

February 15th "Gleanings" advised bee-keepers to breed from the queen that is "clear ahead of all the rest." Pretty sound advice, no doubt, in the majority of cases. With the most of us being "clear ahead" would mean the colony that would fill up the most supers of honey, regardless to what their temper and other characteristics were. Possibly have mentioned before of a colony in my possession that have in the last three seasons stored over 750 pounds clover honey and have never yet offered to swarm. They are of the black "persuasion," very irritable and a little difficult to handle. While I have spared the queen on account of her progeny's splendid work, I would hesitate to breed from her on account of the bad temper of the bees, something that can be endured in the home yard, but which is better eliminated as much as possible at an out-apiary near the farmer's buildings.

#### **Closing Entrances of Outdoor-wintered Bees.**

Editor Root urges his subscribers to try the plan they are following this winter, viz.: Closing the entrances of the hives with snow or straw to "confine the heat yet allow a sufficient circulation of fresh air." While this advice is all right for any one who can be right with the bees, for an out-apiary think I would prefer to have a fairly good-sized entrance, with as little clogging as possible. With us the snow gathers there rather too much to suit me, without having to pile it around the entrance. Mr. Root admits that it is necessary to rake out the dead bees to prevent the entrances from being clogged. Formerly I was very anxious about the entrances, and spent a lot of time going around with a hooked wire pulling out dead bees, but for past few years have come to the conclusion that with a fair-sized entrance (mine are equivalent to five square inches) and good colonies, they

can do their own "undertaking" better than I can. Even with weaker colonies have been bothered so much with ice clogging contracted entrances that I now prefer to give plenty of room, and then contract entrances in early spring.

#### **Honey 9,000 Years Old (?)**

"Stenog" gives a newspaper clipping in effect that a farmer in the States was recently digging a drain, and at a depth of four feet came across a large tree trunk, in which was found a quantity of honey in good condition. A professor to whom the honey was shown estimated that the honey was 9,000 years old. It was not stated whether it was clover, basswood or buckwheat honey. Perhaps it would be well for the learned professor to look up the matter and tell us what honey-producing flora existed in antediluvian times. Until further evidence accumulates, would move that the reporter who manufactured the yarn be awarded first prize as the champion "sensationalist" of America.

#### **How to Detect Adulteration of Beeswax.**

Mr. C. P. Dadant, at the Northwestern convention, gave some practical tests, which I take pleasure in copying from The Bee-keepers' Review. Of some three or four tests given, will copy the two simplest, viz.: Specific gravity test—"Alcohol, which is lighter than water, is mixed with water until a piece of pure beeswax will sink very slowly (almost remaining standing where it is placed), then a piece of suspected beeswax of similar size and shape is placed in the mixture. A very slight percentage of paraffin will cause it to pop up out of the mixture, as an iceberg stands up above the sea." Saponification test—"With concentrated lye and hot water make a strong lye. Into this pour melted beeswax, and stir it up, when real soap will be formed, having a strong, dis-