

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

INTERESTING NEWS FROM CALIFORNIA.

THROUGH your kindness I am in receipt of the first three numbers of the CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL. I like its appearance very much, and should like to take it very much, but already have two—the *Kansas Bee-Keeper* and *Gleanings*. I do not feel that we are able to take another bee journal at this time.

The peculiar climate of this coast needs a bee journal of its own. It had one, but I am sorry to say that our bee-keepers let it die a lingering and ignominious death; in fact nine-tenths of the bee-keepers in San Diego, Cal., take no bee papers at all. I have no doubt that one-third of them never heard of a bee-paper in their lives. About all these men know—all they can know—is to put on and take off the section boxes.

Ask one of these fellows if they are bothered with fertile workers—or if they spread the brood in the spring, or how long, after mating, it takes before the queen begins to lay, and he would stare at you with open mouth! Most probably he would pronounce you an idiot, or charitably ascribe your state of mind to too much tangle-foot! Last summer a gentleman came to our place on a visit. He very seldom has less than 300 hives, and some years as high as 500. He has got, some years, as high as \$3,000 for his honey! He stood perfectly aghast, when he saw me use the Clark smoker. Will you believe it—can you believe it? He never saw a bellows-smoker in his life! He had never heard of *Gleanings*, the *American Bee Journal*, the *Magazine* nor the *Kansas Bee-Keeper*! I gave him sample copies. He said if he was lucky, and got a good crop of honey, he might subscribe for one of them! And yet this man has been a bee-keeper here for fifteen years! He has produced a great deal of honey in good seasons—but he has done it from a great many hives.

The great problem with you, in your inhospitable climate, is how to get over the hard cold winter safely, and how to get all the pollen out of the hives—and prevent dysentery.

With us it is different. Here we aim, or ought to aim, to have 60 or 70 lbs. of honey in the brood chamber at the close of the honey season. As for pollen they gather that the year round. Thus equipped—with a good queen—they fear no enemy—ask no favors—and are ready to do and die for their firesides and their homes! The first year I was here—some four years ago—I had my head stuffed full of some of the notions of distinguished bee-keepers of the east. Taking no note of the climate, I took all their pollen from them at the beginning of the Winter. What did they do? Why, they just went out

and hired wagons, and hauled it in by the ton! Now, Friend Jones, I am not a man that is given to exaggeration. These are cold-rolled, concentrated facts! There is no use in a man attempting to write for a bee paper, without he is prepared to give facts. In truth, facts are the foundation of all our troubles, as well as all our successes. But I have no doubt that many of the bee-keepers will look upon the foregoing statements as very extraordinary—and some few will doubt it. For the benefit of these few then, I will say this—if you had been here, and looked through these hives two weeks after ward, you would have *thought* they brought it in by the ton somehow! There now! I won't come down another ounce—not another ounce of pollen!

The dry part of the year, or rather the parts of the year there is no honey at all, is from about the first of July till the first of January. About the latter date the first of the ground flowers come out in bloom. From this time on till about the middle of March, brood rearing goes on rapidly. Then swarming commences and is kept up until about the middle of June. Last year there was an immense honey flow here. This year there will not be the half of the amount produced. There is a dry belt along the coast—the whole length of the state—in which there will be very little honey made. This belt is from 10 to 40 miles wide. In this belt there has been very little rain. We are in the belt ourselves, and do not expect to produce half as much from 119 hives, as we did last year from 18. Back in the country—near the mountains—they have had plenty of rain and will make a good crop of honey. On the whole then, I do not think that California will make more than half as much honey as she did last year.

I think if honey in the east were as low as it is here, many of the A. B. C. scholars would have their enthusiasm knocked into the middle of next week! What do you think of 3½ cents for extracted honey—the best quality? This is in cans that cost the party who produces it one cent per pound. So he gets but 2½ cents for his honey. Comb honey is worth from 6 to 7 cents. This costs the producers 1½ cents for sections and case. If he has no team of his own, he has to pay out of this for hauling to town, probably half or three quarters of a cent per pound. So you see we only get really from four to five cents for comb honey.

It would be presumption in me—a mere mite in the bee-keeping world—to wish success to the monarch of the hive—to the man who has never marched, without he has marched on to victory!