

## MARKET PRICES OF HONEY.

No attempt was made to get quotations of the market prices of honey, but one may safely presume that those ruling in Victoria and Vancouver are at least indicative of the rest of the Province. Here, as elsewhere, the stores prefer a package of such bulk that the price charged will be represented by a coin such as 25c., 50c., or even two coins in the higher values. Such prices as 20c., 65c., and \$1.15 are not popular, either with the trade or the customers. On the other hand, one must of necessity pack the honey in some vessel that is a staple commodity on the market; so it calls for quite a little consideration on the part of the producer to harmonize as far as possible the conditions. In Victoria we find the containers in common use are half pint, quart, and two-quart fruit-jars, United States measures. When filled with water, the contents weigh respectively  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb., 1 lb., and 2 lbs. But honey is nearly one half heavier than an equal quantity of water; therefore, the jars will hold almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb.,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs., and 3 lbs. of the product of the hive. Larger quantities are sold in tins, the usual sizes being 5 lbs. and 10 lbs.

The retail prices for the three smaller sizes are 25c., 50c., and \$1.50. The grocer usually pays for them 20c., 40c., and \$1.22; that is to say, he gets a discount of 20 per cent. on the retail price. Probably two-thirds of the sales will be of the 25c. size.

The half-pint jars in gross lots cost 5.2c. each; the quarts in dozen lots cost 12.5c.; the two-quart jars in dozen lots cost 17c. A little figuring will show that when the bee-keeper sells to the grocer he will get at the rate of 19.7c. a pound for the honey in the smallest jar, 18.5c. for that in the quart jar, and 17c. in the two quart jar. When the apiarist is located near a city he will generally have no difficulty in selling all his product direct to the consumer at the full retail price, thus getting 5c. a pound more.

Comb honey usually retails at 25c. a section; price to the grocer, 20c. The average section contains 14 ounces of honey, so the bee-keeper is getting at the rate of almost 23c. a pound. This looks better returns than is got from extracted honey, but we must deduct cost of section and foundation starter, and then the two will come rather close together. Then when we consider that it is generally estimated that a colony of bees will produce in comb honey only two-thirds what it will yield in extracted, we see at once that in British Columbia extracted honey is the more profitable form of honey production. We have already learned that on account of the cool nights the bees make a rather poor showing when working for comb honey.

From Dominion statistics we learn that during the year 1909 there was imported through the ports of Vancouver and Victoria a grand total of 81,431 lbs. of honey. These figures indicate a demand in the Province it will take a long time for the bee-keepers to supply. When we remember that there is a protective tariff of 3c. a pound on honey from foreign countries, and that freight rates from most points of large production are almost 2c. a pound, we readily see that there is little likelihood of a sag in prices of this most delectable of ranch products.

## BEES AND FRUIT-RAISING.

Not so very many years ago it was no uncommon thing for a farmer to believe that the honey bee stole a valuable essence from the clover and fruit blossoms, but now he knows that without bees his crop of seed and fruit would probably be scant. Cross-pollination of most fruits is the work of insects, it being estimated that sixty-eight different kinds visit apple-blossoms alone. But the problem is to get a sufficient number when there are hundreds of thousands of blossoms all open at one time as in a bearing orchard or strawberry field. The honey-bee is the only insect under human control, so by keeping a sufficient number of hives we can generally have enough bees on hand when they are most needed. Further, experience shows it is essential to