

Notes Gleaned From a Visit to the Apiary of C. W. Post.

(Continued.)

In reply to the question, Do you use more than one extracting super? Mr. Post said: "Oh, yes, two and three sometimes. In a good season more than one extracting super is an actual necessity." "Do you use full sheets of comb foundation?" "Yes, sheets in everything, sections and brood frames. I have about 7,000 combs and there is not a natural comb in the whole apiary." "Do you wire?" "No, I have never used a wired frame in my life." "Do you not think many fail because they throw a swarm on full sheets of foundation when they should have combs built out in some other way and hive on combs?" "Certainly. Nature never intended a sheet of wax to undergo the strain it must when the bees are hived on sheets of foundation. The foundation will come down very often, especially when the hive is not shaded and the bee-keeper blames the supply dealer." "How do you manage?" "I hive on drawn comb as far as I can. Remember, I have not put a swarm on foundation for four years." "How do you get your foundation drawn out? In the top stories. In what way do you select brood combs?" "When I extract and come to a model comb, I put it aside for the brood chamber. Then in the fall of the year, I get foundation drawn out on the buckwheat flow as you would in fruit bloom." "What do you mean by a model comb?" "One that just reaches the bottom bar and not an imperfect cell from sagged foundation. The bees can then use every cell for brood rearing." "If a bee-keeper has to use foundation in connection with swarms, how would you advise using it?" "I advise moving the swarms on empty frames the first day. The next morning I would quietly take out an empty frame and replace by foundation, disturbing the bees just as little as possible." "Do you think that the absence or presence of drones in the hive has any effect upon the swarming impulse?" "I do not know." "Have you any opinion upon the question?" "Yes, I think with many drones in the hive, the bees are likely to swarm."

By this time we had reached a large honey house with the upstairs for a workshop. I never saw a choicer lot of combs. Everything bespeaks the careful and successful bee-keeper. Mr. Post makes his own comb foundation. In reply to a question as to

how Mr. Post tests bees-wax for purity, he said: "I have an easy test for tallow. If I suspect impurity through an admixture of tallow, I scrape a portion of the cake clean. If pure you can write on it with ink and pen, if adulterated with tallow, the ink will run in globules." "What about the profits to be derived from bee-keeping?" "I could ten or twelve years ago make \$1,000 to \$1,500 a year as easily from 120 as I now can out of 300. This is largely owing to the seasons and the only way is to everlastingly stick at it. Of course the price of honey is less, but this is in part balanced by better known methods of keeping bees."

With many colonies as Mr. Post runs them, there is the expense of branching out. Yet he claims the expenses are largely met by the wax produced. "Do you think the production of wax is voluntary or involuntary as claimed by some?" "Well, you see that wire cloth screen under the frames before mentioned. You also see there is a space under the wire cloth, and if any scales of wax fall, they would be found under the wire screen and upon the bottom board. I have had hundreds of colonies in this way for many years and watched this for years, and I have had flows giving 75 pounds of surplus in a week, and I find bees will not secrete wax unless they need it, and the bottom board is free from wax scales, although you see other excrement." "You have about four hundred colonies here and Mr. Lott, practically in the same apiary has 150. What do you think about overstocking?" "I have tested overstocking and in a good locality I do not put much stock in that. I have compared in buckwheat what our bees were doing and those of a bee-keeper with a few colonies miles from others. There is no difference. We are making the same test again this year. Here are 500 colonies; four miles from here, similarly located, are twenty. I have no doubt there will be no difference." "I see one side of your hive an ugly red. What is that for?" "In the spring of the year I face my hives southwest and have the side to the sun painted metallic red. The sun strikes right in and this helps to build them up. About June 1st these hives are distributed to our apiaries and they are then placed the other way. The red never exposed to the sun, you have a cool hive." "What are those apple barrels for?" "If you touch them you will find they are filled. They contain honey. When I extract in out apiaries, I put the honey into common apple barrels. It takes up less room in the car, and the cans are not soiled before marketing. The way of preparing the barrels is as follows. Select those which have the