

koka, Glengarry, Perth, Prescott, Renfrew, and York. Alfalfa is being introduced into many of the counties, but its value as a honey plant in Ontario is very problematical. It does not seem to yield nectar to any extent outside of the irrigated lands of the West. Even if it did the custom of cutting for hay when only one-tenth in bloom would practically destroy its value as a honey plant. Thistle bloom is one of the ill winds of the careless farmer which blows the bee-keeper some good, but improved methods of farming are limiting this source—fortunately for the general good. Withal, our most dependable source of white honey is alsike. Where this is grown extensively for seed on a good stiff clay, well-kept apiaries are practically certain to yield a splendid average income from year to year.

The prospects for honey this season so far as the honey flora is concerned are almost uniformly fair to good all over Ontario. The following counties report prospects "Poor to Fair": Carleton, Dufferin, Durham, Essex, Grenville, Haldimand, Kent, Lennox, Middlesex, Muskoka, Prescott, Simcoe, Stormont, Welland, Wentworth, York.

There is a variety of fall honey plants. Buckwheat, of course, is the staple, and is growing in popularity from year to year. Next to it is goldenrod, boneset, and some aster. Second crop red clover yields surplus gathered by some strains of Italian and Carniolan bees. Sweet clover gives considerable surplus in some sections.

The total number of colonies reported for the fall of 1909 is 18,445, for June 1st, 1910, it is 16,729. Roughly calculating from the percentage of bee-keepers who sent reports, one would be well within the limit in stating that there are 100,000 colonies of bees in Ontario this spring. The average number of colonies owned by those who reported is 34.3 each, spring count. Bees have wintered very well. The 9.3 per cent. loss given by those who have reported is quite light, as some of the most extensive specialists count on an annual 10 per cent. loss in wintering.

Much of the winter loss is not definitely understood, owing to the limitations of our actual knowledge of bee-nature. The reasons given in the reports are loss of queens, late weak swarms, starvation, dysentery, foul brood, poor ventilation of the hive or cellar, dampness in hive or cellar, honey flow, robbing, mice, and that indefinite term "spring-dwindling." Other cases are covered by the term "winter killed," which is quite true even though of uncertain definition. The whole wintering problem is one of the most frequently stated "difficulties" in the reports.

The condition of bees is very similar all over Ontario. The very warm weather early in March set up breeding and made the colonies strong early in the spring, but very short of stores. This shortage of supplies and the unfavorable weather later cut down breeding, much brood and even whole colonies starved, but not until in some cases a little epidemic of swarming sent many premature swarms out to suffer or starve in their new hives. Those who gave their bees one-quarter as much attention as they would give other live stock fed them sugar syrup, and will probably reap dollars for dimes in the clover honey season. In