

par-excellence which should appeal to the city man who comes to his country house for the summer only. I feel sure that this is not generally understood, and so with your permission I will dwell a little on this aspect of the question. I know two or three cases of summer people who go in for chicken culture and incubation and not a single instance of their going in for bee-keeping. Now I do not wish to say anything against chicken culture and incubation, either as an interesting hobby or a money-making industry. But for anyone who does not come out to the country till late in May, and must either sell off all his chickens again in September or pay someone to care for them, it seems to me that it must prove rather an expensive amusement.

How different with bee-keepers. One visit some Saturday in April, about the time that town people generally do go out to see how their property is looking after winter, will be enough to put the hives out if they are cellared, or to clear the entrances if they are wintered out of doors. Then a little later, about the time that people come out to spring clean and sew their gardens, the hives can be looked through, weak stocks united, and other necessary work of that kind done. The bees will then manage themselves very comfortably till late in May or early in June, when their owner will be once more on the spot, to put on sections and do anything else that may be required. I must not be understood to say that a large apiary can be satisfactorily run on these lines; but a small apiary, say of from one to two dozen hives certainly can. I may go further and say that in the case of a beginner, it will generally be better run like his than if the owner were there all the time. For, though spring work

by an experienced apiarist is often of very great value, yet an amateur is always apt to overdo it. Half the talk about spring dwindling, for instance, comes from amateurs; and the best prescription in three cases out of four would be a good spring letting alone.

There is one other point about bee-keeping, that I should like in this connection to bring to your notice. Out door work in an apiary need not begin before nine o'clock in the morning and there is seldom anything that has to be done after four o'clock in the afternoon. For the happy bee-keeper there is no getting up at four o'clock to milk, nor are there any last rounds to be made with a lantern late at night. There may be people who like to get up at four every morning personally that is the sort of thing I like to do once a year, and to talk about it the other three hundred and sixty-four days. Finally bee-keeping is from one point of view the most delightfully immoral industry imaginable. Its profits are all unearned increment. A few square yards of ground—and if you do not have the ground, then a flat house top will do—on which to stand your hives, the hives themselves, which are not expensive, and a stock or two of bees is all you need to start with. Not a single fruit tree or clover plant or buckwheat patch do you need; the bees know where to find all that; and in their search go over fences and boundary lines, into other people's fields and flower gardens with a disregard for rights of property and rules about trespasses, that if there were any way of prosecuting them would keep a whole college of lawyers in easy circumstances for life.

Surely this is an aspect of the question which should appeal to the city man. What a delightful prospect is here opened up