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# THE AUSTRALIAN Bee Bulletin.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL, DEVOTED TO BEE-KEEPING.

Published by E. TIPPER, West Maitland

Circulated in all the Australian Colonies, New Zealand, & Cape of Good Hope.

VOL. 19. No 12.

MARCH 31, 1911.

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# "The Australian Bee Bulletin."

**A Monthly Journal devoted to Beekeeping.**

**Circulated throughout the Commonwealth of Australia,—New Zealand & Cape of Good Hope.**

**Published by : E. TIPPER, West Maitland, N.S.W. Aus.**

**Editor: W. ABRAM, Beecroft**

**MAITLAND, N.S.W.—MAR. 31, 1911.**

## **EDITORIAL.**

Messrs Hawken and Vance advise that after some delay a trial shipment of 153 cases were made per S. S. Suffolk, consigned to the Anglo-Continental Produce Co., Ltd., London, for sale on account.

Although some shippers set their own cases, we got new wire-bound strong cases for the whole shipment, which, on leaving here, looked as satisfactory as possible.

From a commercial point of view, however, on such a low-priced article, the costs attached are expensive, and it remains to be seen if prices will justify appearance.

Being a trial shipment, we have given it a fair show, and await particulars and suggestions from the other side, of which we will advise you in due course. The different charges against the honey we will let stand over until account sales come back from London.

\* \* \* \*

Owing to excessive rain in the coastal areas, the honey crop has been retarded considerably, just at a time when fine weather was needed. Henceforth, the blood-wood bloom remains the main source that may yet assist the harvest to some extent. Taking all together, there seems no occasion to fear a great overplus supply, and this will prove a bless-

ing to those fortunate to obtain a plentiful crop; but as next year, others may share in an abundant flow, matters adjust themselves to satisfaction.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the designated state of their existence to fulfil a certain purpose in creation, bees have borne their characteristics for thousands of years without any perceptible variation; but during the last century enormous strides have been made in the keeping of bees for profit, principally with a view of making them more controllable and subservant to beekeepers so as to attain the largest benefit from them. But whilst every year larger harvests are aimed at with the most modern devices, the bees' main support to this end, the honey-yielding forest trees, are being destroyed en masse. Is it, then, any wonder that bees do not exceed expectations, but rather the reverse? And what does the average beekeeper do to aid and assist the bees? What does he know of their inborn characteristics? Has he studied them as he ought? In their wild natural state, bees swarmed at will, and the swarms often travelled many miles from their old homes to find and establish a new home in a fresh field and pastures new, whereby inbreeding was provided against; the swarming impulse was not checked as is now being tried. The building of



of new combs, both drone and worker comb, went on as occasions demanded; but now it is deemed unprofitable and checked. Swarms are caught as soon as they cluster, and hived in the same yard. Thus the first step towards inbreeding is taken. Another factor to the same purpose is the breeding or rearing of many queens from one mother and drones from another, whilst the rest is thought unsuited and not allowed to fulfil the natural desire, thus quickening the result of failure sooner or later.

When the habits of bees were not interfered with by man, there were also no bee experts to enlighten all and sundry that they know ripe honey better than the bees do, and many other such clever tricks, winding up with something like this: This being a new idea, will you tell us what your experience is? These ideas and theories, therefore, have their drawbacks. This does not apply to Australia alone, but to other lands, and intended for the progress of the industry.

It may be said that bigger harvests are secured than hithertofore. Pranted, but it must also be borne in mind that such yields occur only at distant intervals.

