

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We observe that the application of bee-stings in cases of rheumatism, chronic neuralgia, etc., is again being discussed. A communication is published in the A.B. J. of the 1st inst., from Dr. Gress of Atchison, Kan., who is of opinion that much care is required in the application of so heroic a remedy. We should say so, indeed. In fact, in our opinion, if we may judge from the cases referred to by the doctor, we should be disposed to regard the remedy as worse, if possible, than the disease. Upon one of the patients on whom the doctor experimented himself, "the immediate effect was sickness, profuse perspiration following an eruption on the surface of the body,"—and this only from a single sting, the doctor himself having got his patient stung by "persuading him to go to a hive of very fine bloods which I had first teased for the occasion, when one of the bees did the work well by striking the spot most affected, which was the left eye," (it was a case of chronic neuralgia). In another case the patient had also been stung and came to the doctor for advice, and "when ascending the stairs he became sick and faint, and fell rolling down stairs, and was unconscious for fully half an hour." Had either of these two cases, says the doctor, got more than one sting, "the result might have been fatal." In that case the remedy would have been much worse than the disease.

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The doctor is very anxious to impress the general public with the necessity of great caution in stinging persons who are not accustomed to being stung. "I advise, first, never to allow any sting about the head or body until you know how the victim is affected by a bee-sting; or, in other words, first take the hand or foot of anyone who has never been stung, and after awaiting the effect of the first sting for half an hour, with nothing unfavorable, then you may apply one to the part affected, be it in the knee-joint, face or

body. Waiting again for the result, if unfavorable symptoms appear, stop for twenty-four hours, and apply as before. But in no case apply from six to eight and ten to twenty stings to any person, unless it should be to an old apiarist, like Mr. Root or Dr. Miller," or, say, Mr. D. A. Jones, to whom the sting of a bee is of the slightest possible consequence.

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And now comes up a very important consideration in connection with the whole subject. We have the experience of reliable medical experts that, as a topical application, the sting of a bee is a perfect success where only the rheumatism or neuralgia is killed—a preterpluperfect one, we must suppose, where the patient is killed as well as the rheumatism. The proposition we desire to submit is, as to whether the remedy may not also be used as a prophylactic. If an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, here we have an invaluable panacea for at least two of the easily-besetting difficulties of the human frame, rheumatism, which may be regarded as affecting the muscular system only, and neuralgia or sciatica, which are confined to the nervous system. Mr. Root and Dr. Miller are both old apiarists; they have probably been stung scores of times just where they wanted to be stung, and perhaps occasionally where they did not want to be stung. Now, then, are Mr. Root or Dr. Miller affected by sciatica, neuralgia or rheumatism. Our *redacteur-en-chef*, Mr. Jones, has been stung so often—well, so many thousands of times,—that to-day, it is quite possible that if he were unveiled and a swarm alighted upon him it might be more inconvenient for the swarm than for editor Jones. We have never asked Mr. Jones whether he suffers from either sciatica, neuralgia, or rheumatism,—but we don't think he does. If we find that he does not, we have got a long way toward solving the somewhat abstruse problem before us,—that is, as to whether the sting of a bee, or the sting of two or three of them, may not be accepted as having prophylactic value in cases o