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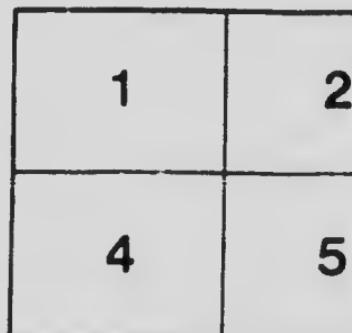
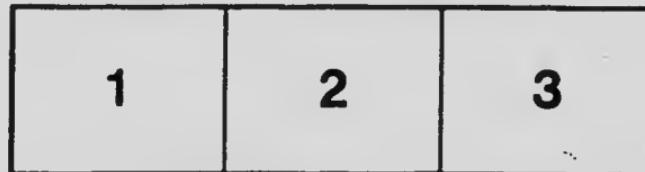
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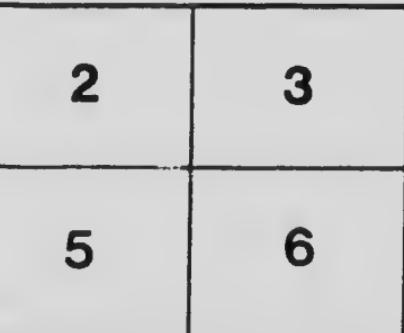
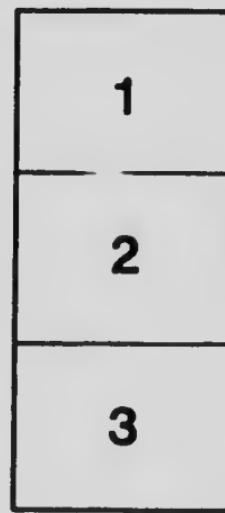
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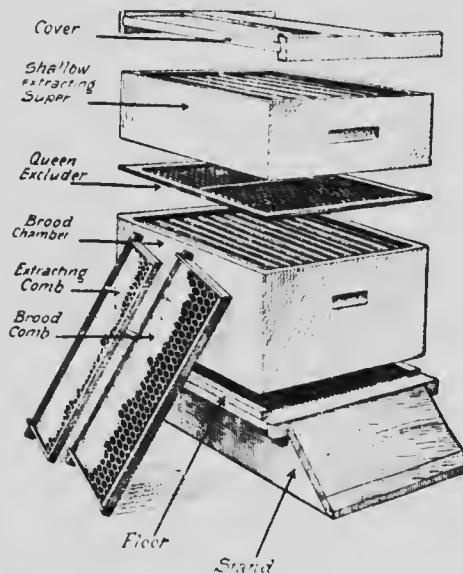
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# BEE-KEEPING IN CANADA

BY

F. W. L. SLADEN.



A 10-frame Langstroth Hive, with the parts separated.

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## DOMINION EXPERIMENTAL FARMS.

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### EXHIBITION CIRCULAR No. 18.

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Special attention is being paid to bee-keeping at the Dominion Experimental Farms. At the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, there is an experimental apiary where the various problems connected with the development of bee-keeping in Canada are being carefully investigated. Adjoining the apiary there has recently been erected an apicultural building specially designed for bee research. An apiary is maintained at each of the larger branch farms where the possibilities of bee-keeping in the region served by the farm are studied and also where visitors may see the most suitable hives and appliances, and may learn the best methods of bee management and how to prepare honey for market.

Bees are of value for two purposes: (1) honey and wax production, and (2) pollination.

Canadian honey is unsurpassed in quality by the honey of any other country. Owing to the abundance of nectar-producing flowers until frost, the warm summers and well-distributed rainfall, the average yield per colony is considerable. With good management, it varies from about thirty pounds a year in poor regions to about one hundred pounds a year in the best regions, where bee-keeping is sometimes carried on by specialists, who find it as profitable an occupation as mixed farming. These figures take into account partial failures in some seasons due to drought or other causes.

The production of apples, pears, plums, cherries, gooseberries, raspberries and alsike clover seed depends upon the visits of insects to the flowers to distribute the pollen. In many places the wild bees are not sufficiently numerous or active to carry out this work satisfactorily, especially when the weather is changeable, and honey bees are necessary to secure uniform and abundant crops.

As many as fifty or a hundred colonies may be kept in one place. Large apiaries, however, should be not less than two miles apart. The most important honey plants of Canada are white Dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*) and alsike clover (*T. hybridum*) which are abundant, wild and cultivated, in many parts of Ontario, Quebec, the Maritime Provinces and British Columbia. Other valuable sources of honey are buckwheat (Ontario and Quebec); basswood (Ontario and Quebec); raspberry; willow-herb (*Epilobium angustifolium*) which occurs chiefly in forest clearings, especially after fire, alfalfa (*Southern Alberta*) and certain prairie flowers. Of less importance are sweet clover (*Melilotus*) and several species of golden rod and aster. In the spring, willows, dandelion, fruit bloom and other flowers supply pollen and nectar, thus enabling the bees to breed up in preparation for the in-gathering.

A local demand for honey is easily created. Wholesale prices for extracted honey range from seven to ten cents per pound for dark and amber coloured honey, and from nine to twelve cents per pound for clover honey. Selling direct to customers, ten to eighteen cents per pound may be got for extracted honey, and twenty to thirty cents for sections of comb honey.