In other branches stress is laid on the selection of the male. This is very different with bees. Whilst we have certain control as to the rearing of the female, the queen, we have actually no say in the choice of the male. It would be idle to assert that by raising drones from best stocks only would meet the case, because we have absolutely no knowledge as to what characters are embodied and hidden in the embryo larva or the full-grown insect, and even if we did, then the death of that male after one connection, ends any further utility. And it would be equally misleading to assume that all drones from the one mother bear the same character. Thus the means at disposal are mainly to prevent degenera-

tion, be that caused by in-breeding or any other means, and to supplant failing queens by vigorous ones; but whether that can be accomplished with untested queens at 3 for 7/6, those having tried it can only know.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some beekeepers have been good enough to send me samples of honey and wax, and this is to remind others to follow suit. In this way it may be possible to inaugurate a scheme of co-operation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Otto Dengg observed how long it took a bee to gather a load of pollen. After 6—8 seconds a single erica blossom was depleted of its pollen. In 5 to 6 minutes the formation of the pellets can be seen; after 18 to 20 minutes the load is completed, and 4 to 5 minutes later the red-marked bee is back again from its 300 meter distant stand for renewed work.

\* \* \* \* \*

Swarming has been freely where black or hybrid bees are kept, and has hardly finished now. Very few stocks swarmed in the spring, but they made it up later on. The Italians, however, kept together and stored honey instead.

\* \* \* \* \*

The demand, for bee-goods has been so great that the Sydney firms have cleared all their stock, and the requirements of queens were never better.

\* \* \* \* \*

A.T.R., Belaringar, writes:—Has it ever been known when a young swarm of bees coming out of the the hive, for the young queen to leave with them, and the old queen to stay behind? My reason for asking is that a few swarms had this happen a few days ago. The old queen in the hive was nearly a pure Italian and the young queen was a black bee. The old queen came out with the second swarm some 3 days after the first.



I have spoken to two or three bee-men about it and they say it could not be so, until I convinced them that such was the fact. They have never heard of it happening before, they say. Trusting you will give me a reply.

[Yes; I have experienced such occurrences occasionally, and it may be due to the weather preventing the first swarm to issue until the young queens are full-grown, and in the tumult of swarming hatch out, one or more joining the swarm, whilst the old queen, shy of leaving the hive-stays at home, to be forced out next time; or the queen is old and feeble, when young queens are raised to replace her, in which case the old queen is tolerated as harmless. When I learned bee-keeping, after over a week's cold and rain, I caught on the next fine day 81 swarms in swarm-bags, and on that day one hive issued three swarms in an interval of about two hours between each, but the first swarm having the old queen. I have often seen the queen on the entrance-board at swarming, and saw her slip inside the hive again, the swarm returning afterwards and ultimately issuing with young queens.—ED.]

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### **BEEKEEPING IN SOUTH AFRICA.**

By Thos. J. Cook.

Beekeeping, here, there, and everywhere should, with slight modifications, be based on standard lines. There is no need to enlarge upon the statement which has long been recognised as an insurmountable fact; and that fact is, the keeping of the industrious little insects in modern hives, and devoting scientific study to their peculiarities, with a view to securing a reasonable remuneration from their labor. Therefore it is with much regret that I pen a description of the orthodox methods generally observed in South Africa in the keeping of bees.

It is certainly not beekeeping, notwithstanding the good work of the very few up-to-date apiarists residing in various parts of the sub-continent. I have read a good deal concerning the use of box-hives in other countries; but, generally speaking, I do not think other countries are especially conspicuous in this respect.

#### **Not on a Commercial Basis.**

From north to south and east to west, the idea of beekeeping is regarded with more or less contempt—a hobby for a schoolboy, perhaps, but certainly not an industry worthy of consideration by the older fry, and thus the bees go a-begging swarming time for the want of sympathetic caretakers, so seldom does their swarming-note appeal to the multitude. As a matter of fact, the popular idea of bees and honey is associated with an afternoon picnic party trekking to the veld, armed with a spade, pick, sacking, matches, and sundry other paraphernalia with which to rob a bee-nest when other forms of diversion have grown stale. It is then that preparations are made for "lining" the bees, and this is quite an easy method beside your American method (the comb-box plan). The entire party, to a man, simply crouches down, and, with heads turned toward the setting sun, they mark the flight of the honey-laden bees returning homeward. Or it may happen that the "honey bird" (as the species is called out here) is heard piping near a wild hive. This bird, by the way, has a high reputation for directing the steps of bee-hunters, and it has never yet been known to raise a false alarm. Whichever cause actuates the party, it is not long before a line of march is decided upon; and in most cases in a few minutes—say from a quarter to half an hour—the hive is located, generally in an ant-heap (there are few trees suitable for bees in South Africa). At the precise moment of commencing



