

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

HOLTERMANN vs. HUTCHINSON.

I regret very much the tone and spirit of Mr. Holtermann's article in the C.B.J. of March 1st. Apart from the merits of the question at issue, there is an air of superciliousness and vindictiveness not to be admired. Mr. Hutchinson's high standing as a beekeeper; his pre-eminent ability as an editor; his frank and manly bearing; and the respectful consideration he has given to the views, convictions and even prejudices of fellow beekeepers, all entitle him to a different line of treatment than he has received at the hands of Mr. Holtermann. If, as I suppose, Prof. Cook is alluded to in the middle paragraph, first column, on page 366, then the same criticisms are applicable to what is said of that gentleman. I am not a slavish follower of Prof. Cook, and do not hesitate to differ from him when I think he is wrong; but I have the greatest respect for him, and feel sorry that a Canadian beekeeper should speak of him in such terms of approbrium. Mr. Hutchinson and Prof. Cook love beekeeping quite as ardently as Mr. Holtermann does, and have rendered it the most eminent service.

I shall venture to say a few words about sugar honey. Mr. Holtermann tells us that his "old friend, Hutchinson," has asserted that it is possible by feeding sugar syrup to bees to "produce an article equal to honey." What kind of honey? permit me to ask. Honey is of various kinds and qualities. The ground taken by Mr. Hutchinson and Prof. Cook, was, and is, that feeding sugar syrup to bees produces an article which may be properly called "sugar honey." It has never been asserted that the product is "equal to honey," understanding by the word the highest quality of floral honey. "Nectar" is simple sweet. It becomes honey by the manipulation it receives from the bees. We have many grades of honey, clover honey, basswood, or preferably, linden honey, thistle honey, buckwheat honey. Last spring we had a great profusion of dandelions, and I had some entire frames

of dandelion honey. It was a long way inferior to clover or linden honey, but much better than buckwheat honey. Sugar syrup is changed from cane sugar to grape sugar when manipulated by bees, and certainly becomes a species of honey. I write this after having carefully read T. W. Cowan's article in *Gleanings* for March 1st. That eminent scientist and beekeeper tells us that sugar syrup does not become honey, but "invert sugar," under the manipulation of the bees, but, by his own showing, the divergence from honey is very slight, and only to be indicated by delicate scientific tests. I doubt if sugar honey can be profitably produced; but experiments will be made, and if, after this tempest in a tea-pot has subsided, Hasty or any one else produces a grade of sugar honey that the public wants and is willing to pay a remunerative price for, calling hard names will not keep it out of the market. This is proved by the history of oleomargarine, which Mr. Holtermann contemptuously calls "hog and beef fat." Leave out the "hog fat," and when it comes to scientific analysis, beef fat is butter fat, and not the most delicate palate can tell the difference between butter made from the fat of an ox, and butter made from the milk of the cow. Oleomargarine butter, distinctly branded as such, has a high market and nutritive value. All grades of honey, like all grades of butter must, and will, in the long run, sell on their merits. Quality rules the market.

There has been far too much of acrimony and passion imported into this discussion. Demosthenes appealed from "Philip drunk to Philip sober." I laugh to myself as I contemplate the hysterical fits into which some beekeepers have wrought themselves on the subject. When they quiet down and can take a calmer view of things they will have a good laugh at themselves. One of the richest treats in life is to have a quiet laugh at one's self when one sees occasion for it; as we all surely do sometimes, and perhaps often.

As for trying to squelch discussion upon this or any other subject pertaining to beekeeping,—well, it can't be done in this age,