

» The Apiary «

THE BEE FOR THE BEGINNER, AND THE METHOD.



ABOVE other considerations the beginner in bee-keeping ought to have a bee which is amiable and docile, so as to be easily handled, without danger of much punishment from stings, else there will likely be premature discouragement, and the enthusiasm so necessary to success, will be nipped in the bud. Another consideration of much importance to the beginner, is to have bees whose queen may be readily distinguished and found among her offspring. To fulfil both essential requisites I know of no bees to surpass, if equal to, the Italians. We have the Carniolans, very amiable, but not so well tested, and the Albinos, less tried among Canadian apiarists ; but the character of the Italian for docility and manageability is well established and well-known.

I would, therefore, advise the beginner to commence with the pure Italian ; and, as experience and skill increase, try other desirable races, and choose the best for himself, or at any rate that bee which, to his peculiar personality and circumstances, is best for *him*. It is a fact, and not at all strange, that the very best apiarists, after ample experience in testing and handling, differ widely as to which is, for all purposes, the best bee. This is, of course, owing to the different circumstances ; and the different make up, mental and physical, of the manipulators themselves ; as well as the differences in the bees of the same race.

As to the best method or methods for beginners, circumstances must, to some extent, determine. Having got the best bees the next thing is the hive to put them in, and the hive which to him (the beginner) will be the easiest to manipulate and work to the best purpose (profit). With so many good hives before us, and so many "best" ones, it would be a rather dangerous, as well as presumptuous, business to attempt to name *the* very best. I shall not attempt it ; but allow the novice to find out by experience (as I did myself) which is best for *him*.

I shall, however, describe the hive which I now make for myself, and which suits me better than any of the many hives I have tried. It takes eight Langstroth frames crowded closely together for spring brooding and seven for after part of season and winter. The top-bars of frames are about an inch wide and double with bee-space between. The bottoms are both fast and movable to suit taste. There is an inch and a half hole in about the centre of the back end of hive, for ventilation, winter and summer—during the hot weather of the latter, and in the cellar in winter. The hole is of course covered by a button outside and a wire gauge inside ; zinc adjustable entrance.