

HOW THE DRONES OBTAINED THEIR COLOR

I have read in Langstroth that an unmated queen lays drone eggs only, and that a mated queen lays worker and drone eggs. It is also stated that worker and drone eggs are essentially the same, and that fertile workers are reared in cells near queen cells, and thus obtain a little royal jelly. If this is the case, how is it that a black queen mated to an Italian drone gives drones with yellow bands on them? Perhaps some of your readers may be able to explain how this is. If the drone eggs are not impregnated in some way while being laid, the drones could not obtain the yellow coloring from black queens.

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[Scientists tell us most emphatically that the drone results from an unfertilized egg, but that the worker arises from a fertilized egg. In the latter case, a male cell, and only one, enters into the egg, and what is called fertilization ensues. Our correspondent, in common with many others, has an idea that even though the egg is not fertilized, it may be affected in some way or other by the male element. This is not the case, and we believe also that such is a physical impossibility. The coloration of the yellow drone is, we imagine, due to the fact that possibly the black queens were not of pure black brood, in which case the yellow color would be explained. There are other possible explanations, but this is the one that we have always accepted. The manner in which color is inherited in bees is a matter that is at present being thoroughly investigated by one or two scientists. In this issue appears an exhaustive article by Mr. Sladen, dealing largely with this question, which Mr. Bradley will find most instructive and useful. We ourselves are thoroughly convinced that the drone inherits absolutely nothing from its mother's mate.

[Ed.]

THE NYASA BEE

BY L. W. J. DEUSS.

My object in putting these notes at the disposal of the Editor is not to teach others—for that I am not qualified—but to let others teach me how I can avoid the failures I have had, and to draw attention to a bee that through its excellent qualities has won my sympathy. The observations were made at Fort Johnston, on the south end of Lake Nyasa, lat. 14 deg. 28 min. 30 sec. south, long. 35 deg. 18 min. 30 sec. east, about 1,600 feet above the sea level. In different altitudes many things might differ considerably.

Even a casual observer of our little friend the Nyasa bee, when it is busy on a flower, must be struck by its beauty in color and shape. The worker is rather slender and wasp-like, with abdomen more pointed than that of the common black bee. Its length is about the same—a little less than half an inch when hungry, and a little more when full of honey.

The color of head, thorax, and legs is black, and these are covered with light-yellow hair, with a tinge of red. The first three of the six visible segments of the abdomen are of a beautiful orange color, with narrow black bands at their bases. The first segment being very small, they appear to have two yellow bands. The next two segments are black, with a bright silver band at the base of each. The last is black. The workers are not very dissimilar to Italians.

This may also be said of the queens. A dead Italian queen I have is not to be distinguished from one of my dead Nyasa queens. But the queens are not so uniform in color as the workers. As a rule, they have the first three segments of the abdomen orange, like the worker, only the dark bands at their bases are dark-brown instead of black, and the rest of the abdomen is dark-

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IRE, Sec.Trés.