

# ON THE LAND

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A new Californian idea provides for the greater efficiency of bees. As soon as the honey-gathering season is over in one place, the bees are to be transferred to another section of the country where the flowers are still blooming. It is expected that they will recommence their activities and so increase the production of honey.

### COMMERCIAL BEEKEEPING.

In view of the great advance in price quoted for New Zealand honey in England just now, an Auckland *Star* representative interviewed Mr. Isaac Hopkins, the veteran beekeeper, who introduced, just 40 years ago, the modern system of commercial beekeeping into Australasia, for some information concerning the progress, present position, and future prospects of the industry in New Zealand.

“Prior to 1878 there was very little honey raised in New Zealand, and what was raised was under the old sulphur pit system. The first modern apiary in Australasia was started by myself at the Thames in 1878, and the first extensive commercial bee farm was also established by myself at Matamata in 1882. There was a big rush into the new beekeeping after that date, and with its expansion the bee disease known as ‘foul brood’ spread rapidly, and through careless beekeepers the industry was threatened with extinction. Only the most determined of the pioneers held on till the Department of Agriculture came to the rescue in 1905, then a great change took place for the better. The Apiaries Act, for which I was responsible, came into force in 1907, since when the industry has gone ahead by the proverbial leaps and bounds. In 1906 the output of honey was 450 tons, in 1915 1250 tons—official figures in both cases. Under the old box hive system a yield of 10 or 12lb of sulphured honey from a box was considered good; now we get in some instances 10 tons from 100 hives. Some of our beekeepers will, I expect, raise the output to 30 tons or more this season. If I were 70 instead of over 80 I would be into beekeeping again like a shot. I have lived long enough to realise my loss through age.”

### CARROTS FOR HORSES.

The value of carrots as an item of food for horses is not known and appreciated to the extent it ought to be, and horse-owners who have not yet used carrots for the purpose indicated should certainly give them a trial. One reason why this root is not used to the extent it deserves is that it is not every sort of land that will grow carrots satisfactorily, but where they can be grown or got at a moderate price they should certainly figure in the horse’s bill of fare (states the *Farm, Field, and Fireside*).

As to their value, we may quote such authorities as Youatt and Stewart, the former stating that they “contribute to the strength and endurance of the sound horse, and the rapid recovery of the sick one”; whilst Stewart remarks that carrots “improve the state

of the skin, form a substitute for grass, and an excellent alternative for horses out of condition." It may be added that carrots are beneficial in all chronic diseases connected with breathing, and have a marked influence upon chronic cough and broken wind.

With regard to the quantity to be given, this must be left to the judgment of the feeder, for it must be remembered that when first given to horses carrots are slightly diuretic and laxative, but these effects soon wear off as the horses become accustomed to the roots. Thus it is as well to start with a small quantity and gradually increase up to, say, about 6lb a day, this being the amount given with most satisfactory results.

The carrots must, of course, be made clean, either by washing or scraping. Some feed them whole, but by far the best method is to slice or pulp them, and mix with the corn and chaff.

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### THE WEEVIL PEST IN WHEAT.

An announcement of vital importance to the wheat-growing industry of Australia was made recently by Professor H. M. Lefroy, the scientific officer of the British Wheat Commission, who was recently sent to Australia primarily to deal with the weevil pest. He stated that future loss from weevil in the wheat stacked in Australia need not be feared. The stacks of wheat in the various States were badly attacked with weevils, and the authorities had not been able to grapple with the situation. "The 1916-17 wheat taken over on behalf of the British Wheat Commission was in such a condition, owing to weevil," he said, "that if the shipping, had been available the wheat could not have been shipped. That wheat has got to be kept here until ships are provided.

"So far as weevil goes," the professor continued, "I have reached very definite conclusions. In the first place, a system of stacking has been devised which eliminates weevil as a factor in the future. The talk about restricting wheat cultivation in favor of stock-raising is wrong. It is not necessary to discourage wheat-growing if we can keep the wheat free from infestation. The British Wheat Commission has paid so much per bushel for the wheat, and we know that it will realise much more if we can keep it. It would be a suicidal policy for Australia to restrict wheat cultivation in view of the new situation. We have now a practical system whereby weevil-infested wheat can be put in thoroughly good condition, and we have demonstrated that all further loss from this source will be stopped. The infested old wheat will all have to be treated, and, once treated, it will be absolutely free of all insect life. It can then be shipped or stacked indefinitely. The cost of treatment is something like 0½d or 1d per bushel, which is infinitesimal. The treated wheat is not liable to reinfestation. Then, again, in stacking the wheat under the system we have devised, the liability to reinfestation would not occur. I would not have any fear in restacking the treated wheat with the new wheat. These facts having been definitely established," added Professor Lefroy, "and the position being now well in hand, it seems to me that the best policy for Australia is not to restrict wheat cultivation, more especially in view of the situa-

tion in Europe.”