

dry. Bees never freeze when the above conditions are complied with. Should they get damp by their own breath or otherwise, they will either freeze or starve. Hence with strong swarms, good hives, properly arranged, you will surely succeed.

BEE-KEEPING— OF THE PAST SEASON.

It will be remembered that 1869 was one of the poorest seasons we have known in Canada for many years, so much so that during the winter, over half the bees in the country perished for want of stores; hence the spring of 1870 opened with the number of stocks greatly reduced, and many of them in nearly a starving condition. But as 1869 was one of the poorest, so, on the other hand, 1870 has been one of the best honey seasons for several years. The result is, that bee-keepers find their loss made up in numbers and their stocks in fine condition, while nearly all have taken some surplus honey.

There was, however, in many sections, a drawback experienced in the Spring. The dry weather causing the honey harvest to fail, soon after the drones made their appearance, they in many cases killed off by the workers, though this did not affect the gathering of honey, as drones do not gather honey; yet it retarded swarming, as the rearing of queens will not commence to any considerable extent when such is the case, and swarming is delayed until another set of drones are sure to make their appearance, the queen always laying drone eggs again as the honey harvest improves. In all sections where this was the case, more or less swarms came off too late to gather sufficient stores, except in cases where they were put into hives containing old or empty combs. Fortunately for such swarms, there were a large number of such hives this season, owing to the great loss of bees last winter. It is always to be regretted by every bee-keeper when anything occurs to retard swarming in this country, as there is so little Fall pasturage. In the section of country where I reside we have nothing growing from which bees can gather anything worth mentioning after the end of August. If they hold their own during September we are quite satisfied; but in sections where buck-wheat is grown it is different. The amount of honey gathered this season, I believe, is greater than for several years. The amount taken from single stocks far exceeds anything ever before recorded in Canada. This, however, is partly owing to the introduction of the honey extractor, as by using it more honey may be obtained from a stock that would be stored in boxes under the most favourable circumstances. In order to use them, however, bee-keepers must use frame hives, and become accustomed to handling their bees. The demand for Italian bees is fully equal to any previous year, and the reputation they have gained for being better workers is generally well sustained. Many are Italianizing their entire stock, and will keep no others, while others are satisfied with simply crossing. And it certainly is a great improvement to the stock to cross them with Italians, for the hybrids are fully equal to the pure, as honey gatherers.

The demand for frame hives is gradually on the increase, for several new patterns—new in some features of their construction—have been introduced; and one is led to believe that, ere long, the market will be flooded here, as in the United States, with a "thousand and one" hives, many of

which are not worth the expense of making. As a whole, the interest taken in bee-culture has been as fully maintained as in any preceding year, and the Fall has been exceedingly mild, that the season of 1871 will open under very favourable circumstances.

Though we have had some drawbacks in this country not experienced in many of the United States, yet we are holding our own with our American bee-keeping brothers very well; and though we may not as bee-keepers make quite so loud a buzzing, yet we gather about as much honey. True, they have several journals devoted principally to the interests of bee-culture (for which the *American Bee Journal* is prince), and bee-keepers' associations are organized in several of the States; yet, in point of scientific knowledge, we are as a community of bee-keepers not a whit behind them. We have our yearly meetings known as the "Ontario Bee-keepers' Association," which is held at the time and place of the Provincial Fair. Though we have no journal devoted entirely to the interests of the bee-culture, yet the *Canada Farmer*, in the Dominion, has an apimary department, and several of our leading agricultural and secular papers devote a column to the interests of bee-culture. May we not hope to see the day when Canada shall be the "land that flows with milk and honey?"

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BIRMINGHAM CATTLE AND POULTRY SHOW.

The Birmingham and Midland Counties Show took place during the last week of November. The entries in all the classes were numerous; but, with some few exceptions, the individual excellence of the animals, says the *Mark Lane Express*, was scarcely up to the high standard one looks for at such an exhibition.

The first prize in the Shorthorn class was won by Mr. Pulver, of Kettering, beating the Earl of Aylesford, who gained the highest honours at the Smithfield Club Show of 1869. The Herefords, we are told, were not as good as usual. Mr. P. Turner, of Lean, obtained the first prize for the best steer, and Her Majesty the Queen the third. The Queen also obtained the first prize for the best Hereford Heifer. The Devons were remarkable good, and as usual of very even excellence.

In the polled class Mr. McCombie, of Tillefour, was beaten by Mr. Heart Harris, of Earnshill, near Forres, Morayshire, though he showed the brother of the famous Black Prince, that carried all before him at Smithfield and Birmingham in 1869. The present steer, shown by Mr. McCombie, is equally fat with his celebrated predecessor, and of exactly the same girth—9 feet 10 inches—but has little beyond his size to recommend him, and rightly gave place in the prize list to Mr. Harris' well proportioned and finely built ox. Mr. McCombie was deservedly successful in winning the first prize for the best cow of the same breed, which has so long been a specialty with him.

In the sheep classes, Lord Walsingham's South-downs and Mr. Berners' Leicesters, as usual carried off the honours.

The show of pigs was better than usual in all except the class of large breeding pigs. The best fat pig, which the *Mark Lane Express*, our authority throughout in this report, pronounces almost "per-