operations the leader of the expedition lights the sacking, and, without more ado—no thought for irascible home-coming bees—the spade is brought into commission with a right good will. The angry onslaught of the bees will soon be manifest, but the work of digging goes on unabated. These old-timers have remarkable hides. I have seen a Dutchman, bareheaded, barearmed, with open shirt front and minus socks, take terrible punishment inside half an hour, without making undue mention of the fact. The burning sacking is never rightly brought into use; but as it is thought to be part and parcel of the work, each man follows the precedent. On such occasions as this, bees simply swarm up the trousers legs of the offending visitor; but, as I have previously said, these old stagers have remarkable hides. They would laugh to scorn the very idea of wearing a veil; and as for gloves—well, their contempt for such would be illimitable.

However, notwithstanding the apparent familiarity of such persons with the habits of the honey-bee, they are ignorant to a degree of the knowledge which up-to-date beekeepers acknowledge to be indispensable to success. After the excitement of the first stages of the operation has abated somewhat, someone brings a bowl to the scene of ignorance, dirt, anger, and disaster—disaster to bees and hunter alike—and what remains of the demented bees' handiwork is placed in the bowl, the whole mass being more typical of an earthquake than that of God's masterpiece—man. Alas! there may be seen scores—aye, hundreds—of mangled insects—those that have toiled for the pleasure of the hunter and the ignominy of such untimely end—budding brood in all stages of development, and dirt galore. The whole scene is one of complete disaster. Probably not more than five per cent. of the colonies robbed in this way are able to migrate with

their queen, if she be still alive; and when, as is often the case, she is killed, there is no place left in the old hive in which to commence housekeeping; for these bee-hunters perform their task with persistency, and allow no corner of the hive to escape their notice; and then, again, these upheavals are always timed to take place at the close of the season, and thus the life-cycle of another swarm is ignominiously terminated. Ah! would that such primitive minds understood the great work of these immortal insects!

Occasionally, however, one meets with one who is more up-to-date in his primitiveness, and who will point with pride to his half-dozen or so kerosene-cases doing duty as hives. An individual of this kind is hard to convince as to the relative merits of his structures and the modern hive. He affirms that beekeeping does not pay, and that his idea in having so many hives is in order to be sure of having a plenteous supply of the choicest nectar for his own table. He complains that a moth (the wax-moth) comes into his hives, and scares away the bees and usurps the combs, among which the newcomer thrives and increases his kind. He regards one's explanation of the circumstances with genuine suspicion, and concludes generally with a reference to his "bad luck."

#### Conditions good for Beekeeping.

It is remarkable how few evils base the path of beekeeping in South Africa. In the first place, there is no known disease to combat; then, again, there is generally sufficient flora in the driest districts to ensure at least moderate returns, while in parts South Africans can well challenge the inhabitants of Imperial Valley and other well-known California bee habitats rich in nectar-bearing flora. I have known as much as 150 lbs. of honey to be taken from a single box hive which had not received the slightest at-



tention from its ignorant owner for over twelve months. If he had had to combat foul brood and sundry maladies known to Northerners, doubtless he would have had another story to tell.

