their work of destruction is completed there, but, excited by the easily-obtained stores they strive to overpower some of the colonies in the stronger yard, and thus cause heavy losses.

The neglected apiaries are frequently found in the neighborhood of a beekeeping specialist. His neighbors are anxious to secure some of the returns he is making from beekeeping, and they buy a few colonies and start in the business. At first they are very keen about their bees. They watch them carefully and often give them "mistaken kindness"; but the neighborhood is overstocked, the pasturage of nectar-producing flora is not sufficient for the increased number of bees, and hence the honey crop per colony is small. Disappointed by their returns their enthusiasm is lost, the bees, once so kindly tended, are neglected, and the list of undesirable beekeepers increased. Some farmers do not lose interest, but the pressure of other farm work limits the time given to the bees, and again the neglected apiary appears. All such beekeepers are a menace to the honey-producing industry. If bees are kept by a specialist—one with the necessary experience—more bees will be kept profitably within a given area than otherwise. The bees will pollinate the fruit blossoms and the

clovers, resulting in a heavier setting of fruit and an increased yield of seed. Quieter bees are usually kept by the specialist, because he pays attention to his stock. He selects his quieter queens and introduces blood of new, industrious strains. Diseases are kept in check, and the specialist cannot afford to neglect his bees.

For many reasons the farmer should seriously consider everything before starting to keep bees, and the losses he may cause if he neglects them. It is necessary to become acquainted with the natural laws governing bees, and although great improvements have been made in apiculture many more are coming into use, and unless we subscribe for and read a good live bee journal we will soon be left behind. In a word, use all available means of getting information—reading matter, local and provincial conventions and demonstrations, the O. A. C. Short Course, and by visiting or working for successful beekeepers.

For profitable beekeeping the best strains of Italian bees should be kept, because of their resistance to the bee moth, European foul brood, and because they start brood rearing earlier in the spring. (It is the early bees that store the surplus honey.) In most localities better results are probably obtained by wintering outdoors. The labor is reduced and the bees build up better in the spring. Bees wintered in the cellar have been found, when they are put out in the spring without protection, to suffer heavy loss from spring dwindling. The warm sun causes the bees to fly out when the air is so cold that they become chilled and they never return. The bee hive needs protection from the rays of the sun, and the cold storms and winds of early spring, as much as it does in the winter months when there is no brood to chill.

As soon as the weather will admit in spring, each colony should be examined so that their condition may be known. No. 1 may be queenless, No. 2 short of stores, No. 3 may be weak in numbers and need a frame of ripe brood or to be united with a strong colony. The uncapping of the old honey should be regulated so that it will be all used up in stimulating brood rearing before the honey flow is on.

A register of the apiary should be kept so that, at a mere glance, the age, race, strain, and quality of the queen can be ascertained also the character of her progeny, the amount of honey stored, and the increase obtained from that particular colony.

Everything needed in the apiary should be ready for use at the commencement of the season, and the wants of the bees should be supplied at the proper time.

Carleton Co., Ont.

W. F. GEDDES.

FARM BULLETIN.

Prose and Rhyme.

BY PETER MCARTHUR.

Driven out of the corn field by a shower but we got the last hills punched into the ground that was ready, just as the first big drops were beginning to splash down. Five days without rain made it possible to get all the higher part of the field plowed, disced, harrowed, marked and planted and even though it is late in the season we may have chicken feed. The best field of corn we have had since returning to the land was put in just as late as this one—between the eleventh and fifteenth of June and we are hopeful that we may have the same kind of luck this year. In any case we have nothing to reproach ourselves with this year for we got in the corn as soon as the land was fit to work. If the rain that is now in progress does not last too long we may be able to work the rest of the field and get it in during the next few days. It will not be too late for fodder anyway. Right here I might relieve my mind by moralizing about the trials of a farmer when the weather is wet and catchy, but what is the use? People who have no experience of it would not understand—and, anyway, I want to lift up my voice and grumble about something else this week.

A Ballad of Bugs.

My Dooley potatoes have bugs on their tops,
Hard ones and soft ones that eat day and night,
There is something the matter with all of my crops—
A bug or a worm or a pest or a blight.
My orchard of apples, in which I delight,
Is a codling moth heaven—my cherries have slugs—
O pity the farmer who worked with his might—
Chanting a ballad whose burden is bugs.

The tomato worm crawls, the grasshopper hops,
The aphid sucks juice, the rose chafer bites,
The curculio stings till the little plum drops
And the damage they do on the farm is a fright.
In vain we seek help from the fellows who write
Of "Production and Thrift"—intellectual mugs—
The farmer must hustle and keep up the fight—
Chanting a ballad whose burden is bugs.

