

a queen from a full colony during the height of her egg-laying, and immediately sending her off, caused her to be unprolific ever afterward, and that, to remedy this, they caged such queens a day or two before they send them off, which allowed them to rid themselves of their eggs before they were subject to the rough usage they must be subjected to in the mails. I may not have quoted this just right, but have given the impression it left on my mind at that time. Soon after this I saw where another of our brethren recommended the taking of queens out of full colonies, which were to be sent off, and leaving them in a nucleus a week before they were shipped, for in this way they became like a queen which had just got to laying in a nucleus, and such queens were scarcely ever injured by shipment. Putting the whole together I believed that the trouble lay in the sudden and unnatural stopping of a prolific queen from laying, so I went about experimenting to see if I were right. I caught two of my most prolific queens and caged them the same as I would do for shipment, giving them the usual number of bees for an escort, placing them in my shop, where I would occasionally handle them and give them about the usage I thought they must receive where going by mail or express. Others were caught and handled as carefully as possible, all being kept from the hive from one to two weeks, some even having the workers renewed on account of the first set dying from confinement, and upon returning them as heads of colonies again, at least one-third of them proved of little value after that, none of them coming up to their former prolificness afterward while they lived. Having solved the matter to my satisfaction, that queens were injured by suddenly stopping them from prolific egg-laying, and not by the usage they received in the mails. I next went about finding out if this unprolificness had any effect on daughters from these once prolific queens, but now almost valueless mothers, and am pleased to be able to go on record as saying that, so far as I can see, such injured queens give just as prolific daughters after their confinement as they did before. Since then my advice has always been, where I have had occasion to say anything about it, that the receiver of a queen which he has bought for breeding purposes, goes about rearing queens from her immediately, as soon as any of her brood is old enough for that purpose. In this way the buyer gets a fair return for his money, even if his queen does not turn out all that he would have her be, as has been the case with many I have purchased.

G. M. DOOLITTLE.

Borodino, N. Y., Sept. 17, 1888.

The question of queens becoming unprolific when sent by mail, etc., is one which gave us considerable anxiety for years. On several occasions we have received letters from purchasers of the finest and most prolific queens that they were worthless, not laying, in some instances, sufficient to counterbalance the mortality of the hive. We have taken some of our choicest queens from one apiary to another, given them careful handling and introduction, and their egg-producing power seemed diminished, and how to account for it we did not know. On taking her back to the colony whence she came the prolificness would return, and this change would sometimes be effected by changing her from one colony to another. Our conclusions were that it depended on the attention paid her by the bees—some colonies give the queen more attention than others. We found the Cyprians or Syrians fed and cared for the queen and devoted themselves more assiduously to queen raising than Italians or blacks. Cyprian or Syrian queens introduced into black colonies did not appear so prolific as when cared for by their own kind. On the other hand, a black queen would be more prolific in a Cyprian or Syrian colony than at "home." Further where you find in the same colony an old and a young queen you cage the latter in the colony and remove all brood and eggs—the old one will lay very little and receive but slight attention from the bees. But remove the young queen and the bees will then give all their attention to the old queen and her fertility will increase, though the bees appear to know she is feeble and are anxious to supersede her by raising young queens as rapidly as possible. Injury in the mails is often caused by rough handling, improper ventilation and excesses of heat and cold, but 99 in every 100 travel without mishap. Express is not better than mail. Mr. Doolittle's article is well worthy a place in our pages.

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Heartsease has given the bees in Illinois lots of work this fall, yielding honey after everything else had failed.