



## APIARY.

### OFFICERS OF THE ONTARIO BEE-KEEPERS ASSOCIATION.

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### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Will Mr. D. A. Jones please answer the following questions in the CANADIAN FARMER?

1. Are queens raised by driving colonies to the necessity of raising them, as stated in Cook's Manual, Ch. 9, as good in every respect as if raised in the usual way?

2. On page 177 of Cook's Manual, we are informed of the evils of natural swarming, while on page 6 of the specimen number sent around last year there is objection made to dividing, rather recommending swarming. Which is really best is best known to those who have had most experience. Please state for the benefit of those who have had less experience.

EDWARD MOORE.

Barrie, May 27th, 1882.

### REPLY.

1. Colonies forced to raise queens, not from strength or the swarming impulse, are not usually as good or as long lived as those raised under the more favorable condition.

2. Those who have not had much experience should not practice artificial swarming, as natural swarming is the best unless the artificial swarming is done by an experienced person and then carefully and properly done.

D. A. JONES.

### CURIOSITIES OF BEES.

The London Times gives its readers the following as some of the "curiosities of bees," which were believed in at "not times." The modern bee-keeper will smile (and perhaps audibly, too) at many of the statements:

According to Virgil, Jupiter gave the bee its marvelous habits, because bees fed him with honey when, as an infant, he lay concealed in the Cretan cave from his father's search. The Curetes, a Cretan tribe, used to dance round the babe and drown his cries by rattling brazen cymbals, whence comes the origin of swarms of bees at the present day being pursued with much clanging of keys against frying-pans, the belief being universal that this noise is agreeable to them. Indeed, Pliny, with questionable logic, argues, because this clatter is always made when bees swarm, therefore they must be gifted with the sense of hearing.

Kirby, who wrote a most valuable monograph on bees, estimated that there are about two hundred and fifty species of them in England.

It is generally supposed that those bees which are peculiar to the New World are destitute of all offensive weapons. Humboldt, however, explains that they have stings, though comparatively feeble ones, and they use them very seldom—only, in short,

when irritated and forced to defend themselves. While seated on the peak over Caracas, in South America, he tells us, "determining the dip of the needle, I found my hands covered with a species of hairy bee, a little smaller than the honey-bee of the north of Europe. These insects made their nests in the ground, they seldom fly and from the slowness of their movements I should have supposed they were benumbed by the cold of the mountain. The people call them *angelitos* (little angels), because they very seldom sting" (Cosmos, i. 435).

Among the numerous tribes of leaf-cutting and mason bees common in England, most possessors of gardens must have noticed the ravages of the *megachile centuncularis*, one of the former class. It is much smaller than the hive bee, and cuts little segments, as clear as if punched out by a machine, from the leaves of roses and peas. The operation is very speedily performed when the bee has once made her choice; the strong mandibles go to work, and soon the bee flies off with her green load. If followed, it will be found that her nest is situated in some palisade or gate-post. The creature runs her tunnels into the wood by means of these powerful jaws, and then lines them with the pieces of leaf. They are not fastened together, but the cells are honey tight, and as fast as they are lined with leaves an egg is dropped into each. Perhaps Virgil, Pliny, and the other ancient writers who speak of bees carrying ballast to steady themselves in windy weather, had witnessed the doings of leaf-cutting bees, and confounded them with hive-bees.

The working bee never lives longer than nine months, they labor so incessantly it is supposed they never sleep. The daily consumption and waste of a large hive of bees in summer may be taken at two pounds of honey; it will show the industry of the working bees to bear in mind that, beyond this, such a hive in favorable weather will often accumulate honey to the amount of four and six pounds daily. Indeed it is upon record that a hive once gained twenty pounds of it in two days.

It is curious that even wild bees can soon be taught to recognize and refrain from attacking people who approach them. No wonder that the ancients esteemed them as divine; that their poet laureate, according to the Platonic philosophy, assigns them "a participation in the Supreme mind and in heavenly influences;" and that another speaks of their power of presaging wind and fine weather. Modern science points out that the fructifying of many flowers is due to the labor of bees in mingling the pollen; and most gardeners must have noticed the difficulty of preserving a pure strain of any plant when these active workmen have access to other varieties of it.

### SIX FACTS FOR BEGINNERS.

I will offer for publication a few facts which every bee-keeper ought to know:

1. That the life of a worker bee during the working season is only from six to eight weeks' duration and that a large majority of them never live to see seven weeks.

2. That a worker is from five to six days old before it comes out of the hive for the first time to take an airing, and that it is from fourteen to sixteen days old before it begins to gather either pollen or honey.

3. That all swarms engaged in building comb, when they have not a fertile queen build only drone comb, and that all the comb in the lower or breeding

apartment should be worker or brood comb, except a very small quantity of drone comb, four inches square being amply sufficient.

4. That the more prolific the queen is the more young bees you have, and the more surplus honey will be gathered, other things being equal.

