

GENERAL.

Groundless Foul Brood Scare.

SEVERAL parties seeing something in the journals in reference to foul brood being in foundation, have sent us samples and asked us to examine it and tell them if there were any foul brood germs in the foundation. We question very much if anybody could tell without testing it in the hive. It is useless to send us comb foundation samples for examination, as our microscope is not powerful enough to detect the germs, and we think the danger is more imaginary than real. The following by F. H. and E. H. Dewey, in an article in the *American Bee Journal* is to the point:—

So much has been said about the foul brood pest in Italy and America, that many will be glad to know that much of the talk is pure sensation.

The *American Bee Journal* has been the field of more or less discussion of the matter; one article in particular, an extract, reporting prevalence of a very malignant type of the present time in Italy, occasioned an investigation. We sent a few questions to the Italian exporter in Bologna, Chas. Bianconcini, with a view of learning the prevalence of the disease in Italy, the truth of the reports regarding its extent and virulence in Jesi, the symptoms and evidences of the disease, if they were unique, and the remedies which the Italians use.

He writes: "Happily, in the district (Provincia) of Bologna, and in all this part of Italy we never have had foul-brood; so that all I can say about it is what I have read in apistic books (meaning bee-books) and in the bee-periodicals. So I cannot speak from my own experience, and I suppose in these conditions it is useless to answer your questions, because I could only translate articles of bee-keepers' periodicals. They write me from Jesi, that in that town, and its vicinity, they never had foul-brood, but in a country that is not very far from Jesi, three years ago some colonies had foul-brood. But, generally, this disease is rare in Italy."

So it took three years for the story to reach America! That last sentence, all the recent agitation, especially to the north of us, notwithstanding, describes the condition there—"this disease is rare."

Of the tens of thousands who keep bees, how many have never seen a case! How many also

have been misled and mistaken. We once heard of a case of foul-brood which was not contagious. The honey from the dead colony had been fed out, and not the slightest symptoms of the trouble resulted "Was it foul-brood?" "Certainly; there was the stench, noticeable a rod away; the brood was decayed, and the bees dead." This colony was not very strong.

Upon further inquiry it was ascertained to have occurred during one of those wet, chilly Springs of recent years. So the colony had dwindled, perhaps starved in the dampness and cold in the sight of honey, and the brood decomposed, producing an instance of putridified brood, not foul-brood—foul though it may have been.

For the sake of a little sensation, how much suspicion, groundless anxiety, and, frequently, deep injury, a report or an article that is simply popular and stirring may cause. The same taste for novelty and sensationalism has led into undue conspicuousness many slurs and suspicions against the honey industry, injuring both producer and consumer.

In view of the fact that disquisitions have been as emphatic as if the pest were now epidemic, and since a man with an international reputation at stake has opened to the centre one of these airy nothings, flimsy but harmful, is it not time to give the right impression to the public?

The recent discussions that have brought out many valuable points, are for possible prevention, and are not present heroic measures. If statements are made, improperly qualified, they become dangerous misleaders.

Who and how many have received injury from foul-brood by the purchase of bees or queens, in the past year? How many have met with hives or apiaries infested with the pest? If all reports are sifted, we warrant that a very small numeral can stand for the answer to either of the questions.

Westfield, Mass.

The Malagasy Bee—"Apis Unicolor."

IF we agree with those entomologists who consider that the honey-bee has wandered westward from India and the East, spreading northwards and southwards over Europe and Africa, and owing to climate and isolation, has slightly altered its habit and appearance in the different regions where varieties are found, then the comparison of the English (*Apis mellifica*) with the Malagasy bee (*Apis Unicolor*) presents special interest, for in them we can see in what way, and to how great an extent, the two oppo-