Uniformity in Hives, etc.

"Mr. Doolittle?"

"Yes. That's my name."

"I want to talk with you a little while on several matters. Have you time to do this now?"

"I am a little busy this morning, but that will not hinder, as I am always busy. What is it you wish to know, Mr. Jones?"

"I am about to make some new hives. Is there any advantage in both upper and lower story being just alike, so they they can be used together or separately?"

"There are many advantages in having all the hives in use of the same size, and several in having both stories alike. Some of them are as follows: In making them you can do the same much faster, and with less bother; you can use the upper story for the same purpose you do the lower, at any time you desire, which will be very often, I assure you: and then, one, two, three, or more will fit together like clockwork in tiering up, without any outside shells whatever to cover them."

"Yes, I see. But what about the entrance? How can that be arranged?"

"By making the entrance in the bottom board, where it should always be. Thus, this part need not affect the hive at all. If made there, you will never have any bother from this entrance when changing hives, reversing them, changing the front for the rear, or any such thing; and I am sure, after once having hives, without any entrance cut in them, you will never go back to the old plan of entrances in the hive again."

"That seems quite simple now you mention it; but I had not thought but that I was obliged to have an entrance cut in the hives as did our fathers. But we must not tarry too long on any one thing lest I weary you with too many questions I wish to ask on different subjects. I must have frames for my hives. Would you advise me to buy wired frames by the hundred, filled with foundation?"

"That depends on conditions."

"What are those conditions?"

"If you expect to work your apiary for extracted honey it might be the better plan; and even if you work it for comb honey, and have not the time to look after the combs properly, while they are being built, or if your time is very valuable, it may be the better way to buy as you suggest."

"What are the conditions under which you would not think it advisable to buy?"

"With the average bee-keeper, who has some time at his or her own command, I think it will pay fully as well, especially where the sections are filled with thin foundation, to use only starters of comb or comb foundation in the brood-frames, say from 3-4 inch to an inch wide, as it will to fill the frames full of the same, to say nothing about the saving of money and time. It is the opinion of several of the best bee-keepers today, that as much or more comb honey can be secured by allowing the bees to build their combs in the brood-frames, using starters as I have spoken of, than by any other mode of procedure."

"I suppose this would give me nice comb honey too?"

"Certainly. Comb honey of the most fancy make can be procured in this way and the difference in selling price between this and that built by a colony having old black comb below, where much of the old wax worked into the capping of the section honey, is an item worth looking after. But, so far as I can see