

A Visit to the Apiary of C. W. Post.

For years I have been contemplating taking a trip to Murray, and visiting the apiary of C. W. Post. Time and again, when on business to Ottawa, Montreal and other Eastern points, I passed within a few miles of Murray, Trenton being the nearest point on the Grand Trunk Railway, but business has always prevented me from stopping over, so I finally decided to make a special trip. Leaving Brantford, Monday August 13th, 8 a. m. our civic holiday, whilst our Brother Odd Fellows bent their way to Niagara Falls, I passed on to Toronto reaching Trenton 5.20 p. m. Trenton has over 5000 inhabitants and is situated at the head of the Bay of Quinte, it also has the canal and the Central Ontario Railway. I should judge its chief industry is lumbering. A drive of about eight miles from the station by livery brought me to the home of Mr. Post, which could readily be distinguished by the hundreds of colonies located in his large apiary covering about two acres of ground.

Mr. Post is located on the Central Ontario Railroad and close to a station on that line and on the Isthmus between the head waters of Bay of Quinte and Lake Ontario, the distance being 1½ miles from one water to the other. He runs about four hundred colonies of bees making him I believe, the most extensive bee-keeper in Canada. He has kept bees for twenty-five years, and for the last sixteen years has devoted himself exclusively to bee-keeping for a business. He is in favor of cellar wintering, but says in double-walled hives some distance from the lake he finds bees winter perfectly, but close to the lake, he cannot winter outside. This will perhaps be a valuable hint to many who keep bees along the shores of Lake Ontario. This year he took a few colonies out of the cellar March 6th, it being very warm 60° in the shade and 35° in the cellar. March 18th a fine warm day he set out 73 colonies, April 7th, 40 colonies and April 8th 10 more, when flurries of snow stopped work, on April 9th, 40 more were set out and the balance on April 12th.

Mr. Post generally winters with a rim under the brood chamber. These are first taken off and of course the bottom boards cleaned. Entrances are closed down to two inches. In about a week or ten days the brood nest is examined. The nine frames, on which the bees have been wintered, upon which spacing buckwheat

honey has been gathered and capped for winter stores, are crowded together and a tenth frame inserted. This brings the capped honey together as mentioned in a previous article of Mr. Post's and the bees have to uncap and distribute the honey giving them a great impetus in brood rearing. He now covers them up warm and lets them alone. For covering, a very thin cushion is used with fine saw-dust, over this is placed a honey board and then a sun cap.

Last year Mr. Post experimented a good deal in building up colonies. All in chaff hives three sets of experiments were conducted, one dozen with one inch painted mineral red honey boards and sun caps off, and thin saw-dust cushion underneath the honey boards. Another dozen with painted honey boards and no saw dust, sun caps off day and night. Another dozen with one-half inch honey boards and packing consisting of old coats and such like on top, and a sheet iron sun cap painted inside and outside mineral red. In the latter way they built up best. Mr. Post says upon lifting the sun cap in the morning the packing appeared quite warm yet. It was quite evident that Mr. Post made use of the warmth of the sun and added to it by means of dark paint.

In reply to the question: Until what time do you think you cannot get the bees too warm? Mr. Post said, in my locality about June 10th. We do very little tinkering, we see that the bees have enough honey and not too much entrance. I would sooner have the bees puzzled to get in during the middle of the day, than give them too much entrance. In the few chaff hives I have, during the season just spoken of, I allow a 2 inch entrance by one-half. I have in these hives sheets of tin lining the entrance thus making it impossible for mice to enter.

Generally the latter part of May the bees are shipped by the carload 25 and 40 miles north on the C. O. R., making two out apiaries and the bees are run for extracted honey. Mr. Post said—I want to get the bees in there apiaries ten days before the clover flower. The bees are set out with the wire screen on the bottom as placed in the car and upon their bottom boards as described in my paper, read before at the Ontario Bee-Keeper's Association meeting. For ventilation the hives can be moved back on their bottom boards three inches at any time. Supers are put on as soon as clover begins to yield well and the body of the hive is nicely filled with honey, say about five days after they begin to work on clover. I think the bees will rush to the supers better under such conditions. With the two outapiaries one of my sons Ernest, puts in his full time between the two. I visited