

One thing more, the practice of exhibiting granulated honey in glass at our expositions is doing good service by way of an educator. Both dealers and consumers begin now to regard granulation as a proof of purity. All of which is most respectfully submitted.

S. T. PETTITT,

VICE PRES. N. A. B. K. A.

Belmont, Ont., Dec. 5th, 1885.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

### SHALL WE KEEP OUR BEES PURE OR NOT?

**Q** F late considerable discussion is being had in regard to crossing the races of bees in general use; more especially in regard to the yellow and black. The idea claimed is, that by so doing we shall breed out bad qualities, and retain and fix the good ones. How far this matter can be carried into actual practice is as yet wholly theoretical; the assumption is made, however, that as we can form new strains by crossing our horses, cattle and fowls, etc., we can also by purity of reasoning do the same with our bees. This assumption while exceedingly plausible at first thought, is open to so many serious objections in actual practice, that I fear failure will result so long as we do not have the power of absolutely controlling fertilization. As is well known I have always been a strenuous advocate of preserving our noble breeds in absolute purity; and believing, as I do, that the moment we commence crossing we shall lose those distinctive markings and characteristics by which the various races are now known and identified, without forming a new strain that will possess such markings and characteristics, and also open the door to fraud and deceit. I must still advocate this principle in order that we may be enabled to know just what we are purchasing, and that we may be absolutely sure of being able to duplicate one and all of our stocks. It is held out by some that we should work for the best bees without regard to markings; so we should, but how are we to know or even guess which one will be the best if we attempt to cross? We know now just what we have got; we also know that when we cross we have no possible idea of what we shall get. We know also that certain races have proved all right in the past, and that by crossing we get bees that are an improvement only on the poorer race; why cross them? Or, at least, why advise crossing generally? Is such advice a "dodge" on the part of some one to enable him to "rake in a pile"? It certainly looks that way to me, and will continue so to look till fertilization is so fully under our control, that we can breed everytime from selected specimens. Does

anyone claim for a moment that we could, as we have done, make such great improvement in the breeding of our horses, cattle, etc., had we bred them as we must at present breed our bees? I rather think not. Our stock-breeders are particular to select the very best individual specimens they can get, from which to breed for a new type, or even to keep the old strain "up to the mark." Without such care but little improvement could be made; and I fear they would retrograde rather than advance. I do not desire to carry the idea that I am not in favor of experiments, or of preventing progression. Far from it. What I do desire is, that our bees should be kept pure, and the best specimens so far as possible kept for that purpose, in order that improvements may be made in and with them, so that the general public may be assured of obtaining certain results from each race as they may prefer to operate with, leaving for those who may choose to cross as much as they please till they establish a new variety, or satisfy themselves, as they eventually will, that such a thing is an impossibility.

J. E. POND, JR.

Foxboro, Mass., U. S. A., Dec. 1885.

We have no desire to have crosses with black bees, having had and tested them years ago. Any crosses we have now are Carniolan, Holy Land, or Syrian, Italian and Cyprian. We have crossed and re-crossed, bred and tested the various crosses of the above races and are convinced from our past experience that to re-commence crossing with black would be a retrograde movement. Although we have a number of apiaries favorably located, yet we can only cross with *certainty* on our isolated islands in the Georgian Bay. When bees will intermingle when as far as five or ten miles apart, we do not see how it is possible for any one to tell with any degree of accuracy without complete isolation. It is true that by looking at the progeny a person may imagine they can tell positively, but after being several times crossed, the person who can tell by the progeny the exact cross, is possessed of more ability in that direction than any one we know of.