

A Word to the Novice.

GENTS.—I don't get much time to write for the Bee Journals, but December 15th, C. B. J. has just come to hand, and I have struck in briefly, taking two articles therein as text. The article I send may not be considered of any value, well it is not, only in the way of giving a caution to those of your readers, who are novices, and if even one of them is kept from throwing away a few dollars some good will be done. C. B. J. holds its own with the Bee Journals, and is an educator in bee matters to its readers. I trust your subscription list is growing all the time. It ought to do so, for you give full value for the money.

PATENTS.

The article on patents found on page 747, C. B. J., and credited to A. B. J., give just the pointer needed by the inexperienced. Bee hive patents at this late day are of not value enough to be tested even at no expense. A patent moth proof hive would be a miracle. Don't Mr. Ewing know that a moth can go wherever a he-bee can travel? Don't he know also, that very few if any eggs of the moth miller are laid inside the hives? If not he should study bee-ology before he attempts to invent moth proof hives. It is a pity to fool away money for worthless patents, but the patent office examiners are not wholly at fault. The so-called inventor has to make oath in his application for a patent, that his invention in new and useful, and that he is the first inventor, etc. etc. If an examination, (and the examinations made at our patent office, are thorough to my knowledge), shows nothing to the contrary, the oath that it is new and useful is accepted of course. The patent office has nothing to do with the matter of whether an invention is valuable or not. If it is new, the law says a patent shall issue on payment of the fee. The inventor expects to get his money back by gulling an unsophisticated public; and right here is where the bee journals can do their work as public educators, and right here let me say, that any bee-keeper, who has any one of the standard movable frame hives, cannot improve his condition by changing for some new fangled patent humbug. Speaking of patents, the next thing I expect to hear is that Mr. Alpaugh will take out a patent on his new method of handling bees, of course he has the right to do so, and if he has originated, such a method, he ought in justice to himself to so secure it, that he can reap some benefit from it. The question is, has he done anything of the kind? We shall

see by and by I suppose, but I have little faith in these wonderful improvements. I have kept bees too long, and seen too many of such ideas come to naught, that I am an unbeliever of the worst kind you ever saw in regard to them.

A hint of mystery will always take with the crowd, and if Mr. Alpaugh can by means of *correspondential* advertising, draw on the crowd, "bully for him," and if the crowd is satisfied all right. Conservative men will wait and see, and if the method is valuable, will take it up and make use of it.

J. E. POND.

No. Attleboro, Mass.

Well, we do not know exactly what Mr. Alpaugh's plan is, but as he is willing to take \$2.00 for it [we] are perfectly willing to give it and run the risk, because he says if it is not as he recommends he will refund the money. Now, nothing could be fairer than that, and you have only to know Mr. Alpaugh to be satisfied that he is thoroughly conscientious in what he says. We wish that we had more Mr. Alpaugh's in Canada.

Disinfecting Hives—Spores of Foul Brood in Comb Foundation.

OBERVE that on several occasions in the current volume of the British Bee Journal the editors have recommended that hives be fumigated by means of burning sulphur to destroy the spores of *Bacillus alvei*. Sulphurous acid has for a long time occupied a very high place among disinfectants; but the elaborate experiments of Koch and Wollfhenkel in Germany, and of Sternberg and others in the United States, prove that it is of no value as a disinfectant of spore-containing material.

In *Mittheilungen aus dem Kaiserlichen Gesundheitsamte*, Vol. I., pp. 188-232, Dr. G. Wollfhenkel has an article on the value of sulphurous acid gas as a disinfecting agent; and in the same volume, pp. 234-282, Dr. R. Koch gives the results of his experiments, made to determine its exact value as a germicide. In the Report of the Committee on Disinfectants of the American Public Health Association, for 1885, there is a paper by Dr. J. H. Raymond on 'Experiments with Sulphurous Acid Gas,' and another on 'Sulphur Dioxide,' by Dr. George M. Sternberg, who says: 'My experiments show most conclusively that it does destroy the specific infecting power of vaccine virus dried upon ivory points, when present in the air of a disinfecting chamber, in the proportion of one