

## The Apiary.

### The Koehler Secret Revealed—A New Mode of Propagating Ligurians.

MR. KOEHLER has recently made his process public in the following article, which appeared in the *German Bee Journal*:—

Now as to the operation itself. It is founded on my observation, that during many fine forenoons and afternoons the air is still warm enough for queens to fly out when drones usually have not commenced flying, or have ceased to take wing. Until, therefore, the young queens become fertilised we must compel the Italian queens and drones to go forth at such times as the German drones cannot possibly be abroad. The time during which drones are on the wing seldom extends with us to later than 4 or 5 o'clock p.m. If, therefore, we have one or more colonies, with young queens which we know to a certainty have not yet been fertilised, we place these hives for three, four, or five days in a perfectly dark and cool cellar, and with them also the stock which contains the Italian drones. Whenever a very warm and sunny day occurs, we watch the German stocks until the drones have ceased their flight. As soon as this occurs we restore the hives containing the Italian queens and drones to their accustomed stands, and set them at liberty after giving to each a cupful of their liquid honey. The queen and drones being ardent, and having been unable to fly for days, the bees excited by the honey and their previous confinement, become so eager after flight, that all play as if mad, and fertilisation follows. We must, however, be careful to return to the cellar in the evening every colony the queen of which has not been seen to return with the sign of fertilisation, and repeat the process until it is certain that the desired result has been attained. This is essential, because it is well known that under ordinary circumstances some queens take flight several times before they succeed in meeting with a drone. How much more, therefore, must this be the case under the foregoing management, whereby the number of available drones is limited to those only which exist in the few Italian stocks?

But now I will make a second communication, which will certainly also be agreeable to you. I do not know whether you give the preference to natural or to artificial swarms. My practice combines both, as by it I obtain natural swarms by an artificial process, and can at the same time with one good Ligurian stock Italianize a dozen colonies with the least possible trouble. The process is as follows:—We take a hive from which a swarm has just issued, and put it in the place of another very populous colony. After nine days, by means of the population received from the removed hive, it will certainly swarm again. If it is now shifted to the stand of another strong stock, it will, after two or three days, swarm again. We continue this process as long as we can hear queens piping in the hive of an evening. Under favourable circumstances we may in this way obtain ten to twelve swarms, as the first hive supplies the queens and the others the bees. If, therefore, we have one or two Italian stocks, and feed them well early in the spring, say from the 20th of March, especially if they are well supplied with pollen, we may be sure that these hives will swarm first. By transposing them in this way with German stocks we shall obtain swarms with Italian queens and German bees.

The advantages offered by my system are very great. In the first place we secure early swarms with young queens, and these queens are generally larger and better than those which bees hatch by compulsion. How quickly also can we Italianize a hive; for it is only changing places with two hives and the work is done. We can also put the swarms in any place we choose, which is less trouble than with artificial swarms, which we cannot always establish where we would wish to have them. We know also the day and the hour in which to expect a swarm, for the second appears in nine days after the first removal, the third three days after this, the fourth on the next day, and so on. If we still hear queens piping after the last removal, the stock will swarm to-morrow, and if we convey it into a dark cool cellar in the evening, we can cause it to swarm at any hour we please by bringing it out into the light and sunshine, and feeding it moderately.

It follows, as a matter of course, that the foregoing method can only be practised with single hives, which can be moved from place to place although they may have fixed combs. Those who have bee-houses can, however, adopt it, because they can transfer their hives from one place to another.

I have still to add one remark:—The process for securing pure fertilisation can only be relied on early in the season, and not towards the end, for it

often happens that certain stocks which have hatched young queens will, as soon as they are fertilised, begin to expel their drones, as I have observed to be the case this year. In such instances the drones do not cease flying so punctually as usual, but often continue on the wing from early in the morning until quite late in the day. We must not, therefore, be too late in breeding Italian queens, and liberal and judicious feeding is and will be the surest means of expediting it.

In the hope that you will be enabled to make experiments, the results of which may not be marred by any unforeseen accident, and desiring that you may be satisfied by experience of the value of my method, I am, &c., KOEHLER.

BEES.—One of our correspondents in this city sends us the following:—The deficiency of flowers in Toronto gardens has driven the bees to the sugar factories. At Hessin's Sugar Bakery, on King street, these industrious insects may be seen as thick as flies are ordinarily in such situations. They go in and out of the workshop, and no doubt appropriate every morsel they can get at. Immense numbers are killed, but it does not seem to thin the comers. Query.—Do bees, when fed on sugar, produce honey? If so, in what proportion?

## The Household.

### Bad News for the Rats

RECENT experiments show that squills (*Scylla maritima*), the enormous bulbous root of which is much used in medicine, is not only a powerful poison for rodents, but also one they are very fond of. The way of preparing it for the desired purpose is as follows: One of the bulbs is cut into slices, hashed and bruised, then done in the can with fat, which is afterwards strained through a cloth and poured into broken plates and saucers, to be placed in the cellars and other places infested with rats, mice, &c. To prevent dogs and poultry from eating of this poisonous compound in stables, pigeon-houses, or farmyards, it may be put into a wooden box, about a foot and a half long, and having a hole at each end. The rat gets in at one end and goes out at the other, after partaking of the noxious food, which soon kills it. Squills may also be reduced to powder for the same purpose, by bruising them in a mortar to a pulp, which is afterwards incorporated with as much flour as it will hold. This paste is then rolled out, as they do for a pudding, then cut into shreds, which are left to dry on hurdles or on sheets of pasteboard, and are afterwards pounded in a mortar. The powder thus obtained will keep for years, and may be put into boxes or barrels. If manufactured on a large scale, it may become a profitable article of exportation. In Algeria squills cost nothing, the country being absolutely overrun with them.—*English Paper*.

