

A DUFFERIN COUNTY APIARY.

By
GEO. WOOD,
Dufferin
County.

Your letter of 21st inst. is to hand, in which you ask me to give a little history of my bee-keeping. I will try to comply with your request.

My first attempt at bee-culture was much the same as the primitive man's soil culture—with a stick. I don't remember the circumstances but my parents have often told me how I cultivated an acquaintance with a colony of bees in an old straw hive by poking a stick in the entrance. The acquaintance was too intimate to suit my two-year-old curiosity and the next ten years I was out of the business.

My first real interest in bees was roused by reading the old Canada Farmer, published, I think, by the Globe Company of Toronto, and edited by Rev. W. F. Clarke. I was a small boy at the time but I remember reading an article which said that the bee-keeper should know the exact condition of each colony as a farmer knew the condition of his cows and horses. This bothered me for a time, as I had never seen bees kept except in a small way in straw and box hives, and thought that they gathered just enough honey to feed them during the winter and no more, and that if the owner of bees wished to get honey he must first destroy the bees with sulphur and then cut the combs out. That was the extent of my bee knowledge at that time. I soon learned, however, that there was a method of examining the colonies

and that books were published on the subject. One was "Langstroth on the Hive and Honey Bee," and the other, "Quinby's Mysteries of Bee-keeping." The latter title attracted me for a mystery it seemed. I soon found a friend of the family possessed a copy of "Langstroth" and I promptly borrowed it. Needless to say I found it a mine of information and more fascinating than Robinson Crusoe. I was a bee man at once though still only in theory. The next event was reading a long article in the Toronto Globes entitled "The Canadian Bee Farm." I devoured it. It was a description of Mr. D. A. Jones' bee yards in and around Beeton, and an account of his operations. The result of it all was that I engaged with Mr. Jones to spend a season with him. This was in 1882 when I had my first look into a colony of live bees. The next season I also spent with Mr. Jones, having changed of the Richardson yard about three miles west of Beeton. It was in September of that year that one of the most pleasant events in my bee-keeping career took place—an introduction to the "Father of Modern Bee Culture," "The Huber of America," Rev. L. L. Langstroth, the inventor of the movable frame hive and the author of that great work "The Hive and Honey Bee." The North American Bee Keepers Association met in Toronto that year, and one day the convention

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