

From Many Sources

MR. S. T. PETTIT'S SYSTEM REVIEWED.

—Farmers' Advocate.

Bee-keeping, as an industry, or even as an adjunct to farming or other occupation, is not as general in a country so favorable to it as ours as its advantages would seem to warrant. True, it is an occupation for persons of leisure, but on a farm where the family comprises several members, a few colonies would be found to give very little trouble, and furnish an article of food which would be not only a relish but a healthful daily adjunct of diet.

Going further, we may state from experience that after the habits of the bees are commenced to be understood, and therefore the methods of manipulating them mastered, they become a source of real interest and pleasure, and if gone into on an extended and thoro scale, a means of considerable revenue. If one has the qualifications of being cautious, observing, and prompt, bee-keeping can be engaged in without fear of failure, and to persons who swell up and become seriously affected with the stings, it may be some comfort to know that after a few stings the system becomes inoculated against the effects of the poison, when a prod from an angry bee becomes of little more account than a mere mosquito bite.

The management of an apiary is not a difficult matter, and needs very little outlay to commence with. One handy with tools can make the hives and nearly all their attachments. True, no matter how full instructions are received, or how many bee-books are read, many points will have to be picked up by experience and observation, so that to succeed in getting the most from the colonies, observation, perception and invention play an important part. These and many other necessary qualifications have assisted the very successful apiarist and proprietor of "Evergreen Farm" and bee-yard, Mr. S. T. Pettit, of Elgin County, who now, at the end of 25 years of studious experience, is looked upon by the more advanced bee-keepers of Canada and the United States

as one of the first authorities of apiculture.

On July 20 we spent most of the day with Mr. Pettit, who, with his son, was busy taking off the last of this season's extracting. This will be finished in a few days, when the fine harvest of fat-comb sections will be removed. By observation and conversation we gathered many important features of Mr. Pettit's system, which we will endeavor to give to our readers.

COMB HONEY THE SPECIALTY.

Mr. Pettit, like many advanced bee-keepers, makes a specialty of comb-honey production. The proportion taken is largely governed by the extent of the swarming, as new swarms are better suited to comb-honey production than those that have come out from winter quarters. This year (1898) swarming has been under the average, and, as a result, Mr. Pettit has only about one-third of his hives supplied with comb-section supers. The spring is usually commenced with 75 to 80 colonies, which come out in vigorous condition from the cellar.

The hives used are of Mr. Pettit's own invention, having brood-frames 9 inches deep and 14½ inches long, and extracting combs 14 inches deep, and of the same length as the brood-frames. The hives are built to hold 12 frames. When the bees are first brought out in the spring they are confined to the brood-chamber until maple blossom commences. Shallow supers are then put on, and the brood is spread in the brood-chamber by placing the centre frames, which contain most brood, on the outside and exchanging for them the outside frames, which contain more or less honey. This is uncapped, so that the bees can readily remove it to the super, leaving room for the queen to lay in these combs when emptied. This exchanged position of frames is only to keep the outside frames of brood warm. When clover honey-flow commences, the strongest colonies are given comb-supers in place of the shallow supers first put on, but the others are given extracting-supers 14 inches deep. Usually two comb-honey supers, each holding 38 sections, are put on, but when the strength of the colonies and copiousness of honey flow will warrant it, three supers, or 108 sections, are put on. Sometimes the third super is added after others have become filled, or nearly so. At the time of our visit nearly half of the comb-honey-producing colonies had three supers, which in most cases contained