

R. McKnight said that it would not do, no matter whether it said or not, to encourage the practice of extracting honey for the purpose of feeding sugar syrup.

W. F. Clarke said that the bee-keeper should not needlessly feed sugar syrup to his bees, and run the risk of some of it going to his customers. An undisturbed brood-nest, stored with the best honey, is what he wants.

Apicultural Journalism was the next subject, and the following by W. Z. Hutchinson was read by Dr. Miller:

APICULTURAL JOURNALISM.

Bee-keepers have good reasons for being proud of their literature. Scarcely a point arises upon which we cannot find the recorded experience of our best apiarists; while new discoveries are at once described, illustrated and discussed in the bee-keeping periodicals. Perhaps bee-keepers have given the matter little thought, but, notwithstanding the excellence of these periodicals, might they not be improved? If so, how? Have they faults? If so, what are they? We believe that "apicultural journalism" may be profitably made the subject of special discussion.

Time was when many of the industries were represented in one family. Flax and wool were grown, spun and worked up into cloth, and made into clothing. Cows were kept, and cheese as well as butter made for home use. Poultry and a few colonies of bees added to the comforts of the household. But there is no need of going into detail; everyone knows how people lived 100 years ago. Cheap and rapid transportation has encouraged the invention of machinery, the building of factories, and the classification of labor. This has brought about specialty. With specialty in production came the need of specialty in periodicals devoted to the interests of producers. For the general farmer we had and still have agricultural journals devoted to the cultivation of grain, stock raising, gardening, fruit growing, bees, poultry, etc., and they answer their purpose well, but when a man makes a specialty of some one of these branches of rural industry, he then wishes a periodical devoted to that business as a specialty, not one mixed up with some other specialty for which he cares little or nothing.

These other topics are all right in their places, but bee keepers who do not care for them, dislike to pay for their discussion, or to wade through the discussions in order to get at what information there is about bees. As a rule, bee periodicals that attempt to "mix in" other topics, do so at a loss. We believe that they will best serve the interests of their subscribers, and at the same time secure their own prosperity, by letting severely alone all subjects not pertaining to their specialty. We would not expunge any wit, humor or eloquence that may bubble up spontaneously, but the publication of such attempts at wit as have appeared in some, is enough to kill any journal that it is possible to kill.

After having decided that only such matter as pertains to bees shall go into the journal, then the matter of quality must be looked after.

Some matter that appears in some of the bee papers could be placed only under the head of "twaddle." What does possess editors to publish such trash? A woman tells in a would-be-funny way of her troubles in clipping a queen's wing, or a man starts out with: "I am a bee-keeper. I began the season with 24 colonies. Some were weak, but—" What is the use of going any further? You have all seen these things in the periodicals. What good are they? Do they help bee-keepers? Must such things be used in order to fill the pages? No; not if editors will bestir themselves, and, if they cannot do this, they are unfit for the positions they occupy.

Friends, how do you read the bee papers? We read them in this manner. We glance at the heading of an article, then at its author's name, and sometimes this is all we do. By the way, we wish all would place the author's name at the head of the article. It saves the bother of looking up the end of the article (over the hat, perhaps) to see who wrote it. Perhaps some think that the knowledge of the authorship is immaterial; if the article is good, it is good irrespective of who wrote it. True, but show us the man who does not wish to know who is doing the talking.

To return, if the heading and authorship are favorable, the first paragraph is glanced over. (Do you know that the gist of a paragraph can be taken in at a glance?) Then the next paragraph is given a glance, then the next, and so on through the article. Frequently this is all the reading the article receives.

There are some copies of some of the bee papers that we have read through in this manner in about five minutes. About once a month there comes to this office a paper claiming to be a bee paper, that we don't read at all—it simply is not worth it.

When we learn, by glancing through an article, that it contains something of value, we then read it through carefully. Careful and efficient editing would save all this sifting on the part of readers. The question that each editor ought to ask himself, when deciding upon what shall appear upon the pages of his journal is, will the matter admitted be of real benefit to the readers? If it will not, why publish it? It may not be possible nor advisable to adhere strictly to this rule, but it ought to be always kept in view.

We wish to oppose one idea that some of our editorial brethren have, with much labor, tried to pound into the heads of their correspondents, and that is that they must write short articles in order that all may be heard from. Why should "all" be heard from, unless they have something of value to communicate? Of course, we prefer to have ideas expressed in the fewest words possible, but a long article is just as welcome as a short one, provided it contains valuable information in proportion to its length. The idea is just here. A journal ought to be filled with the most valuable information that can possibly be packed into it, irrespective of whether that information is furnished by two or three correspondents, or by a dozen.

[This being an editorial written for the Review for November, such paragraphs as were simply "personal chats" with its subscribers,