



The Apiary.

Bees and the Honey Harvest.

A "BEE-MASTER" writes to the *Times*:—"I have ten stock hives. I never destroy or kill my bees. I look on the system of the sulphur match as barbarous and unprofitable. I leave each family on an average not less than 25 lb. of honey for their winter stores, and the surplus only I take away. Should any hive swarm, which I can generally prevent, and the remaining stock be therefore deficient provision for the winter, I feed them in the course of the early spring with barley sugar. This and other little attentions endear the bee-master to his bees as they are very susceptible of gratitude and have long memories. A hive is very like a church-when, in May, it increases rapidly in numbers, and the temperature rises inside, you either increase their accommodation in area or in height, or you will have a secession. Should a secession take place, bees set an example ecclesiastics might copy. The new church never falls out with the old one. Side by side, they work in perfect harmony, believing there is plenty of food for both. The only incidental mischief-maker is the wasp, whether he be prelate or presbyter I cannot say, but I know well he is a thief, an intruder; and after a fight the bees, who in this matter are rigid non-intrusionists, eject, maim, or kill him and he deserves it. Queen Victoria's Court is modelled on the apiarian Queen's. You may see the Queen bee by means of my glass windows going her rounds, and giving orders with her royal ladies, who never turn their backs on Her Majesty. The exceptional instance occurred on one occasion, when it became necessary to give a rather sickly establishment rum and sugar, of which they drank to excess and got drunk. As long as the stimulus lasted the monarchy became a fierce democracy, and Queen and subjects were confounded in the *malice*. The only vice among bees is their passionate liking for rum and strong ale. But the teetotaler would fairly reply that they never care about either, unless it is pressed upon them. My bees at present have begun the massacre of the drones. These are a sort of Benedictine monks, who, like a Brother Ignatius, prefer enjoyment to hard work. They are round, fat, and lazy, making much noise, and eating of stores to which they do not contribute. About this time the queen, and her active subjects, have awakened to the truth of the text, "if any will not work, neither should he eat," and the drones are being garrotted. But you want to hear about the harvest? In one square box there are forty lbs. of honey, and a corresponding super rapidly filling up, there is likely to be for me as much more. In three Scotch or Ayrshire hexagonal hives, which I have found to answer best of any, the three supers are in two almost full, and in one there is at least 40 lbs. weight in the super, and over the super is a bell glass, with 7 lb. or 8 lb. additional. In one of Neighbour's very beautiful straw hives, I have two bell glasses almost full, and a month ago, I removed from this hive a very beautiful glass of honey. In one of Petit's lateral hives, the bees passed the subterranean archway a month ago, and have nearly filled this compartment. On this, also, I have placed a super bell glass, which is beautifully stored. From a common cottage-straw hive I removed a bell glass super, three weeks ago, weighing 18 lb. This season I shall have nearly 200 lb. weight of surplus honey, and yet leave in each hive more than enough to last the producers till April 1865. Why should not cottagers cultivate bees? There is nothing to pay for pasture, very little labour is required, and that labour amusing, in taking care of them, and for very early virgin honey there may be had 1s 6d a pound. The poor cottager might thus easily pay his rent."

Italian Queens.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

Sir,—There is a general complaint among bee-keepers that they have but few swarms, (and those not until late in the season) many not having on an average more than one, from half a dozen stocks. The great drouth which we have had this summer, is generally supposed to be the principal cause, but it cannot be the sole one, as the complaint is heard every season. In my opinion it is chiefly owing to the inability of common bees to prepare themselves earlier for swarming on account of the common queens not being sufficiently prolific at the commencement of the season. To avoid this difficulty I have procured from L. L. Langstroth & Son, of Oxford, Butler Co., Ohio, Italian queen bees at a cost of ten dollars each in "green-backs." I was rather dubious as to whether they could be safely sent such a distance but was agreeably disappointed as they arrived in small boxes in perfect condition. They are very fine specimens as they certainly should be, coming from what I consider to be the "fountain-head" in America of this variety of bees. I was induced to procure them from having heard that they swam from ten (10) to twenty (20) days earlier than the common kind, and in this climate such a difference in time is sufficient to change into a profit the loss which generally arises with common bees. As a result of my experience, I have reason to believe that their qualities have been correctly represented by their breeders. Purchasers should be careful to obtain pure-bred queens, for the reason that those which are not pure-bred are useless in extending the breed.

I do not expect to have any queens to dispose of for at least one or two years, and I make the above statements from having been asked by several persons where they could be obtained, and from having seen inquiries in THE CANADA FARMER to the same effect. My queens came without delay, and without doubt other orders would receive as prompt attention.

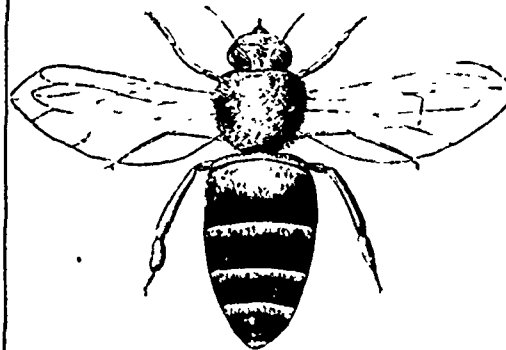
A. C. CASE.

