

lucerne on an extended scale. This plant is probably destined to become the premier agricultural crop in all districts suited to its production. From the beekeepers' point of view lucerne is extremely valuable, yielding as it does large supplies of nectar during the greater part of the summer, and rarely failing in its annual supply once the crop has been established. The honey is rather light in colour, but this is not a serious defect, and the flowers produced after midsummer yield a darker honey than those produced earlier. The main objection to the growing of lucerne from the apiarist's point of view is that the crop is likely to be very largely used as a grazing one and be kept closely cropped, thus limiting the production of flowers. It is, however, certain that a great deal will be cut for hay, and although for this purpose the crop should be cut soon after the expanding of the flower-buds, in many cases crops would yield large amounts of nectar before being cured into hay.

Again, with an increase in lucerne-growing, seed crops will be numerous, and these will provide magnificent bee-forage. Beekeepers are well advised to do all in their power to foster the growing inclination of farmers to cultivate lucerne on an extended scale. The direct advantages to the apiarist are so great that work in this direction is as important as any I can think of in furthering the honey industry. The virtually unfailing source of nectar which this plant is capable of supplying in New Zealand renders it particularly important, all beekeepers knowing the difficulty with what are termed "bad seasons" in regard to most honey-plants.

ORCHARDING.

To any one acquainted with the modern development of agriculture in New Zealand, that of fruitgrowing naturally occupies an important position. By the beekeepers, however, orchards are not looked upon with the favour that might be expected when viewing one in full bloom in the spring. Commercial orchards are now planted with few varieties, and the blossoming period is short. For the greater part of the year an orchard provides exceedingly bad bee-forage, except in those instances where cultivation is neglected, and honey-producing weeds such as yarr, smartweed, fumitory, shepherd's purse, thistles, and groundsels are produced in abundance.

The fact that neglected orchards are better from a beekeeper's standard than properly cultivated ones suggests the idea that the use of certain cover-crops in orchards might lead to their becoming valuable from a honey-producing point of view. At the same time