

Canadian Thistles.

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THE WINTERING PROBLEMS.

In case your readers may think me a crank on the wintering problem, I will promise here and now, not to again refer to the subject for a century or thereabouts, if I am only permitted to state that I wintered a strong colony on four Langstroth combs of sealed honey. I emphasize the word strong because two normal colonies were united, queens and all, on or about the 5th Nov. last, and run into a prepared hive, containing the above number of combs, on either side of which was an ordinary 1 inch thick division board or dummy. On Feb'y 10th, when the other colonies were enjoying a midwinter flight, not a single bee made its exit from this hive. Thinking that I had possibly overdone the matter, I made a close scrutiny of the interior, and was pleased to find the inmates so snugly ensconced in their quarters, that I left them to their own sweet will, and found that on the 11th of March they had actually rubbed their peepers sufficiently to take a glimpse of the outside world, just to be in the fashion. Had this colony been confined to their winter quarters for one month only, instead of three-and-one-half months, they could scarcely have shown less signs of requiring a flight.

Two more combs have since been added, although there was still a good quantity of honey remaining. Of course "one swallow does not make a summer" but the above experiment only proves what has already been proven with hundreds of colonies previously. Who says that bees need empty comb to cluster on in winter?

NO-BEE-WAY SECTIONS.

Say Mr. Editor and Mr. Pettit, dare I growl, in a friendly way, just a little bit at the manner in which you both have jumped on the new fad with your four feet. Two feet a piece I mean, and no insinuations as to the size of them either. Ye editor objects (see page 197) to any more odd sizes of sections. Well, so do I. More than that, I also object to changing styles of supers or fixtures, if it can possibly be avoided; but if there is any shape of section, or method of securing comb honey that will realize better results, I want to know that system.

That no-bee-way sections, with ordinary cleated separators, will produce better filled sections, or those having fewer pop-holes, unless FREER communication is afforded the bees throughout the supers, can hardly be expected, although the first two factors will succeed in having the comb built nearer the edge of the wood. The very fact that Mr. Pettit advocates a perforated divider, in order to secure better filled sections at the sides of the supers, goes to prove that he himself believes in such a system to some extent at least.

Mr. Pettit too (page 203) thinks the plain section a delusion and a snare in every count. If such is actually the case how foolish it is for bee-keepers to attempt a change, to say nothing of the many practical apiarists who have for years been producing good comb honey, and securing even better prices for such, than for that harvested in the old fashion. Well I won't argue the point any further, but simply state that having been born an April fool, I'll be foolish enough to experiment with what I have for some years past desired to try, hoping that I may not meet with disappointment. I am, however, free to confess that a separator which does not admit of free access from one section to another is not going to accomplish much better results in so far as diminishing the amount of pop holes is concerned, and I therefore think a cleated, perforated separator superior to one having horizontal openings, unless said openings are a bee space wide, a thing, by the way, I understand, the fence does not afford, for fear the bees might give the surface of the comb a ridgy appearance, as already referred to by Mr. Pettit on several different occasions.

RENDERING WAX BY STEAM.

As promised the readers of THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL I will now give the results of my experiments with the Improved Steam Swiss Wax Extractor in conjunction with the Hatch Wax Press, as illustrated in the A B C of Bee Culture.

As already stated, I had my doubts as to the quantity of wax secured in rendering old combs in water by the gunney sack process, and my belief that steam would secure better results as to quantity and quality. Well after trying both, I must admit that it all depends on how a person goes about the tests, and how thoroughly they are carried out.

First Test—A quantity of old combs were crushed in cold water, and allowed to soak for two days, in order to allow the