Barton, Aug 1st, 1864.

FREAK OF BEES.—On the afternoon of Tuesday, 17th May, a swarm of bees descended the chimney of the drawing-room of Whitland Abbey, and alighted in a dense mass on the wall between the windows, which, though open at the time, they did not think fit to avail themselves of for exit, but remained perfectly quiet on the spot they had chosen. Towards dusk, one of the farm labourers was introduced, bearing a common straw hive and slate. In this he raked the whole lot with his hand, no disinclination thereto or disposition to sting him being evinced by the bees. Having covered the hive with the slate, it was placed in the proper position, on a small table, where it stood during the night, the inmates being allowed free egress through the hole at the bottom. On entering the room next morning, the bees were found flying about in all directions; and, upon the window being opened, they all speedily took their departure. However, strange to say, every one of them returned in the evening, and peaceably entered the hive, which was then carried to the garden and placed in an eligible situation. They have ever since taken most kindly to their new habitation, and appear now to be as busy and happy as bees can be. It is the largest swarm that any one remembers to have seen in this neighbourhood; and they must have travelled a long distance at their arrival, from the symptom of fatigue shown. No fire had been lit in the grate of the room since the warm, dry weather set in.—*Welchman.*

A SWARM WITH THREE QUEENS.—In the summer of 1856, I lived a swarm of bees, in Northern New York. Before they had all entered, they commenced rushing from the hive. I sprinkled them with cold water and turned them back, but they soon commenced rallying out again. I discovered a queen on the wing, near the hive, which I soon succeeded in getting to enter the hive. The bees soon became quiet, and those outside to make towards the entrance. While watching I discovered a second queen, which I carefully caught. Soon after, I saw still another, this I succeeded in catching. Suspecting that the one that I saw enter, had again issued, I retained the two I had caught, until I could watch and satisfy myself, if the swarm still retained a queen. They remained quiet and I took them to their permanent stand. In a few minutes I saw bees issue, mark their location, and start for the field. Satisfied that all was right, I killed the two queens I had caught. The swarm prospered, so there could be no doubt about the swarm having three queens.—L. L. FARMER, in *Rural New Yorker*.

Exhibition of Italian Bees and the Moveable Comb Hive.



ITALIAN WORKER ENLARGED.

WE had an opportunity of witnessing an interesting exhibition on the 25th ult., by Mr. J. T. Martin, of Tiffin, Ohio, of a colony of Italian bees in one of Langstroth's moveable comb hives. Mr. Martin is an enthusiastic apiarian, and on coming to visit some relatives near Weston who keep bees, brought a hive of Italian bees as a present to them. Learning that a number of parties interested in bee culture, would like to see the much talked of Italian or Ligurian bees he very kindly entered into arrangements to exhibit the hive he had brought with him in Mr. Fleming's garden on the day above mentioned, when a number of gentlemen and ladies assembled to see them. The advantages connected with the moveable comb hive were very manifest on this occasion. Mr. Martin exposed the whole colony to view, removing frame after frame with the bees attached, and appeared to have perfect command of the entire community of insect workers. The Italian bee is larger than the common bee, and a much more beautiful insect. It has three belts of a yellow colour across its body, whereas the common bee is plain black. The accompanying engraving of an Italian worker magnified, will give a better idea of this species of bee than any lengthened description could do. The Italian queen differs from the worker about in the same respects and proportion as in the case of the common bee, and by referring to the illustrations on the 19th page of our 2nd issue, and comparing them with the above engraving, a pretty fair idea will be had of the comparative size and appearance of the various classes of Italian bees. The Italian queen has a fourth yellow belt, of which a slight trace may be seen in the above cut of the worker. Mr. Martin handled the bees without any protection to his face or hands, and quieted them when excited by blowing a little tobacco smoke among them. No one could witness his expert management of them without feeling satisfied of the ease with which a person, having composure and self-command, can do what he pleases with these little insects. The Italian bees are considered preferable to the common ones chiefly on these accounts:—1st. They are more prolific and swarm earlier. 2nd. They are more hardy, and stand our winters better; and, 3rd. They will gather honey from sources unvisited by the common bees. Any parties who would like to see the above-mentioned hive of bees, can do so by calling at Mr. John C. Devins, Lot 20, 6th Concession, Township of York, about three miles north of Weston.

BEE PROFITS IN 1863.—We are indebted to Mr. Sheriff Treadwell for the following account of the bee operations carried on in 1863 by Mr. J. C. Marston, of L'Original:—

"I commenced in the spring with 40 hives; they increased during the summer to 86, from which I took 600 lbs. of pure honey, in top boxes, about 100 lbs. strained honey—and 25 lbs. wax. The price I received for the honey—in boxes averaged 9d. per lb., the strained do. 7½d., and the wax 1s. 3d., which will make, when footed up, the following total:—600 lbs. box honey, at 9d. per lb., £22 10s.; 100 lbs. strained do., at 7½d., £3 2s. 6d.; 25 lbs. wax, at 1s. 3d., £1 11s. 3d.; number of hives with bees sold, 43, at 15s. each, £32 5s.; total, £60 4s. 9d. The amount of honey raised in this section in the summer of 1862 was double that of 1863."