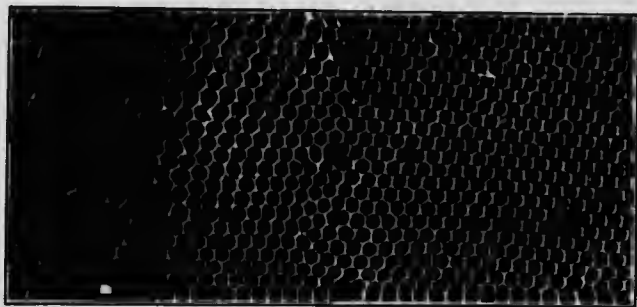


But let us investigate our comb a little more, and first we will probably notice that there are at least two different sizes of cells, one series in the upper part of the frame, running about five to the inch; another kind, generally in the lower half of the comb, that are a little larger, running about four to the inch. In the smaller cells the worker-bees are raised; in the larger the drones, who are the males, spend their days of infancy. Both kinds of cells are used when necessary as storehouses for food. In a well-managed hive the worker-cells vastly predominate; in fact, all good bee-keepers strive to keep the drone-cells to the lowest possible number. Drones are essential to the welfare of the apiary, but an unlimited quantity of them means a waste of valuable space and food, for they are consumers only. Fig. 11 shows the two kinds of cells side by side.

We will now proceed to examine the next frame, but first we will dispose of this one by setting it on the ground, leaning it against the side of the hive. As before, we will break the gluing between the frames. Since it is May it is probable the colony is strong enough to cover six frames, so that this one may have thousands of bees on



Drone Cells.

Fig. 11.

Worker Cells.

both sides, while the weight suggests that the cells contain something. They do, for the centre of the comb is filled with young bees in all stages—eggs, larvæ and sealed brood; these surrounded by a band about an inch or two wide of pollen, while outside of that, especially at the top and ends, is honey. Quite a neat arrangement, you see, so as to have everything handy; nursery in the centre with the food all round about. But stop a minute; all the other frames are arranged exactly the same way; so think a little and you will realise that the brood-nest is a ball, with, of course, the most brood in the centre frame, the least at the sides. Now you will understand why you should not disturb the order of the frames when you examine a hive, as changing the arrangement will upset the brood-nest. This is why you are advised never to set more than the first frame outside of the hive, just to prevent yourself getting mixed up as to their order. The bee-keeper's business is to help the bees, never to hinder them.

SHAKING BEES OFF THE COMBS.

Maybe the comb is so thickly covered with bees that careful inspection is impossible, in which case hold the frame above the hive, raise it slowly about a foot, then lower it quickly, finishing up with a sudden jerk, when practically every insect will drop on the frames.

Fig. 12 shows the position of the frame at the end of the operation. It is not considered wise to shake the queen off the combs at the season when she is laying heavily. Another way, which the writer prefers, is to hold the frame perpendicularly