

Bees At Blairgowrie.

SIR.—Some days ago we had a rather strange experience with a swarm of bees, an account of which may prove interesting to your readers.

The day was cold and windy, and the frequent blinks of sunshine which succeeded the fitful showers were not, from a bee-keeper's point of view, calculated to be especially favorable for the bees swarming.

Among the bees, however, a different opinion existed, for, during a brief spell of sunshine, a large swarm issued from one of the hives, and after (to the bee-keeper) an altogether unnecessary amount of humming and careering around, settled on the branch of a tree only a few yards from whence it came. A skep having been placed securely over the cluster, and a large cloth thrown over the same, the bees, after having been seen merrily buzzing into the skep, were left to their own devices.

Hardly had this been done when a heavy shower came on, which continued for some time, drenching everything around. Warm, genial sunshine followed the rain, and the bees, probably thinking they might be more comfortable elsewhere, deserted the skep and again took wing, this time betaking themselves in the direction of the woods, evidently *en route* for some empty hive or housetop beyond. On the way, however, a loch had to be crossed, and while flying over this the swarm was observed suddenly to stop its onward career, and to circle around for some minutes over the surface of the water. To those who witnessed the conduct of the bees, it was evident that something had gone wrong. Gradually the swarm resumed its way across the water, but on reaching the side they made no attempt to cluster. After flying around for about a quarter of an hour they began to settle in two clusters. Later on these joined together, and after being skepped were carried home without mishap.

A piece of queen-excluder having been fastened over the hole in the skep, the bees by aid of smoke were driven through it. When almost all had gone through those left behind were carefully examined, with the result that our suspicion that the queen had been drowned, was verified, for no queen was anywhere to be seen.

The bees were put back into the parent hive, and now it is the strongest hive we have.

Bees in this district are, where properly attended to, doing exceedingly well, but a correct idea of what the average honey yield will be cannot yet be formed. The rain of the last few days will materially help the clover,

which should continue to yield honey for some time yet. In some places, however, it is quite burned up.—Yours, &c., W. B. M.—Bee-Keepers Record.

The queen no doubt, was drowned, which is a very common thing, as our experience in breeding bees on our isolated islands in the Georgian Bay, proves to us. Especially when the water is deep, and not a ripple on it, a bee flying on the water, sees what it fancies are bees below and lights down to meet them. The result is that they cannot rise out of the water. In taking our bees from our own apiary up into the islands, when we would open them up to give them a flight if the water was perfectly smooth, and the sun shining, hundreds of bees would light right down on the water and would flutter their wings there. We have stood and seen them lighting down in dozens, and when we undertook to get queens mated on the small islands, where there was not plenty of rock or timber, we sometimes lost nearly all of them. When they fly over land they rest on the trees, or we suppose they do, and when they fly over water, they would attempt to do the same thing, especially if the water was deep. In this way we accounted for our great losses in mating queens on some of the islands.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

A Letter from New South Wales re Foul Brood Legislation.

THOSE of your readers who live in this Great Southern Land view with a good deal of interest the reports that appear from time to time in your JOURNAL relative to the working of the Foul Brood in Bees Bill that is already on the Statute Book of your colony. This interest is the more heightened by the fact that we are endeavoring to bring our "powers that be" into a way of thinking so as to pass a measure that will compel the careless bee holder here to keep his stocks in a healthy condition, and give the progressive bee master a chance to demonstrate the place apiculture should take in the divers pursuits of colonial agriculture. It seems strange to many of us who have carefully followed the line of action and experiment carried on in countries that have had foul brood to contend with for some length of time; how the advocates of "acid curing" so tenaciously stick to their pet hobby, in spite of so many evident facts as to its uselessness; again and