

## The Advantages of Larger Hives

(R. F. Holtermann.)

In making soap, which is the more important, the fat or the alkali? Some may say the fat, others the alkali, but can soap be made without either ingredient? It cannot. The two, then, are of equal importance. If we apply this to the question sometimes brought out by bee-keepers, which, in bee-keeping, is of the greatest importance, the bee-keeper, the bees or the hive? We will soon come to the conclusion that in bee-keeping all are of equal importance and all equally indispensable. If I were to deal with the question fully I should trace the development of the modern hive but space forbids. We have to-day two first great divisions, the movable frame hive and the hive in which the frames are not movable. The movable frame hive is again divided into two great divisions, one in which the brood chamber consists of two shallow or divisible parts. The latter has not had much headway but this does not imply that it is not good. Bee journals, be they right or wrong in what they may endorse, have a very great influence on the average bee-keeper. Leaders in bee-keeping have the same as the average bee-keeper, especially the one not a specialist, very largely allows someone else to do his thinking, in fact, the average man lays himself open to the suspicion that he imitates and acts on impulse rather than the result of carefully thought out reason. Just as the ladies wear hats and bonnets which are neither useful, comfortable nor convenient, and only some times ornamental. At the last Ontario Bee-Keepers association convention Messrs Hoshal and Miller treated the

question of the divisible brood chamber hive in a fair way and although there was not time for those advocating another system to speak, I enjoyed hearing them. It is always interesting to hear an expert give an exposition upon a line where he is convinced he is right, and I enjoy it none the less if he opposes me.

I know of no hive which has all the desirable points, it is a matter of being able to make a wise choice, studying our conditions and choosing that which has the greatest number of good points for us. The Heddon hive certainly has some good points. But let me say, small hive men need not take the Heddon hive for an illustration; its divisible brood chamber is equal to ten-frame Langstroth hive, and were I ever to adopt the divisible brood chamber (which I do not expect) I would make its capacity equal to a twelve-frame Langstroth.

In treating our subject, let me say I am not a leader in this matter of large hives. Moses Quinby, L. C. Root, the Dadants, J. B. Hall and many others we respect and look to for apicultural light, have been advocates of large hives for many years back. I have been one of the "well nigh unconvertable" bee-keepers "York County Bee-Keeper" speaks about, and in the past an advocate of the eight-frame hive, and I can stand and look at the mire wherein I floundered and compare the two positions.

The twelve-frame hive or a large hive is not a necessity to the person who for any reason winters his bees badly, and whose stocks are weak when the honey flow begins, and who has with this condition only a short honey flow, to all others, however, in my estimation large hives would prove an advantage. The bee-keeper who generally winters well, who brings colonies out strong in the spring, or who, though a poor winterer, has a