

Not Gloves, But Oil of Wintergreen For The Hands.

A SUGGESTION FROM A DOCTOR IN AUSTRALIA.

DEARSIR:—The May numbers of *Gleanings* arrived a few days ago, and I see that the writers in the *Ladies' Conversazione* are much exercised in their minds on the subject of gloves for apiary work, and all sorts of materials are recommended, from pigs'-skin to sheep's-wool. Gloves are no doubt of use to keep the hands clean and soft; but I want to tell the ladies that, so far as stings are concerned, they can do without any covering for the hands. Just let them get some oil of wintergreen and rub a few drops of it over their hands; and if they can get a bee to sting, unless it is hurt, they are cleverer than I am.

It is now mid-winter here. The day is dull and threatening rain, but the temperature is not low enough to keep bees indoors; the day, however, is of the kind on which they are usually cross; but just now I went out, and, after putting on a veil and rubbing my hands with oil of wintergreen, I removed the cover of a hive and stripped off the mat, which was stuck down with propolis. The bees came at me in fine style, and dozens of them struck my hands; but as a rule they went off at once. Some remained, and curved their bodies around so that it took some strength of mind so prevent me from knocking them off; but they always thought better of it before the sting went in. I then jarred the hive and jerked my hands over the frames; but, though numbers of bees struck my hands, I was quite unable to get one to sting. I repeated this with two other hives, with similar results.

I know that the use of oil of wintergreen in this way is not new; and Mr. Cheshire, in his "Bees and Bee-keeping." Vol. II., describes some experiments similar to the above which he and Mr. Simmins conducted; but they do not seem to have taken root, and I noticed that, in your review of Cheshire's work, you do not mention it. I feel convinced, however, that, were the fact more generally known, gloves for handling bees would soon become things of the past.

The smell of oil of wintergreen is not disagreeable, and it does not soil the hands. It is, moreover, easily washed off afterward. Cheshire says that, in England, it is often adulterated, and it is here also; but, of course, I know that they wouldn't do anything like that in America. They might, though, in Canada.

H. MILLER, M. D.

Warrnambool, Victoria, Australia, June 29.

[Is not oil of wintergreen the chief ingredient of apifuge, a substance that is sold in England as a preventive of bee-stings when smeared over the hands? The stuff did not prevent the bees from stinging our hands, although it did seem to make them hesitate a little. We accept the very fine compliment you pay us Americans. We wish we deserved it.]—Gleanings. E. R.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

Wintering Bees in Manitoba.

SIR:—Would you kindly explain in your next issue of the *Bee Journal* what you consider would be the best way to winter bees in Manitoba, that is what shape to put them in to bring them through the extreme cold of a Manitoba winter. Yours truly,

ALEX TRIMBLE,

Hampshire Mills, Aug. 20th, 91.

Some people in Manitoba have wintered their bees splendidly, by setting them in a row close together, and piling prairie sods on the back and at the ends, about two feet in thickness, leaving a space of about one foot between the sod and the hive then packing them all around and on the top with chaff, say one foot, the sods on top of the chaff. The entrance was left open in front, as the hive sat about two feet back under the sod. The sods were piled up like bricks in front, and little poles on them, which left a space of about two feet in front of entrance, then plenty of straw was piled over this space, some left the space open except in the coldest weather. It was a sort of bee-caves on top of ground. One of these sod caves would last for years, and they are quickly and easily made. Some have wintered out-doors without any protection at all, as the atmosphere is so dry, that the bees do not suffer from the intense cold like they would in a damp atmosphere. Some have driven a few stakes down around the hives, putting chaff in next to the hive, and long straw next to the stakes. We do not think the intense cold of the North West any serious objection to wintering because the dryness of the atmosphere makes up for the difference in temperature.

* * * Secretaries of local associations are requested to forward us, at the earliest possible moment, the dates of their meetings; and when the convention is over, a full report of the proceedings.