

The New Method of Handling Bees.

BY JACOB ALPAUGH.

I SUPPOSE you are all anxious to hear a few words from me one way or another, at least I would judge so from the host of inquiries I have had lately. I have given up the notion of answering them all personally—they may find a few words of information in the following: Mr. Jones in his first article would lead you to believe that I was quite a long way behind the times, where he says that he thinks probably it is just the Hutchinson method when fully found out; and in his second article he tries more fully to explain how the method is operated, but yet he did not give one word of the secret that I intend charging for. Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Demaree try to explain the method, but neither one of them knows any more about it than I did before I found it out.

Most all bee-keepers have some serious objection to natural swarming for comb honey. Some hives will swarm too early—some too late, and some swarms will be too small to work well in the upper story, and often you have to put your sections on the old hives to give your bees employment, which is not the place to get nice comb honey, and the worst of all, you have to watch them all through the swarming season. The new method does away with all of the above objections. Now, I have done quite a lot of dividing to prevent swarming, and I have also done considerable shaking on to starters or full sheets of foundation to prevent swarming, and to get the bees started to work on sections when I wanted them; but I think, like most bee-keepers heretofore, I have made a failure of such practices, but with the new method, I can have my bees in fine shape for the clover flow, and working for comb honey when it comes, if I wish, without swarming or nearly so. You all know that there will be some crazy swarms, but of these there will be not more than three or four per cent. If I wish combs built under the new system, I can get about 90 per cent. of worker on an average from all ages of queens. If you want to produce your comb honey above sheets of foundation or starters (where it ought to be produced), you will only need half the usual number of spare hives; and you can have all young queens for next season with very little trouble and no expense. Now, laying Jones' first aside, you all know that a man commonly handles so many hives, say from 100 to 150 according to the season, but under the new method, you can handle them in one, two, or three different apiaries if not more than from six to ten miles away from home, and do it all yourself, if you have a horse to drive around from apiary to apiary.

A great many bee-keepers know that ever since I have had bees I have been inventing and experimenting which has cost me considerable, and now I claim I have something good; but the next question is, am I to charge for it, or am I to give it to the public free. If I make a charge it will be about two dollars, and I think, to anyone that has 50 or 75 colonies, it would be worth twenty times that much yearly. I do not want to be hard with my fellow bee-keepers, but I think I ought to have something for my expense and trouble. Let us have the voice of the people.

St. Thomas, (box 704) Dec. 19, 1891.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

A Letter From Australia.

DEAR SIR,—I notice in the Canadian Bee Journal of July 15th, 1891, you publish a "curious bee story," and add that you would be pleased if your subscribers would furnish further facts in reference to these bees. I am afraid the facts I have to furnish will considerably damp your enthusiasm as to this particular species. Our native Australian bee is small, black and stingless, looking indeed more like a tolerably robust black ant than a bee, they rarely store more than two or three pints of a thin, watery honey with a peculiar aromatic acid taste due, I think, to the large quantities of propolis, gathered from the encalypti, which they mix with their wax and in which their honey is stored. It may have valuable medicinal qualities, but as yet they are unknown.

We Australian bee-keepers have often heard that curious bee story with variations, but there were too many things connected with it that were palpably false, we wisely declined giving it any credence whatever. This wonderful bee tree was discovered in Tasmania by M. Guellment and his band of Ranakas. Ranakas cannot, and do not live in Tasmania, it is the name applied to the native coolie laborers (South Sea Islanders) of Queensland; it is but rarely individual specimens are seen in New South Wales, certainly not further South.

There are many bee-keepers in Tasmania, but so far as we can learn they are in utter ignorance of this most wonderful bee, and it was left to a foreigner passing through the colony to discover it. The mystery of this most extraordinary discovery may be explained when the fact becomes known that this honey to which most valuable and extraordinary medicinal qualities were attributed, was sold in Paris and London in small vials at a guinea each. A vial of it