

## PRESENT AND FUTURE SOURCES OF HONEY IN NEW ZEALAND.

A. H. COCKAYNE, Biologist.

IN all agricultural industries the production of the raw materials on which the industry depends is of paramount importance. In this respect beekeeping is no exception to the rule, and thorough study of the sources of supply of the raw material, and of methods tending towards increasing them, should be of great value.

Beekeeping is one of the few rural industries where the production of the raw material is not generally carried out directly by the person particularly interested. In certain cases the apiarist may also be a farmer, but this is rare, and the beekeeper in general relies for his supplies of nectar on plants that may comprise either the natural vegetation of the district or crops (intentional or unintentional) grown by the farmer. From time to time suggestions have been made for the growing of special plants for the express purpose of honey-production. It can, however, be said that, with extremely rare exceptions, the growing of crops for the sake of their nectar alone is not a payable proposition. Thus, if the bee-farmer attempts to produce his own bee pasture he must select such crops as are themselves payable, and the nectar produced should be looked upon as a by-product. In such cases the beekeeper has to combine the duties both of an apiarist and a farmer, and as the management of bees and the work of preparing the honey for market will fully occupy the whole of his attention, such dual-purpose bee-farmers are unlikely to be uniformly successful.

Therefore the bee-farmer is forced to rely almost entirely on the natural honey resources of his locality, and on the honey-plants that come within the scope of ordinary farming operations. It might be said that the apiarist, having virtually no control of the matter, need give no attention to the sources of supply, as such are factors beyond his jurisdiction. This, however, is not true, and the beekeeper should at the least pay particular attention to the general trend of agricultural development, and encourage with all his power any methods that are payable to the farmers and at the same time are likely to increase the honey-yield of