

## A FEW OBSERVATIONS

BY JOHN A. M'KINNON.

## Italians and Robbing

My Italian bees did some robbing from hives four miles distant this last season, and there was no possibility of mistaking their identity. In another direction, six miles distant, black queens were mated to Italian drones from my apiary.

## Large Entrances and Cellar Wintering

Too large entrances produce bad results in wintering in my bee cellar. My bees winter best with small entrances and temperature ranging from 36 to 45 degrees. I wintered 165 colonies in my cellar last winter, in which the temperature varied from freezing point up to 50 degrees, with three of the windows open most of the time. At times the snow drifted in enough to completely cover the fronts of those hives the entrances of which faced the windows, resulting in the death of two colonies. With one exception, the remainder came through in first-class shape, and even small queen-rearing nuclei wintered O.K. In March there was a foot and a half of water in the cellar, and in places it touched the bottom-boards.

## King Birds

King Birds are expensive boarders when rearing queens. Last season queens were a little too frequently lost on their mating flight, and I began to look around for the cause. A King Bird flitted past. "That's the chap!" said I. So I got out the .22 and knocked over fifteen that afternoon, and the next day I got several more. It seems that they had flocked in from all parts to feed on my bees. After I had shot off most of them, only an occasional queen was lost, and it was usually found at the entrance of the next hive, balled or already dead.

## Some Strains Difficult to Introduce

Some strains of Italian queens are easier to introduce than others. During the latter part of the season I purchased two queens from Geo. B. Howe, and reared about twenty-five queens from them to replace some mismated queens. I don't remember caging any one of those queens any longer than to transfer them from the mating hive to the colony to receive it. I killed the undesirable queen in the forenoon, and in the afternoon I would cage what queens I wanted to introduce, which I would do by removing a frame of bees and brood into an empty hive for a few minutes and running the queen out among the bees. These queens seemed to make themselves at home at once, and the bees took no more notice of them till the queen circle was formed as a bodyguard. Queens of other strains that I have had would hump their backs, stick their heads sidewise into the cells and squeal until they were balled. That seemed to satisfy them, and when I had a surplus of young queens I did not take the trouble to take her out. In one instance I have known, a queen was balled for two days, after which she was accepted. She had one hind leg paralyzed. Can any one tell me why, in rare instances, after introducing a young queen, there seems to be a division among the bees? About one-third of the colony will be stung to death—a few at a time—for about forty-eight hours. There will occur no robbing, but to me it seemed to be mostly the field bees, as a lot of them were stung on the alighting board.

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Coal cinders, according to the *American Bee Journal*, are excellent for the surface soil of an apiary location. Cinders under the hives and in front keep the moisture away and prevent the growth of weeds.

## ANNUAL

"The best consensus of opinion at the convention of the last month. The keepers were doubtful whether the program has been in this country some of the convention in

One of the meetings was held on November 14th. Mr. Morley Peterson read the annual report of the American Beekeepers' Association. He said, no change in the last convention decided at the time that there should be a special inspection of beekeepers' courses of instruction for inspectors to the best ways to prevent and cure a further aid to the circular letters to aid in counteracting publishing statistics and giving Moreover, these way for the inspection finish his work monthly. These bulletins large amount of edited bee-keepers.

The organization of apiaries was changed by Mr. Pettit. Now one inspector was made to new system of reporting bee-keepers did the extra visits. The number of apiaries was decreased. American Foul Brood ground, European Foul