The South African bee is a splendid worker, fairly docile and amenable to civilization, and seems to work with a will among the more congenial conditions, provided the hive is well sheltered from the sun and winds. I know many will not agree with me in this respect; but I have investigated many cases where bees have persistently deserted modern hives, and in nearly every case one or the other cause contributed, undoubtedly, to the absconding persistency complained of. In such cases persons have taken sides with the box hive, and have proved that the bees would remain in these crude structures, in positions where modern hives have proved unsuccessful in this respect. But again, I have pointed out that, by virtue of the size and often favorable ventilation afforded by box hives (according to the circumstances I have been called upon to explain), the bees have been better catered for with the old than with the new style hive. I need not describe the ceremony that usually accompanies the "take" at the end of the season from such undesirable bee "dwellings," as the same is universal.

I should be lacking in sentiment indeed were I to pass on without paying a tribute to the alacrity with which our bees pursue their calling. Many times during the honey-flow I have seen my bees working at 3 a.m., and as late as 11 p.m., assisted in their quest for nectar, seemingly, by the light of the harvest moon; and, generally speaking, I have no cause to complain of any apathy on the part of the South African bee, either in brood-rearing or storing in supers. Indeed, I have had remarkable success in this respect without making spe-

cial provision for the same. Another feature of my beekeeping in South Africa is the phenomenal success which has always attended my queen-rearing operations. I have frequently taken surplus cells from a hive and placed the same in a match-box and tossed them up on to the top of a shelf near the roof of my house, and, without exception, I have always been apprised of the approaching hatching of those cells by the inmates themselves. In walking through my house I have frequently heard the familiar "pipping" of some monarch-to-be, and have promptly attended to her requirements by placing her slender gray form in a cage, and then relegated her to a hive until mating-time.

In their native state the bees here have to contend with the ravages of the ant-bear—an animal very much like your brown bear, but only about the size of a fox-terrier dog. This animal, as its name implies, lives chiefly on ants, which it attacks in their hills by scraping away a hole at the base of their abode. Once inside it scrapes the interior of the hill bare, devouring as many of the inhabitants as it can lay hold on, devoting special attention to their eggs. It is following these attacks that a swarm of bees takes up its abode.

The ant-bear is wise in his day, and suffers the tenants of the scene of his late depredations to fill their larder unmolested—until he wills otherwise. When he thinks there is a sufficient supply of honey in the ant-hill, calculated to appease his desire, he sallies forth. Nothing can withstand his attacks—unless it be iron bars—and inside the ant-hill he goes. Then commences a banquet in wholesale order—bees, brood, honey and all are devoured ad libitum. Nature has provided him with a hide which the stings of our favorite hymenoptera can not penetrate; and, having satisfied himself thus, he decamps, leaving the re-



maining bees to figure out the prospect of restarting for themselves.

### Bee Pirates.

May be it is meet to record that there is a wasp known as a "bee-pirate" which is alleged to be responsible for the depletion of many a stock, but I "hae me doots" about the actual total of facts in favor of this theory. I can not do better than to outline the *modus operandi* of this wasp, which certainly does create a certain amount of anxiety with myself, but not from its direct operations. The pirate is a yellow insect possessing a sting, and is extremely smart in its movements. It usually manifests its presence in the apiary about the beginning of November, and remains there until March of the following year. Usually its hours are very regular, and it may be seen between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. any fine day, on any point of vantage from within 6 feet up to the alighting-board of the hive it is watching. I have paid special attention to this insect, and have not the slightest hesitation in stating that each pirate concentrates its attention upon one particular hive. Of course, there may be any number of the pirates up to a dozen watching at the same time. The pirate's mode of attack is as follows :

Usually it is only returning bees that come in for attention. As soon as the bee is within striking distance the pirate pounces upon its victim, delivers a thrust with its sting, and flies away with its prize to its nest, which is generally made in the ground. There the pirate lays an egg on the under side of the bee in the region of the neck. The resultant larva from this egg is thus enabled to secure nourishment from the honey-sac of the bee as soon as the egg hatches, and thus the cycle is repeated. Now, it will be noted that these pirates molest the bees

