

remain to a great extent in the covered way.

This year arrangements had been made to secure plenty of drones, and I was able to study the method adopted to get rid of them. The first sign of it was that here and there a worker climbed on to a drone's back and nibbled at him in a playful way for a few seconds, generally at the base of the wings. The drone would shuffle on an inch or two and apparently think no more of it. In a few days these attentions became quite spiteful, and soon workers could be seen hanging on like little furies to the poor drones, and dragging them with many an indignity to the entrance. Sometimes a drone would force his way back; but in the end the unfortunate males had been so worried and hustled, that they became disheartened and no longer dared attempt to return. Doubtless they soon perished from cold and hunger, for the drone consumes much food, and is, I should imagine, quite incapable of procuring any outside the hive. As to workers stinging the drones, I saw no sign of it: not only would it appear to be unnecessary, but there would be some risk to the worker in attempting it. In the unkindly office just described, the same want of unanimity to which I formerly alluded seems to obtain amongst the workers. The greater number of these do not attempt to molest the drones. During the period of bitterest persecution I actually saw a worker feeding an expelled drone in the covered way near the mouth of the hive.

It has often been observed that the drones pack together in corners of the hive when their time of tribulation begins; but the packing seems to be a habit of theirs at any time. Early in the season one might see as many as thirteen or more drones

packed closely together on the comb. Perhaps two or three workers among them, but all the rest of the cluster were drones.

Propolis was carried in largely towards the end of the season, and again I saw a bee, itself laden with it, nibble off a piece from the load of another and chew it as it walked above the combs.

It is stated in our most valued books of instruction on matters apian that bees clean their antennæ by working them through the comb in an arrangement on the opposite foreleg; thus the right antenna is said to be cleaned by the left foreleg and vice versa. Far be it from me to suggest that this is not correct; but it is by no means invariable. I have often seen bees cleaning an antenna by means of the leg on the same side. This can best be observed with the drones. For obvious reasons they are very particular in grooming their antennæ, and they are also slower in their movements than the workers. Or if any one will offer his finger to a worker bee which has come into a sitting-room in the spring or autumn and which has become somewhat chilled, the bee will willingly climb on to it. Offer a drop of honey; and will go the little tongue like a flash and in a few moments the drop will have disappeared. Then our little friend will begin to clean its antennæ and with your finger close under your eyes the process can be clearly observed. It is quite probable that it will be seen to take place in the way I have described.

This concludes my observations for 1900. The observatory hive has again been such a trouble to me that I hope some of your readers may have profited by my advice and have started their own observations. I have a fine Cyprian queen ready for the season.—South Devon Enthusiast

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