

From our English Correspondent.

MEL SAPIT OMNIA.

SOME HINTS ON SPREADING-BROOD.

“O ‘Peek-a-boo’ has come to the end of his tale, and a very good tale he has told, in a very lucid and humorous style. Here is a piece of news that has come to me in confirmation of the last chapter and Mr. Jones does not know I know of it until he sees this in M. S. After the exhibition was closed and while your commissioners were waiting to find a customer for the residue, a city commission man gave Mr. Jones a very good bid for the lot on condition that he had the sole agency in England of the sale of The D. A. Jones Co’s. appliances. Mr. Jones’ reply I am informed was most prompt and straightforward. “Let us deal for the honey and when that bargain is struck we will talk about the other matter; if the honey was all mine I would very soon come to terms with you but the two must be separate as I am only one custodian of other peoples’ goods” Messrs Cornell and McKnight can contradict this if I am misinformed. Brother beekeepers of Canada you were well served, your commissioners had a chance of making their trip to England a huge holiday but as it was, they stuck to their posts as no set of business men would have done for themselves if the goods were their own. Pray don’t growl or we shall cry shame!”

Our season does not grow any more kind to us, cold and dull has been the order of the month of April, instead of the usual warm showers and sunshine.

There seems to be a disposition amongst you to deprecate brood-spreading in any form. We used to get far too much pulling the frames about, I with others have fought a strong war against the practice but we still practice a little stimulative brood-spreading. In former letters I have told you something of uncapping sealed stores, and giving frames of sealed stores that have been kept over winter, I have also written about regulation feeding, I may interest you now by telling you how we spread brood. Please remember I am not advocating our plans for your adoption, possibly you have better methods, of that you must judge, my object is simply to give information. Some ‘let-em-alone’ entirely, but as a rule they are the indolent, they will object to the soft impeachment doubtless, but there it is. Some are always fussing and smoking and fuming but they do not make fortunes out of their honey crop. Others are careful to crowd their bees during cold spring weather as much as possible; we take combs

that the bees do not require, away, and close up with *dummies* to keep them warm. The bees require 80° Fah. in their brood nest to hatch brood so that it is useless to give them combs they cannot cover. Our first interference is to turn the outside of the frame if the queen has not laid in it towards the brood-nest, this causes the queen to lay in the empty cells, especially if you are very gently feeding. If there is no pollen about, some of us stir a little wheaten flour into the syrup and give them, but you must ‘go slow’ at it, as bees seem not to be able to resist breeding if pollen is given them in this form. As the population increases we give a frame of comb, but always on the outside, no splitting up the centre of the brood-nest. As the weather gets warmer and bees increase we can give more combs, always keeping our eye on the thermometer outside, as it makes all the difference as to how thickly they are compelled to cluster to keep up the necessary heat in the brood-nest. There is still another plan some of us adopt, we give a frame of comb with young grubs four days old and upwards from a strong stock to a weak one and give the strong one the empty comb for their full laying queen to fill. I notice you shake young bees in front of your weak stock and allow them to run in, we do not practice that plan much. The first four days of the grub’s existence is the time that gives the greatest strain on the nurse bees to prepare their food so you will see that is a strong argument in favour of allowing the grubs to get at least four days old before giving them to a weak stock.

I never puff smoke in at the entrance in spring time when about to examine a hive. The bees in fanning it out again, which they soon will do as they abhor it, always lower the temperature of the inside of the hive. They are always easy to subdue in spring and I am also careful only to turn the quilt back as far as necessary and do all as quickly as possible. I have always stoutly condemned the loose way some people expose their brood to a chill. There is not much advantage in getting our stocks up in their full strength until the last week in May unless it is in some special district. By the 21st June our meadows are in their prime so we must make our harvest between these two dates and if bees are ready before the flowers they simply waste their energies before the honey glut comes and are past doing their best at the proper time.

The inventive genius of our friends here has received a great stimulant by the Indian and Colonial Exhibition last year. Our last quarterly conversazione was unusually full of