### How to Keep Silk.

SILK articles should not be folded in white paper as the chloride of lime used in bleaching the paper will probably impair the color of the silk. Brown or blue paper is better; the yellowish, smooth, India paper is the best of all. Silk intended for dress should not be kept long in the house before it is made up, as lying in the folds will have a tendency to impair its durability by causing it to cut or split, particularly if the silk has been thickened by gum. Thread lace veils are very easily cut. But dresses of velvet should not be laid by with any weight above them; if the nap of a thin velvet is laid down, it is not possible to raise it up again. Hard silk should never be wrinkled, because the thread is easily broken in the crease, and it can never be rectified. The way to take wrinkles out of silk scarfs and handkerchiefs is to moisten the surface evenly with a sponge and some weak glue, and then pin the silk with some toilet pins on a mattress or feather bed, taking pains to draw out the silk as tight as possible. When dry, the wrinkles will have disappeared. The reason of this is obvious to every person. Some silk articles should be moistened with weak glue or gum water, and the wrinkles ironed out by a hot flat-iron on the wrong side.—*Leisure Hour*.

HERBS.—Every housekeeper, where there is a garden attached to the premises, should have her bed of herbs of all the different varieties used in a family. They are very hardy, and once cultivated they will not soon be given up

“Cheaper than dirt” is the pertinent inscription on a case of soap in an apothecary's window.

WHEN the Hindoo priest is about to baptise an infant, he utters the following beautiful sentiments: “Little baby, thou enterest the world weeping, while all around thee smile. Continue so to live that you may depart in smiles, while all around you weep.”

TEST YOUR KEROSENE.—In view of the many lamp explosions resulting almost invariably from the use of bad kerosene, we urge upon the heads of families the importance of testing their oil before use in the lamp. This may be readily done by any man, woman or child, by means of a thermometer, a little warm water, and a tablespoonful of oil. Fill the cup with warm water, the temperature of which is to be brought to 110 deg. Fah. Pour the oil on the water; apply flame to the floating oil by match or otherwise. If the oil is unsafe it will take fire, and its use in the lamp is dangerous, for it is liable to explode. But if the oil is safe and good it will not take fire. All persons who sell Kerosene that will not stand the fire test at 110 degrees, are liable to prosecution.—*Ex*.

AN IMPERFECT ANGEL.—One of the younger members of the French Legation at Washington is noted for his gallant and exquisite compliments. One evening, at a “german” at Governor Morgan's, he was introduced to a witty New York lady who had an ugly flat nose. The polite Frenchman discreetly complimented her on her dancing, to which she archly replied, “Ah! I have heard you are flatterer, but you cannot find it in your heart to compliment me on my personal beauty, so you praise my dancing.” “Madam,” was the reply, with a Parisian bow, “you are an angel from heaven, but you fell on your nose.”—*Exchange*.

## Miscellaneous.

### The Trial of the Crows.

At a recent meeting of the “East Lothian Agricultural Club,” Mr. Durie, Barney mains, in speaking to a motion, of which he had given notice at last meeting, as to the desirableness of diminishing the number of crows (rooks), said that he was certain that crows did an immense amount of damage to every farmer in the county. Mr. Scott Skirving, and other friends of the crows, said that they killed vermin. No doubt they did; but if they could put the amount of damage against the amount of good they did, the balance would be found to be on the wrong side for the farmer. He did not want their entire extirpation, but simply that they should be kept down, say to about half the number there were at present. He moved a resolution to the effect that the club was of opinion that the number of crows should be diminished, and that the proprietors should be communicated with, in the hope of their taking means to destroy them in their districts.

The CHAIRMAN stated that many years ago an application was made to the Earl of Wemyss to allow persons to kill crows in Amisfield Park. His Lordship gave orders that every one should be killed, and 30,000 were supposed to have been destroyed in two days. From that day to this, not a crow had been allowed to build in the Park. He did not think the crows were so plentiful in the county as they once were, but they were still too numerous.

Mr. MILL, Lugate, said he really thought that to a large extent the crows were the farmer's friends. They preserved the crops from grubs, and he thought it would be for their advantage if magpies and hawks were allowed to live, as they were many years ago, for the purpose of keeping down the small birds.

Mr. ELDER, Bearford, thought crows kept in a limited number would do good, but not in their present number. He knew that crows were fond of worms and grubs, but he also knew that they liked wheat, especially when coming through the ground. They might sow to the extent of a bushel of wheat less per acre but for the crows. If those who spoke in favour of the crows had visits from as many of them as he had, they would have a different opinion.

Mr. ELLIOTT, Abbey Mains, seconded Mr. Durie's motion.

Mr. JENKINSON, Kidlaw, said that the crows “harried” a great number of the partridges' nests—otherwise, he had never seen them do any harm.

Mr. SMITH, Whittingham, said his opinion was not confined to this district—that the crows were very destructive. They took up, for instance, seed potatoes when they were planted. He had known them carry off these potatoes in their bills, and drop them when pursued. Whatever might be the natural