

## USE CHARITY

(For the Canadian Bee Journal.)

Before me lies a card, written evidently by one who was not in any easy frame of mind when he wrote, which reads as follows.

Doctors Disagree:—"All the writers on bees are as opposite in their opinions and practices as can be. I have looked in vain for some one person whom I could follow with a certainty of success, and as freely as I would a teacher in any of the common branches of human knowledge." As there seems to be an opinion similar to the above prevailing with the most of the beginners in bee-keeping, and also with many who have kept bees for some years, perhaps a little looking into the matter may help us, as readers of the Canadian Bee Journal, to understand each other better, or at least help us to understand why nothing pertaining to bee-lore can be followed like a rule in arithmetic.

No Fixed Rules:—

Twice two makes four every time, because it cannot be otherwise, no matter by whom multiplied, nor at what season of the year the computation is made, or in what locality; hence we have the rule of multiplication as being always the same. The same of all other rules pertaining to the elementary part of arithmetic but when we come to apply any rule similar to the above to the bees, we find that it don't always work, for the reason that every season brings its changes.

Swarming Uncontrollable:—For instance, in the early eighties, we had two seasons very similar, in which the early flow of honey from clover was good and during the first season I tried a plan of increase in which I made one new colony from two old ones; without any swarming afterward, which pleased me much. The next year I tried the whole apiary that way with a like result: writing out the plan for a friend in another state, telling him it was just the thing. He tried it and the result was double the swarms he had ever had before, this causing him to almost curse me down in the bottom of his heart, although he did not do it openly.

Go Cautious:—The next year we had an entirely different season, one in which the bees gathered only enough to keep up brood-rearing to the fullest extent, and when I came to try my sure plan of moderate increase with no swarming I found that it worked? to the extent of nearly 300 swarms from some sixty odd colonies in the spring. In fact everything swarmed and swarmed till very little money was the result. Now why

was it that my friend in another state did not succeed with the plan I gave him as I was succeeding at the time I gave it? Simply because the season with him was similar to the next with me, in which I made even a greater failure with my own plan than he had done. Without farther illustrations, it is easily seen why no rule regarding bee culture can be formed which will do to follow throughout the whole country, as can the rules in arithmetic; and the only thing we can do is to try the plans of others CAUTIOUSLY till we know they are suited to our wants, using charity all the time.

Doolittle vs. Pettit:—In speaking of charity, I have felt to wondering if "charity had her perfect work," when Bro. Pettit on page 60 of the Canadian Bee Journal, in speaking of the gentle murmur heard in the bee cellar when the bees are in it, Bro. P. says, "Bro. G. M. Doolittle once called it a contented hum; but allow me to say, there is no such thing as a contented hum in the cellar, the very reverse is the matter of fact. It is a hum of discontent." Further on he says in substance that where bees are wintering perfectly they drop into "STILLNESS AND DEEP REPOSE," except when they arouse to take stores into the cluster, etc. I do not live in Canada so do not know but what Bro. P. is entirely right in his assertions regarding bees in that Province, and will use charity enough not to dispute what he says; but I wish to say that if bees ever "drop into (perfect) stillness" in central New York at any time of the year I never was on hand when they had thus "dropped."

Bees always Murmur:—I have placed my ear to the side of the hive many times at all seasons of the year, and I never yet done this but what I always heard a murmur from the bees inside, even when I considered them wintering perfectly. Now multiply this murmur of a single colony by from 50 to 100 according to the number there is in a cellar and it amounts to the "contented hum" I once spoke of in some of my articles. I see by last Gleanings that Dr. Miller's bees give forth a sound when in a quiescent state during October, so it would appear that the state of Illinois is similar to New York. To better illustrate: I set my bees in the cellar this year Nov. 18th. and as the temperature out door was about the same as that in the cellar the doors were left open till the night of the 20th. Just after dark I went to the cellar. There was a slight breeze blowing so as to make a murmur in the tree tops standing in the twelve acres of woodland close to the bee cellar. As I approached the cellar I noticed this murmur and noted how near it