The bug on the farm with his appetite stops,
When his "tummy" is filled he is ready for flight,
But the Big Bugs who work in the law-making shops
Are grabbing for all that is lying in sight.
They have tariffs and tricks like good old "vested right"
And the voter they lead by his long hairy legs.
They are the pests that I want to indict—
Chanting a ballad whose burden is bugs.

ENVOY.

Prince, our exploiters, with insolent spite,
Picture the farmers as mossbacks and thugs,
But you, if you knew them, would pity their plight,
Chanting a ballad whose burden is bugs.

Middlesex Notes.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

The fruit bloom has come and gone at last. It was later than usual, but abundant and the almost constant mild weather at the time allowed the bees to gather a plentiful supply of honey and incidentally fertilize the blossoms so that where bees are kept the yield of fruit should be large. But unfortunately bees are now kept mostly in large apiaries miles apart, so that especially if the weather be a little cold or wet some orchards are not visited by them at all. Of course there are other agencies for pollination but none so important as the bee, and experiments have proven that where the bee is excluded the yield of fruit is less and of poorer quality. Farmers should encourage beekeepers to put colonies in their orchards, especially those who produce clover seed, alsike in particular. Neither beekeeping nor fruit growing is practiced extensively in East Middlesex though we are probably well up or a little beyond the average for the province. There are a few up-to-date, but mostly these two industries are allowed the minimum of care. Dairying and hog raising are the chief industries and next to these come beef cattle and horse-breeding. Poultry products are common and a company has a large public cold-storage warehouse in St. Mary's, and keeps wagons and motor trucks on the road all summer collecting the eggs in crates from the country stores. Some farmers ship direct to the cities. Also some of the merchants. Since March the average hundred-acre farm has been producing about thirty dozen a week. The maximum is usually reached in May and keeps gradually falling till November when it ceases altogether. Country merchants just now are paying twenty-two cents a dozen cash and come to the door for them. About half the farms carry flocks of turkeys averaging maybe ten or a dozen in size, but the ravages of roup and black head have abated the enthusiasm somewhat. Farmers here are rather pessimistic over the weather. The rain comes about every third day and keeps the soil so wet that grain seeding was not at all done June 7, and practically no preparation made for corn or roots. Some early sown grain is up and growing nicely but some is turning yellow. Wheat and clover are excellent and the hay crop will likely be large. Cheese factory patrons are doing well as there is lots of milk, although this supply is not abnormally large. The test system of buying is not used at least in this neighborhood and Holsteins and their grades are mostly kept, as they give larger quantities but poorer in quality. We think the test system will be an improvement when it comes, as patrons will send richer milk and there will be less expense handling so much water from the milk; the cow is milked till it returns to the hog trough as whey. The whey is pasteurized and every man with hogs wants his full share returned and some of them bargain for the share of the one who has just sold his hogs. This season emphasizes the importance of drainage and a lot of tile is going in. Next winter there will be a big demand for tile. Both the clay and concrete kinds are used and each has its advocates. We hear of some concrete tile breaking down after ten years use but probably it depends on the per cent. of cement, but this is a quality not easily determined.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

J. H. BURNS.

Prospects for Banner Crop in Prince Edward Island.

EDITOR "THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE":

Seeding was about completed in Prince Edward Island on June 10th, with the exception of some turnips. The season has been exceptionally fine so that notwithstanding the scarcity of labor the spring work is done earlier than usual. The prospects for a big crop were seldom, if ever, better at this time of year. The clover came through the winter fairly well and the meadows and grass lands seldom looked better. Seeding was general on May 8th, which is a few days earlier than usual, and the weather was fine but somewhat cool, making it good for the teams. The driest lands are not suffering from lack of rainfall, and the low fields that are not usually seeded till about the middle of June and sometimes not seeded at all, were in good condition for seeding the last week in May. It is generally considered that there is a larger area seeded to grain this year than ever before in the history of the Province. On June 11th a warm rain fell the greater part of the day. It was not heavy at any time and practically all soaked into the ground. The fruit trees are now, June 12th, in bloom. It is too early to make a forecast of the crop, but the bloom is abundant and the weather warm, but cloudy and threatening more rain. Spraying has not been as general as usual, on account of the scarcity of labor.

The cheese factories are opening for the season, and the high price of cheese and the prospects of plenty of pasture are likely to make a good year in this business.

Horses are the only "drug on the market" agriculturally in this Province. A great many are being offered for sale, but no one is buying. A very big crop will however provide more work for them than usual and make it easier to carry them over another winter when it is hoped prices will be better.

P. E. I.

FARMER.