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BEE-KEEPING IN ONTARIO

[Ontario Department of Agriculture,
Bulletin No. 166.]

The information contained in this report has been taken from answers to questions sent out in a circular to all the bee-keepers of the Province, dated May 15th, 1908. While the Province has been fairly well covered by the reports received, there were over 1,500 bee-keepers who did not return the blanks sent to them. Until a greater proportion of those engaged in the industry take enough interest to answer the few questions asked, it will be impossible for the Department of Agriculture to prepare as full and accurate a report as is desired.

Of the reports received, only ten per cent. answered that the industry was carried on at all extensively, and this percentage is perhaps high, as in some cases more than one individual so reported in the same vicinity. Others noted that while the business was once in a flourishing condition, the losses of the past two years had made a material change, and that now few large apiaries were left, while the smaller ones were in many cases wiped out of existence. The census report of 1901 gave the Province a total of 116,403 colonies, but from the information at hand, this total for the present year must be decreased at least 25 per cent. to cover the heavy loss of 1907 and 1908. These changes will doubtless tend to keep up prices for the better quality of honey, and those who have any bees left should give them special attention, as the natural increase and the surplus honey gathered will both improve sources of profit at the present time. Very little disease was reported. While the percentage of dysentery seems high, in every case the correspondent stated that the attack was slight, generally occurring in only one or two hives in an apiary. Of the instances where foul brood

was reported, in only two cases was the attack a severe one. European foul brood has appeared in the vicinity of Trenton in rather a virulent form, and has caused heavy losses in two apiaries.

The work of the six inspectors appointed last year has shown itself favorably in the reports received, and the decrease in the disease has been evident. This year the Province has been divided somewhat differently, and the inspectors' names, with their districts, are as follows:

W. A. Chrysler, Chatham—Counties of Essex, Kent and Lambton.

John Newton, Thamesford—Counties of Elgin and Middlesex.

D. Chalmers, Poole—Counties of Perth and Huron.

James Armstrong, Cheapside—Counties of Norfolk, Oxford, Waterloo and Wellington.

William McEvoy, Woodburn—Counties of Haldimand, Welland, Brant, Lincoln, Wentworth and Halton.

H. G. Sibbald, Claude—Counties of Bruce, Grey, Simcoe, Dufferin, Peel and Muskoka.

J. L. Byer, Mt. Joy—Counties of York, Ontario, Victoria and Durham.

From Northumberland east to the boundaries of the Province a special inspector will be sent out to look over the apiaries at every important point. At the present time, outside of the outbreak of European foul brood at Trenton, the Department has no definite information in respect to the prevalence of foul brood or otherwise in most of this territory, and it has been thought advisable to select a man from elsewhere in the Province who is thoroughly conversant with the disease in all its stages to make a careful investigation in the east. All suspected apiaries will first be visited, and any bee-keepers wishing to clear up any doubt as to the presence of this disease in their apiaries should send word to the Department of Agriculture at an early date.