

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

JOTTINGS OFF THE TRACK.

WHAT is, off the working track for I have been *hors de combat* for the space of three weeks. For once in a long time this complex machine which I have been running pretty constantly for forty-six odd years has gotten seriously out of gear. The trouble is I have been running it of late for just about all it is worth, and what with the excessive heat, the depressing drought, and over work, the boiler of the organism which is so "fearfully and wonderfully made" made up its mind to strike work for a time. It refused to be started up to boil the victuals for blood and brain. Of course the factory, under such circumstances, had to be shut up, or rather had to be *laid down*. This happened about three weeks ago, and after considerable obstinacy on both sides an amicable adjustment is now well under way and the present prospects are that the factory will soon be running again as usual full time—well no, not quite as usual, the fuel must be kept back a little and somewhat less steam generated. This will merely be a prudential and precautionary move to prevent another "strike."

WEATHER AND CROP.

The drought still continues, and I begin to think that the face of nature now hereabouts is beginning to present some such aspect as the dead old moon presents could we get a near squint at her arid and lifeless surface. True, we still have some animal and vegetable life yet, but there is a languor, and lassitude, and laziness about it that nothing under heaven will dissipate except an outpouring from the upper regions of space. As to the honey crop when I say it is with me about one third of what it was last season I am putting the figure at the outside; and if there is to be no fall crop at all and I am compelled to feed more or less for winter the figure one third is quite beyond the truth. In parts of Lennox and Addington however, south of Napanee in Lennox and towards the north of Addington, there has been more rain and the honey crop is much better, with the prospect of a considerable fall crop.

PROBABLE PRICES.

The honey crop, being so short not only in Canada and the States extending to California but in Great Britain and more or less in the Continent, the crop, such as it is, ought certainly to command a good price; and would in all places were it not for the foolish shortsightedness of some producers. In this section we have two or three of this class who persist from year to year, whether the crop is abundant or scarce,

in spoiling the local market at the very beginning of the season and keeping it demoralized till their wares are gone. One of these parties is in the north near Arden, who produces extracted honey, and the other in the south near Morven, who produces comb honey. The latter party if I am rightly informed is not only foolish in his own interest but contrary as well, refusing to sell his production to his brother producers at the same figures with which he spoils the market. Bee-keepers generally are business men and honorable but there are exceptions. For myself I only want a fair paying price for my productions, and were there none but my own crop in the whole country I would not ask or take an exorbitant price for it.

THE CLIPPING OF QUEENS.

In relating the experience of himself and apiarian friends in Toronto in last JOURNAL, if friend Clarke thinks he has made a point against clipping I cannot agree with him. They bungled, the whole business, and when our friend essays to tell how to do it when the queen is clipped he just tells how *not* to do it. No one who understands hiving clipped queens and their swarms would think of "picking up the queen," putting her "under a tumbler" and then releasing her when the bees get back from their "bootless flight"! Instead of regarding that management as all "O. K." they would be very apt to regard it as all S. E. (which, being interpreted, means stupid enough.) In the first place to pick up the queen would be bad for two reasons. You might injure her in the performance, and getting the effluvia of your hand on her person she might not be quite acceptable to the bees when they returned, for it so happens occasionally that they are quite displeased with their queen for not coming off with them and only require a little extra pretext to abuse her. Then putting her under a tumbler and releasing her when the bees return is more bad management. She ought simply to be allowed to run up out of the grass into a little wire cage, which she will invariably do if you hold the open end over her, and then after shutting her in the cage it may be laid upon the entrance board, and she may be liberated after the bees have returned and mostly gone in, or what is better, if it is a very hot day, or from any other cause they are likely to come out again, the caged queen may be put in on top of the frames under the quilt and liberated in the evening or next morning. Let our friends who oppose clipping first learn how to clip a queen and then how to properly manage her after she is clipped, and some of their objections to clipping will forthwith disappear.