

Thoughts andComments ON CURRENT TOPICS

By a York County Bee Keeper.

SWEET CLOVER AS A HONEY PLANT.

A correspondent in "Gleanings" estimates that three acres of sweet clover that was within reach of his bees, was worth \$30.00, i.e., \$10.00 per acre; and contemplates renting land and sowing more of the "stuff" for bee-pasturage. Of course Mr. A. I. Root, who is an enthusiastic champion of the plant; appends a commendatory foot note expressing appreciation of a report stating that sweet clover was worth at least \$10.00 per acre as a honey plant alone.

Much as I admire friend Root's ideas and work, when it comes to the question of sweet clover, there I most decidedly disagree with him. While not in a position to express an opinion as to its exact value as a honey plant, owing to the limited quantities grown in our vicinity, feels quite competent however from experience, to venture an opinion as to its undesirability on good arable land.

Some 25 or 30 years ago, my grandfather, an enthusiastic bee keeper, was induced to sow a few acres for the bees. The crop was allowed to seed and even since that time the stuff has been a nuisance in the field where it was sown, in fact this past harvests' some two or three acres sown in spring wheat were so infested with the rank growing clover that it was almost impossible to cut it with the binder. About one quarter was cut with the mower and burned. Mr. Root would probably say the land has not been well tilled. For answer would say that this section will probably compare favor-

ably with any other part of the continent as far as good farming is concerned. Ardent as I am in all matters pertaining to apiculture; when it come to the question of scattering sweet clover seed in a good farming community would draw the line. Would consider I was doing a grave injustice to my neighbors, with the chance of obtaining little, if any remuneration for my trouble.

BEST RACES OF BEES FOR HONEY.

During the recent convention at Los Angeles quite a discussion took place as to the merits of the different races of bees. Dr. Miller I believe as well as some others, stated that a hybrid colony proved to be exceptionally good honey gatherers, they would not hesitate to breed from queen of said colony.

This brings to my mind my experience with a colony of genuine "blacks" this past two seasons. A year ago they stored something over 350 lbs and this past season over 250 lbs or choice clover honey, never swarming either year. Although they are quite irritable to work with, yet, this fall I took extra care to put them in good condition for wintering, for notwithstanding the fact that there are some choicest queens of both the Italian and Carniolan races in that yard, would not care if the whole apiary were of the strain mentioned even if I did have a little extra stinging while working with them.

SHALL WE KEEP MORE BEES?

Editor Hutchison in November "Review" again brings up this topic before the readers of that journal.

There is no doubt that friend Hutchison has been the means of persuading many bee-keepers to increase their stock, and as clover honey is now hovering somewhere around 6c a pound, perhaps it would