

quest of difficulties. The pursuit is too fascinating to be abandoned, so long as there are available precautions against danger. There is also a dash of the heroic about it, which gives it a charm for certain minds, my own among the number.

WM. F. CLARKE.

Guelph, Dec. 1, 1885.

We have before heard of friend Clarke's non-infallibility to bee-stings. Have you ever tried the solution of ammonia as an internal remedy? We have a good deal of faith in it. Friend Root, in a late issue of *Gleanings* says he does not care very much for drugs of any kind used in this connection. The writer has not since the experience recorded on p. 494-5 been stung at all; when such does occur, however, the effects will be noted.—M.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

#### THE PREVENTION OF AFTER SWARMS.

**R**ECEIVING valuable hints myself in the CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL, I will contribute my own observations upon "after swarming and upon non-swarming." Considering as I do that the highest production of comb honey can be best secured by non-swarming hives, and increase not being desirable it has been my aim to manage to prevent all natural swarms.

I have not had less than 70 colonies in the spring for a number of years. Losses here in wintering and by spring-dwindling, so far as this writer's observations extend, are entirely traceable to neglect. Robbing can be prevented if seen, and queenlessness provided for, but not in time by the negligent dilatory master of an apiary.

We winter entirely on the summer stands and need no other protection than a tight roof and a good porous covering on the frames. Wheat chaff in a bag is the favorite, because handy and cheap. We need not have to restore and fill long lines of empty hives in the spring, lost by winter-killing.

It will be admitted, we think, that 40,000 bees will produce more surplus honey in one colony than if divided in two, and 60,000 more than two of 30,000, provided the proper conditions as to room and facilities are provided. It may be attempted to disprove this by a *reductio ad absurdum*, extending in the figures, but the practical point and practical limit is what we are after. We know that many apiaries swarm so much as sadly to interfere with surplus honey production. We also know that the old assertion—where it

originated we know not—that bees will not swarm if they have plenty of room, is incorrect. In Mr. Langstroth's great work it is so stated.

If that were true in all cases we would have a perfect check upon swarming.

But in a majority of cases it can be relied upon, if care be taken that a good healthy queen is in the hives. For several years I have been able to keep down below one-fourth increase by natural swarms, and have not had an after-swarm in many years.

The 10 frame L hive is used by me and at the proper time they are contracted to 8 or 9 frames, depending upon the condition of, and amount of brood in the hive.

The contraction is done to force the bees into the cases and right here the superiority of the 10 frame hive is claimed—for it gives the larger area of storage room above—a vital point. Then no matter how fast honey flows, even as high as 17 lbs. in a day shown on the scales, room can be provided by tiering up and taking off the cases just as soon as capped. Now, supposing that when two or three cases full of section half filled with honey, and of course with bees, they lose a queen and swarm out, heavily, or if the case be such the old queen leaves, leaving say the equivalent of some sheets of eggs and brood in all stages of growth.

If a large swarm it takes the great working force of the hive and the parent colony would not in that *honey season* finish the cases on the hive. We are working for comb honey, observe. If we take off the cases with the bees in them take out the brood combs below, and after cutting away all but one or two selected cells to remain in the old hive, take at least three combs of brood and bees to the new swarm, filling out to eight frames with foundation and then place the cases on the new stand, we have a honey producer of the first class.

By uniting two old ones in like condition as left above, we can in a very few days have another.

With long experience I have not known either the prime or united colonies to swarm again.

Others may have tried this plan and not have succeeded so well as the writer. Here it has succeeded well, and I have from each of several colonies taken 250 lbs. of honey.

J. W. PORTER.

Charlottesville, Va., Nov. 16th, '85.

You are right in maintaining that large strong colonies give better results than smaller ones. We would prefer 40,000 bees in one hive, if pounds of honey was the object to be gained, than