

## Canadian Thistles.

F. ALEXIS GIMMELARIO.

And so the Gould, Shapley & Muir Co. are going to give the bee-keepers a new honey package. That's right, especially if it is anything better than we now have.

Many times I have thought that a substitute for tin would be a bonanza, if all the essentials that tin possesses, without any of its objections, could be secured. We are not yet informed of what material the new package or utensil is to be composed of, but from what I can learn its cheapness and cleanliness is an advantage. If on the other hand the receptacle cannot be placed in water in order to liquify the honey, should it granulate, then I fear we are not going to gain much after all. As, however, the firm has gone to considerable expense in designing and preparing the article spoken of, it would not be wise or judicious to attempt to throw cold water on the new venture until it has been thoroughly tested. We will therefore hope for the best.

### MELTING OLD COMB INTO WAX.

I believe that much wax and labor, has been sacrificed in following many of the old methods for rendering undesirable comb into wax. My own experience in the past has taught me that if I had to do the same work over again, that I would throw some of the old combs away at once, rather than trouble with them. The practice most in vogue is to place the old combs in a coarse bag or gurnsey sack, and sink it to the bottom of a tank, or large tin dish containing boiling water, and then skim the wax from the top as it rises to the surface. This method requires constant watching, in case the melted wax should boil over on the stove and cause trouble, to say nothing of the too much boiling the last wax receives before it finds its way to the surface. I think myself that steam for the purpose mentioned has been far too much neglected or overlooked, even when melting small quantities, and I am therefore about experimenting with the old Swiss steam extractor, on a much larger scale, however, coupled with some improvements as recommended and used by Mr. J. B. Hall. This extractor is intended for home use, the steam being generated on

the kitchen stove, if no other and more convenient place can be had.

I am also intending to use a more extensive plan for large quantities, the steam in this instance being furnished at a factory, and utilized in such a manner as not to allow the wax to come in contact with the boiling water, as it will be conducted in either case from the melter, as fast as it becomes liquified, so that no danger can result from boiling over. Nearly one half of the wax melted by amateur bee-keepers is either over boiled, or scorched in such a manner as to be almost worthless for foundation making.

Should my experiments reach my expectations, I will give the readers of the C. B. Journal the benefit of my newly acquired knowledge very shortly.

### A CONVENTION OF THREE.

A friendly local convention of three members, comprising Mr. Hall, Mr. Newton and myself, took place a few days since at Mr. Newton's home in Thamesford. Oh my! I nearly forgot to state that there was a lady and a baby too, that made a good convention also. We talked as only bee-keepers can talk when they meet, much after the same fashion that lady visitors do, when three or four are assembled all alone by themselves (so confidential like) except that our theme was not in the same strain.

The subject, of course, had to be different. Among the matters discussed was the outdoor wintering of bees, and I could not help thinking of all the changes and the various methods advocated and practiced within the last 30 or 35 years.

There have been upward, downward, too little and too much ventilation, with sometimes none at all. Then there was packing on top, sides, bottom, or only porticos of the hive; and no packing at all, the latter being the "yes, let 'em alone" plan. Next in order came entrances, large, small and medium size; some at the top, others at the bottom, with a few any place and every place, etc.

In a circular and letter received from Father Langstroth & Son, in 1864, the placing of dry corn cobs on top of the frames or combs, was advocated in order to absorb the moisture arising from the bees, so that the combs and interior of the hive may be kept dry. It appears to me that upward ventilation with absorbents has to a greater or less extent been practised ever since, and possibly before. It is quite certain that clean quilts yearly and a Hill's device or something similar has had quite a siege, and I am not yet