

BEE-SPACE ABOVE OR BELOW FRAMES—WHICH?

I want to have a debate on the above subject—which is preferable, to have the bee-space above or below the frames? In Chalmers' Observations in February number of C.B.J. we are told to have it above, and I know that there are many good men—yes, a great multitude—who agree with this. There are some, however, who do not. When at the convention in Chicago, at the time of the World's Fair, this question came up. There was a prompt reply, "Above, of course," but immediately after, "No, below the frames." Why is it there is such a difference of opinion regarding so many things apicultural. My hives and supers are all made with the space below the frames, and this is one of the things that if I had to begin over again I would have the same.

I will give you my reasons for having them this way, and then, Mr. Editor, after both sides have had their say, I want you to decide.

In the first place, when bee-space is above the frames, you must always have a specially-constructed bottom-board to allow for a bee-space below, whereas with a bee-space below any flat surface does. "In a pinch" any board, if long enough—or two, if one is not wide enough—does for a bottom-board.

Again, when setting down hives or supers with a bee-space below, any old place does, whereas with bee-space above you have to set them just so-so, or bees will be killed under bottom bars of frames. Even when bees are brushed or shaken from frames care has to be exercised lest some are overlooked and come to an untimely end in the same way. Again, when top bars of frames require cleaning of propolis or burr-combs, it is much easier and better done when the bee-space is below and top bar comes level with the top of the hive. I think this is obvious. Again, where end bars of frames touch the sides of the hives the bees

have a better opportunity of "sticking them tight" when the bee-space is above the frame. I know the top bar should not touch in this way, and I would not tolerate a hive that permits this, yet we know that most of them—or, shall I say, many of them—do. No, no. Give me a hive with bee-space below the frames, although friend Chalmers and a host of other men possibly as good prefer the other. I am open to conviction, however.

Until that man Chalmers began his Observations I thought we had most things in common, but I discover there is another thing we differ on. It is that all-zinc queen-excluder without any framework. I want a queen-excluder that is easily handled, always has a bee-space, and never gets out of shape. It seems to me that the wood-zinc queen-excluder is the only thing that can fill these requirements. I know that in this matter also there are many who think as does friend Chalmers. I would like to see this question debated also.

On "How to Serve Honey" our mutual friend is not "far astray." To accomplish much good this educational process should be conducted through other papers than our bee journals. Could not something be done along this line? It would tend to advertise our goods, and at some time may induce some to know more about this by practical experience.

G. A. DEADMAN,

Brussels, Ont.

[We like a bee-space at the bottom, but in no case would we dispense with the bee-space on top. With a bee-space on top the bare sheet of excluding zinc can be used, and, judging from our experience of the last two seasons, we would prefer it. It is more useful in the long run. If it has the wood frame its period of usefulness is shortened: the frame soon goes to pieces, and then the zinc is too small to be of use. Mr. Deadman raises two nice points, and we hope they will be thoroughly discussed.—Ed.]

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