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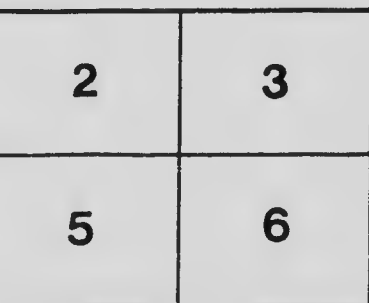
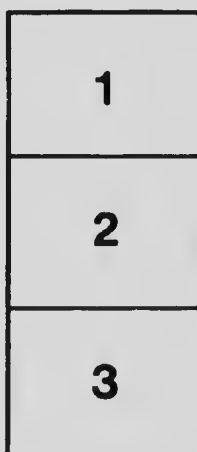
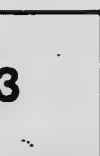
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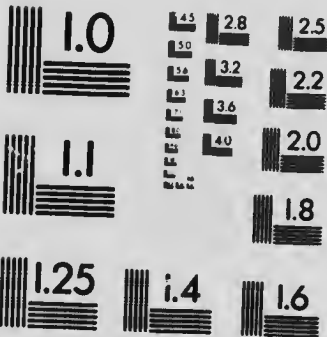
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FACTS ABOUT HONEY

BY

F. W. L. SLADEN.



DOMINION EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

J. H. GRISDALE, B.Agr.,
Director.

F. W. L. SLADEN,
Apiarist.

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Honey is the nectar of flowers modified in the body of the bee and concentrated by evaporation in the hive. Chemically it is essentially a concentrated solution of two kinds of sugar, dextrose and levulose, present in approximately equal proportions with small quantities of odorous substances which give to the honey its flavour. The presence in honey of a diastatic ferment and traces of a protein secreted by the bees has lately been demonstrated. Honey has a high nutritive value since dextrose and levulose are immediately absorbed into the circulation and perform in the animal economy the useful and valuable function of heat and energy production.

Canada abounds in nectar-producing flowers, and honey is already an important food-product of the country. The quality of Canadian honey is unsurpassed.

In commerce, honey is divided according to colour into white honey and dark honey. A grade between the two, known as "amber honey," is often recognized. These colour distinctions, however, are for convenience only. The correct way to classify honey is by the plants from which it is gathered, each of which imparts to the honey a distinct colour and flavour. Generally speaking, light-coloured varieties of honey are mild flavoured and the dark are strong flavoured. The light-coloured, mild-flavoured honeys are sold at a higher price than the dark-coloured, strong-flavoured kinds, but tastes vary and some people prefer strong-flavoured honey. The impression that dark honey is necessarily of inferior quality is erroneous.

Most of the white honey produced and sold in Canada is clover honey gathered from alsike and Dutch clover. Commercial clover honey in its fresh liquid condition has a light straw tint, and it granulates in a few weeks to a creamy white. Clover honey has a delicate flavour of which one does not tire, and it is regarded by judges as the standard of fine honey. Basswood honey is another fine white variety that granulates quickly; it has a stronger flavour than clover honey. The cutting down of many basswood trees has made this honey less plentiful in recent years than formerly.

A third kind of white honey that deserves attention is that produced by the willow herb or fire-weed, a tall plant, with showy purple flowers, common in forest clearings. Pure willow-herb honey from Eastern Canada is nearly water-white, and, like clover and basswood honey, granulates almost as hard as lard. The flavour of willow-herb honey is very mild.

The principal dark honey comes from buckwheat. Buckwheat honey is deep purplish brown, and its pronounced aroma and flavour recall somewhat the famous heather honey of Scotland. Some people consider the flavour of buckwheat honey to be too strong, but it makes an excellent blend with other honeys with which indeed the Canadian product is generally mixed by the bees.

The colour and flavour of most samples of honey, except some of the clover honey gathered in the principal clover honey producing regions, are affected more or less by honey gathered from a variety of melliferous flowers occurring in swamps, woodlands, pastures, orchards and prairies, such as goldenrods, asters, dandelion, fruit bloom, milkweed, sweet clover, viper's bugloss and mints of different kinds. Nearly all of these honeys have pleasant aromatic flavours, which add character to the honey, and improve it in the estimation of many of those whose preferences have not already been formed. One or two kinds, however, have a resinous or turpentine-like taste. On the prairie the honey comes principally from wild flowers. So far as is known, no unwholesome or poisonous honey is produced anywhere in Canada.

Nearly all the honey that is seen in stores in Canadian cities is produced in Canada. The usual packages are: extracted honey in glasses containing about $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. and 1 lb. and in tins holding $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs., 5 lbs. and 10 lbs., and comb-honey in sections weighing 12 ozs. to 16 ozs. Which of these packages is it advisable to buy? The majority of consumers want the best article at the lowest price. They should have no hesitation in buying honey in tins, for in these containers the honey is perfectly well preserved, and it costs about half as much as it does in 1 lb. glass jars or in sections. However, comb-honey is a fancy article of especial charm to many people and when in good condition is a treat well worth the extra cost.

The principal honeys of Canada granulate within a few weeks after removal from the hive. This granulation is hastened by cold. The liquid condition may be restored by heating. The feeling that some people have, that granulated honey is not perfectly good is unfounded. Granulated honey is not one whit inferior, except perhaps in appearance, to the liquefied article, and it has certain advantages. It is not liable to leak out of the package, it is easier to handle, and children are less likely to get it onto their fingers and clothes. Honey is liquefied by raising it to a temperature of from 130° to 150° F. The vessel containing the granulated honey is placed in hot water, and care should be taken to see that the temperature does not go higher than 160°, for above that point, honey decomposes, the flavour spoils and the colour darkens. Honey should, therefore, never be liquefied by the direct application of heat. In time, most examples of liquefied honey commence to granulate again, acquiring an objectionable composite and "sugary" appearance, which has often caused their purity to be called in question. It is sometimes stated that the granulation of honey is a proof of its purity. This is not true. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that well granulated examples supply a certain safeguard against adulteration to the purchaser, who seldom is in a position to submit the honey before purchase to chemical analysis, and has therefore to rely on general appearance. The adulteration of honey is not, however, extensively practised in Canada. Out of 194 samples of honey recently examined by the Inland Revenue Department in 1913-14, and reported upon in that Department's Bulletin No. 289, only ten were found to be spurious. The chief adulterants used are cane sugar syrup and commercial glucose.

As a supplementary food for children, no less than for adults, honey occupies a high place, and it should form a portion of the daily ration of every family in the land. Spread with butter or alone upon bread, it makes the latter more palatable. To help to meet the present day demand for a variety of nutritious and appetizing foods that do not require cooking, honey is particularly well qualified. It is a concentrated food ready for use at all times, and there is no waste, for honey keeps good for any reasonable length of time, provided it is stored in a dry place.

Honey is used to a considerable extent and with very satisfactory results in cooking. In baking, it has the valuable and useful property of keeping cakes and biscuits moist and fresh for a long time. For this purpose, the darker grades are usually employed.

Honey enters into the composition of several remedies for sore throat and coughs, and on some individuals it has a laxative action, which may be expected to vary according to the genus of plant from which it is gathered.

The kitchen cupboard is usually a more suitable place for storing honey than the cellar. Honey absorbs moisture from the damp air, and an excess of water renders it liable to ferment. Liquid honey should flow but slowly when the temperature is below 70°, and granulated honey permeated with air bubbles should be rejected.

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