

For the Canadian Bee Journal

Chapman Honey Plant.

SUPPLIED FREE BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

THE "Chapman Honey Plant" has been placed by the Dept. of Agriculture upon the "free list." All residents of the United States who desire to procure the seed can do so by addressing Hon. Norman J. Colman, Commissioner of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., or it can be procured through their representatives in Congress.

My object in notifying apiculturists and others who get the benefit of your valuable journal, of this opportunity to get this seed gratis is that I have been paid for the seed I furnished the Dept., and I want our tax-payers to get the benefit due them, and not permit the seed to waste in the Seed Dept. at Washington. Your most excellent JOURNAL is, I conceive, read very extensively in the United States, hence you will confer a favor upon your "Yankee" readers by noticing this in your JOURNAL.

H. CHAPMAN.

Versailles, N.Y., Feb. 2, 1888.

We are glad to observe that the Chapman honey plant has been taken hold of by the United States Government, and it shows the extreme unselfishness of friend C. that he should be anxious to let every U.S. bee-keeper know this. By so doing he is virtually putting lots of money out of his own pocket which otherwise he might receive.

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OBJECTS TO VIPERS BUGLOSS.

I CANNOT refrain from addressing a few lines to you sir, in protest, when I find you recommending on page 938 a pestilent weed like Vipers Bugloss to be sown as a honey producer on the waste rocky lands of Muskoka, and I may also add elsewhere, for it is not the first time the great influence you possess as an authority on everything pertaining to bee culture, has been used in bringing this weed into notice. Now I hold that however important the honey interest may be it will never justify the spreading of weeds known to be injurious to the agricultural interests of the country. I am informed that this is the noted blue thistle of the Shenandoah valley, and if so we do not want it in Canada. About ten years ago I noticed, while driving in the country, on the roadside a patch of this plant and as bees (principally wild bees) and insects seemed to visit the flowers freely I took some of the young plants home; in course of

time the seeds were scattered. I am now informed that the owner of the farm adjoining the garden where it was planted, had been trying to eradicate it from his fields for several years past.

I submit, Mr. Editor, that Canadian bee-keepers ought to rest and be thankful for the pest which is already so abundantly scattered without their aid. I refer to the Canada thistle and refrain from being the means of adding another to the already too long list of foes which Canadian farmers have to contend against. Would our Minister of Agriculture give his sanction to the purchase by the Bee-keepers' Association of the seeds for distribution?

To conclude I am afraid, Mr. Editor, when you read this you will recall my promise to write no more on bee matters, but I cannot refrain from warning an old friend when I have reason to fear he is on the wrong switch.

J. C. THOM.

Streetsville, Feb. 10th, 1888.

Whether this is the blue thistle of the south or not we are not prepared to say. We believe the botanical name is Vipers Bugloss and are convinced of its honey bearing qualities. It is a biennial and we have sown and grown it in our own fields and garden and had no difficulty in killing it when we wanted to, in fact with us it is as easily killed as clover or more so. You mow clover off before it seeds and it will grow up year after year, while to mow V. Bugloss will prevent it from seeding for one year and destroy it forever. It is perhaps one reason why so many people object to it. The seed remains on the stalk during the fall and winter, and shells out from time to time. We have known it to blow on the surface of the snow and drift along as it were and scatter in this way some distance from the old plants. We think if you had travelled through many parts of Muskoka where we were you would come to the conclusion that farming was practically out of the question. There are thousands and perhaps millions of acres that are only fit for raising bee plants and shrubs. It would not be difficult to find some burnt districts where a person could walk ten miles without crossing five acres of tillable land. We think even Vipers Bugloss would not thrive in many places for want of soil; but from the experience we have had with it it does not seem to be any more of a pest than our mullein or cow thistle (not Canadian.)