

only a few scattering hives which were saved within the town."

From Amarillas, a town on the south coast of Matanzas Province; "Before the war there were 10,000 hives in this district, now only ninety."

From the foregoing it can be seen that at least 90% of all the bees on the island have disappeared.

Since the first of January, 1899 to July 1st, over 600,000 lbs. have been exported from Havana. Of this amount over 500,000 lbs. have been shipped direct to France by the firm of Bridat Mont Ros & Co., who on account of their straight dealings and liberal prices, have succeeded in handling almost the entire crop of honey, thus breaking up a clique of dealers who formerly put their own prices on the article and crowded out legitimate competition. During the two preceeding years the same firm exported over 1,500,000 lbs. of honey and large quantities of wax.

There are now in the Province of Havana nine modern apiaries containing about 1700 hives, and others are being started in different parts of the island. The country around Nuevitas, in the Province of Puerto Principe, has the name of being the finest part of the island for bees, as large quantities of honey and wax are brought from there in coasting vessels. From what the writer has seen of the island there is very little territory where bees do not do well unless it is where there are a great many sugar mills, and the surrounding country is all taken up with sugar cane, and unless the place is overstocked with bees, the writer thinks there are few places where ten gallons per hive cannot be obtained.

The price in Havana markets range from forty to fifty cents per gallon net, the buyer paying the cost of package. The crop is all handled in hogsheds of from 100 to 105 gallons each. In any good location 300 hives can be kept without overstocking, and with the exception of during the extracting season, from December 1st to March, one man can care for two such apiaries, provided they are of easy access.

There are also difficulties to be taken into consideration, but as all bee keepers know, many of them can be overcome by the judicious use of that one quality; vigilance. One of the main things necessary is to keep the colonies all supplied with young and vigorous queens, thereby freeing them from the ravages of the

moth, so much feared in tropical countries.

As there is no time during the 385 days of the year (except when it rains) when the bees cannot get out and find something to carry in, they can be increased very rapidly.

During the rainy season, especially the latter part of September and October, when we are sometimes visited by storms and rains which last several days, it is necessary to watch the bees closely and sometimes feed the weaker ones, for the high winds bruise and toss about the nectar yielding plants so much, that there is a scarcity of flowers, and those which are short of provisions are liable to succumb before Nature gets back to her usual condition. When the rainy season closes in November the flowers begin to give a variety of color to the luxuriant vegetation, and from then until March there is nothing to do but take out honey, as the bees store it so fast that the queens are kept restricted to the lower story. In March and April some honey is also extracted, but the queens begin extending their domains, and swarming commences, although the swarming fever does not get so bad here as it does in the northern climes.

Last but not least (although they are very small) is the ant problem, which is one of the most important to the Cuban bee keeper, especially during the rainy season, for they take refuge by thousands under and in the hives, and often cause weak swarms to abscond.

Another important matter to take into consideration here, is the cost of living, which is at least fifty per cent. more than in the United States.

With the exception of sugar and tobacco, which are the staple export products almost everything is imported, not that the country cannot produce everything needed, but on account of the total destruction of rural wealth and the depopulation of the country, there is nothing planted, and what were once productive farms are now abandoned to weeds and grass. This of course, is only a temporary condition which will disappear when the tide of immigration turns this way.

On August 10th bee hives were placed on the free list of importations and although the duty on them was not excessive, it will doubtless give stimulation to the industry, but even if Cuba does take the lead as a honey producer, as long as the duty of twenty cents per gallon remains on extracted honey, it will not