

Notes and Pickings.

—D. W. HEISE.

Hellow! Mr. Editor! After a month of roasting and shin heats since attending the Senate meeting at Brantford, during that extremely cold dip, I think I am sufficiently warmed up to do a little Noting and Picking.

To the question of whether imported queens are superior to home bred ones, G. M. Doolittle says in the American Bee Journal, that from years of experience with imported Italians and home bred queens, he does not think any proof can be found to substantiate such a claim. Mr. D. believes, in fact, that the balance of proof is on the other side. He thinks this is attributable to the fact that beekeepers on the other side of the water, are somewhat careless in the selection of their breeders and the queens they export often being selected from second and third swarms. How different is the mode practiced by the best American breeders! Queens are selected for generations, each selection being made from the very best of that generation for the succeeding one, and so on until perfection is well nigh reached. From Mr. D's observations, the home bred queen from good selections has always proved superior to the imported ones.

[I doubt very much if there has been enough selection for honey producing qualities, doubtless there has been a great deal for color.—Ed.]

Bees dying on the snow. If the cause is diarrhoea, they may as well die on the snow as anywhere, says Mr. Doolittle in Gleanings. This just reminds me that a short time ago a neighbor of mine chanced to walk through my garden while the bees were having a good flight, after having been confined for a good time. This man noticed the dead bees lying on the snow quite thickly, and coming around to where I was working with great excitement, exclaimed, "Why, your bees must be all dead!" I tried to assure him that I thought they were wintering very nicely. "Why," said he, "the snow is covered with dead bees, there surely can't be any left in the hives alive."

The truth of the matter was, as every experienced apiarist well knows, by far the majority of those dead bees found on

the snow were those carried out of the hive; true, some flew out and failed to return, but those being old and about at the end of life's span, it was preferable that they should die outside than remain in the hive to meet the same fate. Then again it is true, as Mr. Doolittle says, 100 bees on the snow will attract more attention than 1,000 on the ground, but there should be no occasion for alarm.

The Boiler of Beedom quotes from a foreign journal a sad experience with bees placed against a south wall. The hot sun beating upon the hives, with the additional heat reflected from the walls, melted the combs of a colony into a heap. At the conclusion of the quotation we are told "A north wall is safer." Quite right, if the north wall doesn't happen to have a very warm south side to it. "See."

Prof. A. J. Cook, in the American Bee Journal, asserts with a good deal of positiveness that honey dew is a secretion of plant lice, the definition in the dictionaries to the contrary notwithstanding. The professor seems to think where many are deceived as to the true origin of this substance is that they search only on the lower branches of trees, and not finding any of the insects they conclude that it is "exudation" from the leaves; when in fact the insects are at the top of the trees and the secretion, excretion, or exudation falls to the lower branches. The professor says further, "I have now carefully examined this secretion for years." (I note he calls it a secretion.) If this be its true name then the substance which the bees gather is "excrement or voidings." Although the professor says, "It is not to be inferred that this honey dew is unwholesome. It is a secretion and not an excretion. It has a similar origin to honey, and may be as delicious. I am not at all anxious to cross sticks with such an eminent scientist as Prof. Cook, neither would I for a moment attempt to define the origin of honey dew, but I really desire more light on the subject. And I fail to see how it can be a secretion of the insect, without coming to the bees as an excretion or excrement unless it be (as I would like to believe) first an exudation of the leaves, taken up by the insects, and then emitted by them, in the same way that the bee takes up the nectar from the flower and then emits it upon reaching the hive. I am much interested in this subject and would like some explanation from the Professor regarding the similarity of nectar secretion by blossoms, and