Honey is deservedly popular, not only on account of its delicately flavoured sweetness, but because it is a valuable food, supplying energy and heat to the system. The natural craving of children for something sweet is well and satisfactorily met by giving them honey. Bread, butter and honey make a pleasant and wholesome combination both for children and adults. Used in baking and confectionery, honey has the useful property of keeping cakes and sweetmeats moist and fresh for a considerable time.

The severe cold and length of the Canadian winter are not serious obstacles to the keeping of bees, because the bees can be successfully wintered in the cellars of dwelling houses, or, packed in shavings, in large wintering cases out-of-doors.

However, no one should embark on bee-keeping who is not ready to study the bees' requirements and to devote the necessary time to their care, for bees are no more able to take care of themselves than any other kind of live-stock. Indeed, neglect in their case is frequently even more disastrous, for if colonies die as the result of European foul brood or American foul brood, two very destructive and infectious diseases of the bee larva, bees from other hives in the apiary and surrounding district will steal the honey and thereby carry the germs of disease to their own hives. The greater part

of British Columbia, of the Prairie Provinces, of the Maritime Provinces, and of Eastern Quebec, and certain sections of Ontario are still free from foul brood and it is important that bees should not be imported into these regions from places where the diseases are prevalent. European foul brood is rapidly spreading in Ontario and Quebec, destroying whole apiaries of black bees in its course. Fortunately the Italian bee is more or less resistant to European foul brood, and the bee-keeper can save his bees by proper treatment and the timely introduction of Italian queens. Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, British Columbia and New Brunswick have passed laws for the control of foul brood, and the bee-keepers in some of the other provinces are asking for similar legislation.

To treat both forms of foul brood shake the bees into a clean hive fitted with frames having starters of foundation not more than one inch wide, and afterwards cover the entrance of the new hive with a queen and drone trap for two or three days to prevent the colony from deserting. Melt down the combs in boiling water and disinfect the old hive by scorching the inside with a flame. Other articles may be disinfected by boiling in water for half an hour. When only a few colonies are treated, to prevent the bees of healthy colonies from getting any of the infected honey, the shaking should be carried out in the evening, and if the honey drips from the combs newspapers should be spread in front of the hive to receive it. These newspapers are to be afterwards destroyed.

The only satisfactory kinds of hives are those fitted with movable frames to contain the combs. The Langstroth frame, 17½ inches long by 9½ inches deep, is the standard in all parts of Canada, and should be adopted by all beginners. It is wise to keep only a few colonies until experience has been gained.

The following list comprises all that is necessary for making a start in bee-keeping:—

Two or three colonies of bees in 10-frame Langstroth hives. (The bees may be obtained from a local bee-keeper. Ascertain that they more than half fill the hive, that a young fertile queen is present and that the brood is healthy). Cost each, according to locality, condition, and time of year. . . . .	\$8.00 to \$12.00
One pound brood foundation, costs about. . . . .	0 60
Bee smoker, costs about. . . . .	1 00
Bee veil. . . . .	0 35
One-quarter pound No. 30 tinned wire. . . . .	0 15
Spur wire embedder. . . . .	0 25
Two or three spare 10-frame Langstroth hives with frames, each about. . . . .	2 00

If extracted honey is desired add the following:—

Extracting supers fitted with Langstroth frames (shallow supers may be used in regions where the honey flow is light), one or two for each hive, each about. . . . .	\$ 1.00
1½ pound light brood foundation for each super, per pound. . . . .	0 62
Honey extractor. . . . .	\$8.00 to 10.00
Queen excluder for each hive. . . . .	0 30

If comb honey is wanted substitute for extracting supers, etc., the following:—

Comb-honey supers fitted with sections, two for each hive, each about ½ pound thin super foundation for each super, per pound. . . . .	\$ 1.00
250 spare sections, split top. . . . .	1 00

It is usually more profitable to work for extracted honey than for comb honey because about double the quantity of honey is obtained and extracting is more easily controlled.

The names of manufacturers of and dealers in bee-keepers' supplies may be found in the advertising columns of the "Canadian Honeyiculturist and Bee-keeper," a monthly journal published at Peterborough, Ont.

The keeping of bees in box-hives is unsatisfactory and a menace to successful bee-keeping, because the combs cannot be lifted out to see in what condition the bees are, and whether the brood is diseased. Bees in box-hives should be transferred to hives fitted with movable frames.

There is no mystery about the successful management of bees. For a large part of Canada, it may be briefly summarized as follows: In September, see that each colony covers at least seven combs (weaker colonies should be united), and has a young fertile queen, and 30 to 35 pounds of stores. Deficiencies up to 10 pounds or 15 pounds may be made good by feeding about mid-September with sugar syrup made by dissolving two parts by measure of best granulated sugar in one part of water, stirred in while water is hot. Protect from cold in the latter part of October. Bring the bees into the cellar about the middle of November. The bee cellar should be well ventilated and dark, and neither very damp nor very dry. The temperature should be kept as steady as possible, between 40° and 45° F. Bring the bees out in spring as soon as the willows come into bloom. Protect them for a few weeks from cold, and see that no colony runs short of food, feeding, if necessary, with syrup composed of equal parts of sugar and water. Give a super as soon as the brood chamber is filled with bees and brood, and honey is coming in freely, and enlarge the entrance. Give an additional super when the first one is half full of honey. Swarms should be put into a new hive on the old stand, the old colony being moved to a new location. By clipping the queen's wings (this should be done early in May) there is no fear of losing the first swarm, but somebody should be present to secure the queen and hive the swarm when it issues.

Inquiries about bee-keeping should be addressed to the Apiarist, at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

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