

GENERAL.

That "Bee Dance."



R. EDITOR.—Your plan of telling when certain colonies of bees will cast first swarms, as given on page 577 of C. B. J. for July 15th, will not hold good in all cases—not here in the south where we have such long and warm summers.

I have noticed this something you speak of (scraping and beating at the entrance and just above it) a number of times, and although it does in some cases indicate the early issuing of a swarm, it does not in all cases, for I have known colonies to work for a week at a time at this same thing, cleaning off a space 6 to 10 inches around the entrance, especially so on unpainted hives, or those that were old and the paint wearing off. In all cases the actions of the bees in their work were the same.

My explanation of the cause for this work, is that the bees use the woody fibre, obtained thereby, in connection with propolis for filling up cracks, etc., and that some colonies apprehending the need of it in their new homes, set to work to obtain it before departing, taking it with them, under the same reasoning they fill themselves with honey to take to the new home for the secretion of wax.

This is the only explanation I can give and I think it is correct. Will others please give their experience.

A. J. Brown.

Huntington, Florida, July 28, 1891.

P. S.—We hardly know the C. B. J. now-a-days, it has improved so much. It looks as if you would get a share of the cream also, I think some of those who were so fast at first, are watering their cream already, or rather giving us skimmings.

Perhaps there is a difference in different localities. We notice the bees do this "dancing" very much more in a season when the honey-season is long, and the weather very warm. In a private note from Mr. Brown, we learn that he intends getting out on a post card or circular, a list of questions as below, in order to secure the honey statistics of Florida. We shall be pleased friend Brown, when these are compiled, to have them.

- 1st. How many colonies of bees have you?
- 2nd. In what kind of hives?
- 3rd. What is your increase for the season?
- 4th. From what plant does your honey chiefly come?

5th. What is the average length of your season (give dates)?

6th. What per cent. of a full crop have you obtained?

7th. What is your entire crop (in pounds) (a) Comb, (b) Extracted.

8th. Number of pounds of beeswax obtained? Name:

Address

Date.

1891.

Fall Fairs.

EXPOSITIONS, Exhibitions and Fairs are once more almost upon us, and to many they are a reminder of another season of growth having passed and that winter is almost upon us. There are many who intend competing for prizes who do not appear to read the lists carefully, and when the judges appear they have misinterpreted a clause and find themselves at sea. It is to be regretted that sometimes the prize lists read in an indefinite way and the task in connection therewith is an unpleasant one for the exhibitors and the conscientious judges. There are other prize lists which contain conditions to which there appears to be no reason or common sense, in fact the conditions are such that few bee-keepers care to compete. At present I have in mind No. 716 Sec 53, of the Central Canadian Fair held at Ottawa this fall. It reads: "Display of Comb Honey," put up in wood boxes with glass ends, about 4 lbs., product of one apiary in 1891. There appears to be a little doubt about if the comb-honey or the glass ends are to weigh four pounds, but with a little of the Yankee *guessing* one will conclude it is the honey, but how can any Fair expect a good display of comb honey if the exhibitors are compelled to put it in four pound boxes. That is an added expense which helps neither to make the display attractive or more marketable. Now go to the prize list of the Western Fair, class 56, Sec. 8, headed, "Special prize given jointly by the Ontario Bee-Keepers and the Western Fair Association":—Sec. 8. "Honey, best general display and quality of Comb, and Extracted, wax, etc., arranged in the most attractive manner, the product of the exhibitor."

Now I think this is very indefinite. I think it would take more than a Philadelphia lawyer to understand what that means, and then what does the etc. mean, is it put in to round up the sentence legally. It must surely stand for something, at what then shall we draw the line. I must frankly own it would puzzle me; and a list should read in such a manner that a judge would know exactly what to do.