

who can do much good, give him a section of honey, but at the same time tell him anything he wants to know about bees.

For the Canadian Bee Journal.

CLIPPING QUEENS' WINGS.

IT the suggestion of, I know not whom I began clipping my queens' wings in the spring of '86, and my experience therefore extends over three seasons. The first two it worked fairly well. But the trial as I have found since was not a fair one. During the first season I kept them below the swarming point by removals of bees and brood with which I either strengthened weak stocks or started new ones, and the honey flow being light towards autumn, they had little inducement to swarm so I passed through that summer with two swarms issuing. The queen in one case had returned to the hive before I saw her, and in a little time the swarm also returned. In the second case I found her floundering in some grass near the hive and placed her in her old home and her progeny came back and resumed their places as before. So far I was favourable to clipping. The next season opened out promisingly for the apiarist the weather was warm from the first of May and the rain fell copiously. White clover blossomed freely, and for a few days yielded abundantly, but the sun burning fiercely and the rain suddenly ceasing the honey flow stopped and the swarming impulse was checked. I had meanwhile started a number of nuclei and did not allow more than three or four swarms to issue. The clip in these cases held the queens, and with them the bees after flying about for a while and even clustering in two or three instances on trees. I was now considerably in favor of clipping. Then came the present season, the cold dry spring is fresh in the memory of all in western Ontario, brooding was thereby retarded, then came the prolonged dry spell, so fatal to increase of stocks generally. There was little difficulty in the swarming business. Any of mine that issued came back again on finding that there was no queen with them. I thought again and again what an admirable invention this wing clipping is. It secures the stock and gives the very minimum of trouble, it makes bee-keeping easily possible to persons whose time is not under their own control. But with the removal of my bees and prolonged honey-flow throughout autumn, my difficulty in queen wing clipping began. The bees retarded in the swarming impulse up to this time finding honey plentiful, resolved to divide themselves in almost every hive into two,

three, and even four colonies. In furtherance of this design the old queens were encouraged to lay abundantly and queen cells were matured, and out the first section went, but the old queen could not accompany them and they had to come back, the return took place all night. Once or twice after that I noticed that they did not return, but after flying about for a time or remaining in cluster they took to the woods, and when I had seen a few thus depart, I begun to think I had better secure them as they issued. How was it they failed to return now? Simply because they had killed the old maimed queen and a young queen was with them. Finding their colonizing propensity interfered with in the flying disability of the old queen they put an end to her that another able to accompany them might take her place. So it went on during the last half of July and all August, till every queen, I believe, whose wings were clipped in the spring had disappeared. Among this lot was only one over two years, and most were one year old. Moral: Queen's wing clipping will do admirably when the honey flow is brief or light, or when stocks are weak, but it is worse than useless when stocks are strong, weather warm, and honey abundant in the fields. As for me, I've done with it.

J. R. BLACK.

For the Canadian Bee Journal.

QUEENS LOST IN MATING.

IN your answer to Query No. 212, Mr. Editor, you place the solution in a nutshell. It is not improbable that some queens may be devoured by birds, and others may miss their mark in returning. But it seems a frailty of human nature to throw causation upon convenient weakness; for example if gates are left open, it is always the youngest totler or perhaps the least brilliant "bairn" that receives the blame. And what a feeling of well-being wells up within us when we can so readily catch causes. And if queens are lost it must be the unfortunate birds which cannot vindicate their innocence, that took them for lunch.

As our good friends, the Methodists, say, I will tell my experience, perhaps it will strengthen some weak brother:

1. In 1886 and 1887 I lost many queens mating.
2. Isolated hives with many drones, lost very few queens.
3. Isolated hives with few or no drones, lost many.
4. Hives adjacent to others with few drones, lost very many.
5. Hives adjacent to others with many drones, lost some, but not so many as preceding.
6. My observation hive which I used for fertilizing, lost very few.