


to understand just how natural swarming is conducted, for with such knowledge one is more apt to succeed in having the right proportion of both young and old bees in the two parts after dividing.

Borodino, N. Y., June, 1891.

Gleanings.

Selling Honey Under One's Own Label.— Difficulties When the Crop is Large.

R. WILKIN.

 R. EDITOR, I am glad you continue this subject of adulteration of honey, which is intimately related to the variations in the quality of the genuine article. I have seen much more harm from unripe and off grades of honey than from adulteration. So indiscriminate has become the purchase and sale of honey that there is but little encouragement to the bee-keeper here to aim at excellence in his products, as it is mainly sold from all parts of the State through commission men of San Francisco. The main test being that of color; strictly white commanding 1 to 1½ cents per pound more than dark amber. It is shipped East by the car load and manipulated there to suit the interests of the dealers. Owing to the variations in the color, flavor and consistency of honey, and the many tastes and fancies to be consulted, it is very difficult to grade according to merit, and when we add to this what seems to me the almost insurmountable difficulty of readily detecting adulteration, it is not strange that the consumer gets his honey in a hap-hazard sort of a way. If bee-keepers were convinced that in most cases we could have the experience that Byron Walker had when Health Officer Duffield tested the honey, we could in a short time raise the necessary thousands of members to the Bee-Keepers Union, which would, if necessary, employ an expert to travel and look after this matter of adulteration. But can we rely on its being so practical?

Last season the man on whose place I kept bees, bought nearly a car load of my honey to take with him to his old home in Missouri to sell to his acquaintances as honey that he knew was made on his farm in California. It did not sell so fast as he expected, and he left it with a commission man in Kansas City to sell for him. Soon after, the commission man reported that he had the honey tested by a chemist who pronounced it 28 per cent. glucose, and consequently sold it at a sacrifice. (I know it is possible that the chemist never saw the honey as it was

represented he did.) But from what I understand of the composition of honey, it would be an easy matter to make just such a blunder and bring the force of science to bear against the innocent bee-keeper.

Being of the same faith with yourself, that the most practical thing was for each bee-keeper to work up a trade for himself, I have made three efforts at it. In 1879, I went to London, England, with 80 tons of extracted honey. With much labor it was sold at some profit. I formed an acquaintance with Pelling, Staley & Co., of Liverpool, extensive grocers, who expressed themselves inclined to deal in California honey, but were discouraged by their experience in buying from Cutting & Co., extensive packers of honey in San Francisco, as they found both good and bad honey under the same label marked orange blossom honey. (?) But in 1881 I succeeded in getting their order for 10 tons in 2-gallon tins with my label. The next season they ordered 32 tons, and the third year they ordered 48 tons, one-half in 1-gallon tins, the other half in 2 gallon tins, but here set in trouble. In this region, honey was scarce and none of it so fine as I had been furnishing. I informed them of the fact, but they had their demand created, and I filled the order as best I could, but it was not satisfactory; and about this time honey poured into London from all parts of the world, running the price away down, thus killing our trade there. In 1884 the price of honey came down to 3 cents here; 4 in San Francisco. I took a car load to Boston, where I sold it at an average of 6½ cents per pound. Taking the cost of transportation and my expenses from it, reduced it to 3 cents, while the cost of package and hauling from the mountains, reduced it one cent more. But Boston was far away, making it difficult to follow up the trade already started.

In 1886 honey was very abundant and exceedingly fine, but only brought 3½ cents in San Francisco. I put my honey in 10 gallon tins with my label on it, showing it to be from the producer in California, and took it with me to Texas. I had no difficulty in persuading dealers that they were getting a genuine article, and thus created a good demand for our honey.

The next season the orders came in freely, but the bees that season, and the following one, yielded almost no honey and what there was, was of a poor quality, as it usually is here when scarce. This disconcerted all our plans, and now, without going back there as a honey dealer, myself, I could not sell a full crop of honey. To hold one's custom, it seems neces-