

For the Canadian Bee Journal

Reply to "Critic on the Path."

OUR friend the "Critic on the Path" (I suppose he means war path) seems greatly alarmed that there will be too many bee-keepers. I judge from the spirit of his article that if he could obstruct the road to glory he would do so, thinking the conditions would be too crowded for his comfort when he arrived there. His alarm has no foundation except in his own selfish nature. Here in the State of Michigan wherever you find one successful bee-keeper you will also find from fifty to a hundred others in the same vicinity who have embarked in the business and given it up in disgust. This makes good Mr. Doolittle's statement that there is but one person in five thousand that is adapted to bee-keeping. Well, enough of this "let us all go fishing."

JOHN DEITZ.

Ellington, Mich.

For the Canadian Bee Journal.

BUCKWHEAT HONEY.

ON page 815, Vol. III., CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL, in his article, "Too much poor honey sold," Mr. McEvoy speaks of buckwheat honey as "black trash" and says he does not want any of it about him. Now, while I do not doubt that friend M. is sincere in what he writes, yet it seems to me he must have a very poor locality for the production of buckwheat honey. It is a well known fact that some districts are not favorable to the production of buckwheat honey. Here we seldom fail to get a fair yield from buckwheat, and some seasons we get an immense flow and it is far from being black trash. It is light in color, sometimes only a shade darker than basswood, and as to flavor, many of our customers prefer it to linden or clover.

We have tested it for wintering and when well ripened—and honey of any kind should never be used for winter stores that is not well ripened—we have found nothing better. In many localities buckwheat honey is gathered so late in the season that it does not have time to ripen before winter, and is thin, watery, and neither fit for winter stores nor for table use.

What Friend M. says in regard to poor honey hurting the market, we have found to be true, and I believe it would be better if none but first-class well ripened honey were put on the market.

O. G. RUSSELL.

Afton, N.Y., Jan. 13, '88.

The difference in honey from various districts is noticeable and especially so with buckwheat, some being quite light.

Many prefer it to other flavors when they become accustomed to it. One of our best customers who always ordered the best clover, linden or thistle, sent for a can of buckwheat last time as his good lady liked the flavor. Heather honey brings half a dollar a pound in the London market. Its taste is more decided than our buckwheat, and were you to hand it to some of your friends they would wonder what trash that was, yet it is sought after and highly prized. No doubt early gathered, well ripened buckwheat would be appreciated by those accustomed to it. See how smokers appreciate a special brand of tobacco or cigar, yet how many of us there are who could not be hired to taste it. Custom has much to do with it.

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WINTERING IN A LIGHT CELLAR.

FRIEND BRIDGES' SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT.

NOTICE that some of the readers of the C.B.J. are making inquiries about wintering bees in a light cellar, and as my name was mentioned in the last number with reference to the subject, I will give you my experience. I gave you an article last winter on that subject, which will be found on the 23rd Feb., 1887. I wintered my bees last winter in a light cellar and they came out in good condition, not losing so much as one colony. I have 93 colonies in my cellar this winter, and they are in the light. The question will be asked, Do they not fly to the window? Yes, they do, and if they were kept in total darkness as all bee-keepers direct, they would die in their hives. It is a common thing to take out hives in the spring, half full of dead bees, with the combs mouldy and rotten. This would not be the case if they were in a light room. There are very few dead bees in my hives, for when they get ready to die they come out and fly to the window if they are able to do so—if not, they fall to the floor. My bees are dying considerably faster this winter than they did last winter, which can be easily accounted for. Last winter they went into winter quarters with young bees, this winter they went into winter quarters with old bees. No man can put 100 colonies of bees into a cellar in the fall and bring them all out in the spring; they will be sure to die off more or less any winter; simply keeping them in a dark place will not keep them from dying. My experience is that they can be put in a light room with a temperature under 47°. I aim to keep mine as near 45° as pos-