

bees, or else they showed inattention to their work. That state of things has passed away to a certain extent. But they were not proficient yet, for it was only the other day that the Board of Exports advertised for 50 tons of honey for exportation, and was able to secure only 28 tons fit to export, and yet there was the cry among the bee-keepers, "What can we do with our honey?" No doubt there was an abundance of honey. No country in the wide world possessed such amount of flora suitable for honey production as that which grew in New South Wales, and no country had better advantages in all other respects. But the trouble was to separate the dark from the light honey. The former was unfit for exportation. They had only to know how to treat it and they would find that they had the best honey field in the world. The darkest of the honey should, he thought, be kept by the bee keepers for feeding purposes in the spring time of the year, instead of using so much sugar syrup. Nearly all the old countries that used to import honey, such as Germany and Russia, had fallen back in their supply. At the present time America was sending to the English markets hundreds of tons annually. New Zealand also exported a large quantity, and with the natural resources possessed by the bee-keepers of New South Wales, there was no reason why N. S. Wales should not take its place among the honey exporting countries of the world."

The Bee Bulletin says editorially,—

Honey, not fit to be classed No. 1 or 2, would be sent as "suitable for manufacturing purposes."

"After the Convention a number of bee-keepers visited the office of the Board of Exports, to see the samples of honey available for export. They numbered some forty, a good proportion of which were allotted either first or second grade. Some were very inferior, and a couple gave very decided indications of being glucosed. The tins in boxes were also inspected, the former being pronounced first-class, but a suggestion was made that the bottoms should be double blocked as well as the top. The boxes, Mr. Stephenson said, could be supplied at 8/- per dozen.

"The Man About Town" in the St. Mary's Journal, tells the following story:—Speaking of honey, a bee is a well-meaning and poorly educated insect that needs the guiding hand of man to bring it

to perfection. The making of honey is a secondary consideration in the economy of bee life. The stuff which costs time and labor is the comb, which is manufactured into storage vaults, in which the honey is preserved in air-tight sealed packages, stamped and labeled with the trade mark of the queen bee who presides over the destinies of the colony. Different men have constructed machinery for the stamping of beeswax into crude imitation of genuine comb, and the bees have accepted this as a passable substitute for the real thing. A certain local bee fancier, however, tells me he is the first apiarist who has done away with beeswax in any form and satisfied the bees.

One day last June, after washing his buggy and sponging it off, he threw the sponge which was large and porous, into an empty bee-hive that was in his stable. Here it stayed until thoroughly dry. A swarm of bees coming out, he housed them in this hive without thinking to remove the sponge which had clung to a nail in the top board. Two weeks later he looked into his hive and found it was almost filled with nice, white, clover honey. As the swarm was not a large one, the great store was a surprise to the bee-fancier, who thought it would not be full till September. On closer observation he found that his bees had utilized the porous sponge as a store house for their honey, filling it cell by cell, and sealing it up as if the sponge was the very article that progressive bees had been seeking all their lives.

It was too late to continue the experiment, as all the bees had swarmed, but the apiarist will equip all of his new hives with sponge comb, and believes he has solved a problem that has mystified bee-keepers for years. Instead of compelling his bees to waste three-fourths of their time in chewing vegetable gum and making it into wax for cells, he will now furnish them with ready made comb, thus multiplying his honey output three or four times. When he wants some new honey he will remove a sponge, put it in a cider press, and, having squeezed out the liquid sweetness he will replace the sponge in the hive to be filled again. Should the innovation become general thousands of bees will doubtless be thrown out of employment. Even bees are not secure against the competition of labor-saving contrivances.

[We have heard of fish stories; this one is certainly spongey.—[Ed.]