5. That you ought never to cut moldy comb out of the hive, for the reason you should never allow it to become moldy.

6. That you ought never to double swarms or stocks of bees in the fall, because you ought to attend to that and make them strong during the summer by taking brood from the strong stock and giving it to the weaker.

### HOW BEES WINTERED IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

Written for the CANADIAN FARMER.

I thought I would contribute my mite to the bee-keepers of Canada by handing in my report (although not a very brilliant one) of last winter.

After doubling up weak colonies in the fall, I started into winter quarters with ten stocks prepared as follows: five on summer stands packed with six inches buckwheat hulls around and on top, and five in a dark room, upstairs, where the thermometer ranged from 20 to 36 degrees. Each had a division board on each side with chaff cushions, loose chaff or hulls in upper story, and confined in from five to six combs.

Now for the result. April 18th, those wintered inside were brought out with four alive, and four alive outside; but the worse was not over then, for they have since dwindled to five stocks, three of which were wintered inside and two outside. I find that those wintered outside suffered most from spring dwindling, if that be possible, than those wintered inside. They would get to robbing in spite of all I could do. I wonder how Mr. Jones gets his bees to cover the combs down to the bottom when they are weak, for I found trouble with my shallow L. frames. Perhaps he never has any weak swarms.

It has been one of the coldest winters ever known in New Brunswick, with a very cold and late spring. The first pollen was gathered on May 6th. I have come to the conclusion that it won't pay to winter bees on summer stands here, as there are no warm days for them to fly. Between Dec. 1st and April 1st the thermometer never got higher than 35 or 40 degrees, and that only two or three times.

On June 5th we went out to try to buy a few hives of bees but found it impossible, as others were as badly off, if not worse, than myself. One man had sixteen stocks last fall and came through with only seven, all very weak. Some had lost all.

I think that the members of the Ontario Bee-Keepers' Association must be asleep. I thought that each member was to send in his report by May or June 1st. How many have done it? Some good articles have appeared from Mr. D. A. Jones, Hon. L. Wallbridge and a very few others, but these gentlemen have not said a word about last winter.

Wake up, bee-keepers, and write for your paper, and don't let it go down. If each member would write two articles a year it would give four every week, which would be a great help to Mr. McKnight.

I see by my paper that C. R. Tench contemplates starting a bee journal. His subscribers will have to do better for him than they do for the FARMER, or he would not be able to get matter enough. Should he start it I will give him my aid the first year, if not

too high in price, and promise to write three or four articles for it to the best of my ability. With regard to size, I would suggest eight pages, 6x9, and be issued semi-monthly at about 50c per year. Of course this is only a suggestion and must be taken with due allowance.

S. G. ECCLES.

Mouth of Netepet, King's Co., N. B., June 19th, 1882.

### WASTED SWEETNESS.

Mr. W. Z. Hutchinson in the *Burr's New Yorker* says:

"There is, probably, enough honey that goes to waste for want of bees to gather it, to sweeten all the pies, cakes and cookies that are baked. Upon nearly every eighty acre farm there is enough honey secreted by the flowers each year to furnish its owner with sweetening power from honey-harvest to honey-harvest. It is admitted by our best apiarists that a few colonies in a place give better results than a large number, therefore if the bees were scattered about, a few colonies at each farm, there would not be so much sweetness wasted. To be sure, there are, and probably always will be, people who make a specialty of bee-keeping, owning their hundreds of colonies; and that is all right; it is to such persons as these that we are indebted for the improvements that have made bee-culture the safe, pleasant and profitable pursuit it is; but this need not deter any farmer from keeping a few colonies of bees that will supply his table with that most delicious and healthful of sweets, pure honey. They will probably find bee-keeping to be one of the most fascinating occupations in which they were ever engaged."

### ABSCONDING COLONIES.

California bees are naughty this season. They have gotten into the habit of absconding at a terrible rate. One man informs the *California Apiculturist* that he has captured thirty-two, another twenty, another thirteen, and many others various numbers. These have been captured mostly by placing hives and boxes out upon the sides of the mountains or in tree tops. One gentleman says that he had a number of hives piled up near his house; his attention was called to a few bees, cleaning out a hive, the next day, about 11 o'clock, a swarm came and took possession of the same hive. He was clearly of the opinion that the bees seen there the day previous were members of the same swarm, and who were in search of a dwelling in which to move. The same thing was noticed several times with like results.

A hive in June is a perfect study, a model of order, work, neatness and beauty. About nine o'clock at night you can not do better than listen for a quarter of an hour by your hives, and you will hear an oratorio sweeter and richer than you ever heard in Exeter Hall. Treble, tenor and bass are blended in richest harmony; sometimes it sounds as the distant hum of great city, and at other times as if the apian choristers were attempting halleluiahs which will swell from earth to heaven when all things are put right.

THERE is no more wholesome or delicious fruit on earth than the Wild Strawberry, and there is no more effectual remedy for Cholera, Dysentery, Cramps and other summer complaints of infants or adults, than Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry.