

## THE SHORT COURSE IN BEE-KEEPING

BY SALVATOR PFEIFFER.

The first day's impressions in the spacious lecture-room—as could be read in the faces of all in attendance—were highly satisfactory. The longer the intensive work went on, the more this satisfaction crystallized to a conclusive conviction—it was worth while to have come to Guelph. All the lectures and demonstrations were of such an extensive nature that not only the beginner learned a lot of things which cannot be found in books, but also the advanced bee-keeper profited by comparing the different methods with his own, and putting their value to the proof at home.

The whole program was strictly systematic. From the basis of an introductory lesson in anatomy, which showed the use of the microscope, it rose to an elementary treatise on biology, in which the functions of the different organs in the complicated mechanism for producing wax and honey were explained, until at last the whole structure was covered with a transparent roof in the form of reports of scientific experiments in the intelligence and the mental power of the honey-bee.

Hand in hand with this theoretical part went the practical—the manipulating of the frames, making hives, extracting honey, preventing natural swarming and the raising of queens. At the close of the proceedings, in the evening, limelight views were shown, and were well described.

A botanical course was also given, which dealt with the principal part of the plants—the blossom, with its delicious dishes for the bees, and it called to mind the great services the honey-gatherers fulfil in the household of nature in carrying pollen and in cross-fertilization. Here the attention of the audience was called to a few pictures,

which showed in a striking way how, with the assistance of the bees, fruit crops of all kinds can be doubled and trebled, not only in quantity, but also in quality.

The moving spirit of the course, or, as a scholar would say, the *spiritus rector*, was the genial and experienced lecturer, Mr. Morley Pettit, who, like a stage manager, chose the men best fitted for the purpose, put them in the forefront, and watched closely to see that none of the statements made were misinterpreted or misunderstood. He did the best work of all, and we hope he will accept in this way our tribute of sincerest gratitude.

The attendance was between forty and fifty, and was gathered from all parts of the Dominion, as far as the Pacific coast. All ages were represented, from the lad of 16, with the pinkish face, smooth and soft as that of a girl, to the white-haired old man—courtesy forbade any enquiry as to the age of the ladies present—of 70 and more, with deep furrows on his pale forehead, the undeniable signs of a hard fight in life, no less honorable than the scars of a gallant warrior. All came filled with enthusiasm and strong love for their apiaries, hoping to learn more and improve their work at home.

Whilst the beginner listened to the speaker with the eagerness of one for whose astonished eyes had just been opened the doors of a temple filled with mysteries and secrets, the older bee-keeper proved himself more skeptical. He questioned nearly every statement, and was hardly to be convinced. How deep this skepticism was rooted in some of the individuals is shown by the fact that the writer heard the first morning a man remark: "These professors understand nothing about bee-keeping." The face of the critic, not the most sympathetic, betrayed the astute and cunning fox, who seems to himself the most intelligent and the cleverest, while

others so simple had bad experience was both from this to answer

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In a class men from the The one, a young ising future, ner of speaking, philosophers who walked up of the academ one or the other was always ru the platform to distance someti much agitated his discoveries fellow-countrymen Sphinx in the had for all the hearers only a syllabic answer.