

and pupæ and a supply of honey in a box. 'At first,' Huber says, they appeared to pay some little attention to the larvæ; they carried them here and there, but presently replaced them. More than one-half of the Amazons died of hunger in less than two days. They had not even traced out a dwelling, and the few ants still in existence were languid and without strength. I commiserated their condition, and gave them one of their black companions. This individual, unassisted, established order, formed a chamber in the earth, gathered together the larvæ, extracted several young ants that were ready to quit the condition of pupæ, and preserved the life of the remaining Amazons.

'However small the prison, however large the quantity of food, these stupid creatures will starve in the midst of plenty rather than feed themselves.'

'I do not doubt that, as Huber tells us, specimens of *Polyergus* if kept by themselves in a box would soon die of starvation, even if supplied with food. I have, however, kept isolated specimens for three months by giving them a slave for an hour or two a day to clean and feed them; under these circumstances they remain in perfect health, while, but for the slaves, they would have perished in two or three days.'

'In *P. rufescens*, the so-called workers, though thus helpless and idle, are numerous, and in some respects even brilliant.'

(What do the ladies say to that, substitute "servants for "slaves" and a higher order of animals for "ants" and what do you make of it.)

But I have not quite done with Sir John's book yet; in his introduction he says:

"The Anthropoid apes no doubt approach nearer to man in bodily structure than do any other animals; but when we consider the habits of ants, their social organization, their large communities and elaborate habitations, their roadways, their possession of domestic animals, and even, in some cases, of slaves, it must be admitted that they have a fair claim to rank next to man in the scale of intelligence."

If the origin of civilization was "progressive desire," and its goal is to make us more dependent on "servants" on the one hand, but more "brilliant" and fit to "rule" on the other, let us pause in our mad rush for a "higher civilization" and ask ourselves, where will it land us? But I must forbear or my chivalry for "ladies who labor" will make me rank as a social heretic.

AMATEUR EXPERT.

England, 14th Dec., 1887.

For the Canadian Bee Journal.

### A STRAY VIRGIN QUEEN.

**A**S you express a desire to hear from those in Canada who combine bee-keeping with other pursuits, I herewith give you mine.

I am a store-keeper and keep, about 60 colonies of bees, and with the aid of my small boy, aged fourteen years I attend to my store and bees. The last season has been a very poor one in my locality, the season being dry. They gathered a little on clover but nothing on bass-wood. My average yield was about 35 lbs. extracted honey and a small amount of comb honey, and then the bees required some feeding back in the fall. I put my bees in the cellar on Nov. 5th in good condition. They seem to be wintering well, the thermometer standing at 45° F. I have one ventilation pipe running from a back wood-shed, and one running from cellar to kitchen stove. I winter without much loss,

generally without any; I winter with covers off and cushions on, entrance opened. I keep my queen clipped; I keep mostly Italians; this past summer I had three colonies come off at one time; all lit on the same bush. I caged the queens and changed the hives and waited for the return of the bees about the usual time, but soon found they were all starting for the woods, but with the aid of water I succeeded in stopping them and they returned to the same bush. I cut the limb and brought it in to the yard, wet them up nicely, shook them on the ground in front of an empty hive and I secured a virgin queen as they were running in, that had got with them. She was making all the mischief with them. The bees then all returned to their several homes. I then uncaged the queens, and all was quiet, three colonies of bees and one estrayed queen to spare. I give this to show that bee-keepers are not always sure of their bees when their queens are clipped, but I think it best to have all laying queens clipped if possible. I do really believe that bees do supercede their queens oftener when clipped, but so much the better. We want young queens; especially those that are not good we should get rid of as soon as possible. I make a business of always keeping lots of young queens on hand during the summer so in case I find poor queens I change them and always raised them from a very strong colony of bees. They are always better and live longer.

JAMES LEFLEUR.

Thanks for your report. We are satisfied that queens are better when raised from very strong colonies under the most favorable circumstances. Bees sometimes supercede queens with clipped wings sooner, perhaps, than if they were not clipped, but we have had clipped queens live to be very old. Are you satisfied where the young queen came from? It is not an uncommon thing when a swarm is issuing and virgin queens are out in the air for them to alight with the swarm.

From The British Bee Journal.

### Bees in Natal--Their Companions and Parasites.

**I** AM posting to you to-day some specimens of an insect which is common in hives here, and of which I cannot ascertain the name.

or whether it is hurtful to the bees. These insects are certainly more numerous in weak stocks than strong ones; bees seem to pay no attention to them, whether running on combs or frames, or holding on to a hind leg by their disproportionately long nippers. If bees are thrown from a frame on to the ground in any