between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. during the summer months (remember the seasons are reversed in this part of the world), i. e., when, according to the best authorities on the subject, there is little or no nectar secreted by any flowers in hot climates. The climate of Colorado and most parts of South Africa coincide to a degree. Reverting to the work of destruction credited to the bee-pirates, I strongly uphold the view I have made by deduction, viz., that the evil effect of the pirates on the bees is not direct, but it attributable to a demoralizing influence on the hives in easy range of them. I have frequently noticed hive after hive in which the bees were to be seen shoulder to shoulder stretched across the entrance from side to side during the period of the day mentioned. It is a striking sight to witness these sentinels strongly entrenched against their solitary enemies, who, from time to time, assert their impatience for attack by flitting from point to point, eagerly awaiting a favorable opportunity to seize a straggler. I have actually seen these pirates march boldly in (always at right angles), and spar with one of the defenders comprising the line of defence; and should the bee—which is not often the case—make bold enough to assail the intruder, the fate of the former is sealed. With a quickness which has to be seen to be appreciated, the bee is seized, and the victor takes to wing in the twinkling of an eye, while another bee in the rear takes up the position vacated by the over-zealous defender. Occasionally, however, the defenders effect a capture, and then there is a distinct note of joy struck up which reverberates throughout the hive, and the invader is subjected to "balling," similar to that which befalls a strange queen at times. But, notwithstanding that the bees frequently imprison the pirate for hours at a stretch, the chitine covering of the pest proves invulnerable to the at-



tention of all and sundry that from time to time seek to wreak vengeance upon it; and, seizing a favorable moment when the bees are not so numerous, and, consequently, the pressure is lesser, the pirate will break away from his would-be captors and once more awaits his chance, which is never long in coming, and is always certain in its result.

The system in vogue among progressive beekeepers for exterminating these pests is a simple one: A plate containing kerosene and water is placed slightly to one side of the middle front of the hive, and the pirates (which seem to have a particular liking for white surfaces) are caught very soon, although, of course, frequently bees are caught as well. But the great point to keep in mind in this connection is the demoralizing influence which one pirate will impart to a whole hive—not so much the value of the bees caught.

#### Two-Legged Bee-Pirate, the African Kaffir.

At this juncture I am reminded that I have not been very successful with outapiaries, owing to the presence of a two-legged "bee-pirate" in the shape of a Kaffir. I am afraid my northern confreres would lose heart altogether after putting in a season in South Africa (that is, if they decided to run outapiaries. It takes a deal of combating, I assure you. The Kaffir must and will have both brood and honey. The former he makes into an intoxicating beverage known as "kooroomore;" and with the latter he regales himself full well. It is here that, for the sake of economy, it is better to invest in packing-cases, for the simple reason that the dusky thief, not content to take brood and honey, takes away to his hut the whole outfit, and lights his fire cold nights, may be, with the fuel thus obtained, the while gorging himself to profusion with his ill-gotten

gains, and listening to the cheery crackling of the hive-boards; for what will burn with greater avidity than the propolis and wax besmeared boards of a time-worn hive. Nor am I alone in my experience of the black miscreants' depredations. I have met several beekeepers who complain in a similar strain.

#### The Sources of Honey.

The markets for honey and wax are always eager for a greater supply than is usually forthcoming, and prices, as a consequence, are good, frequently ranging from one shilling to two shillings per pound for "strained" (no extracted) honey, while for comb honey as much as 60 cts. per section has been obtained retail in Johannesburg. I myself have obtained 54 cts. for comb honey in bulk.

The chief sources of natural nectar are the mimosa and decoma trees, pink heather; and, of late years, the pepper-tree and blue and red gum have contributed largely to the supply of nectar obtained from what might well be termed wild sources, and have come to be regarded as valuable adjuncts to indigenous flora, especially as they come into bloom just about the time when pollen is most needed for building up the brood-chamber in readiness for the fruit-bloom.

Beekeeping as a business has not been taken up by many people. In fact, I think I am correct in stating that only about three or four persons have as yet settled down to the industry wholly and solely; and their efforts have not been in prominence long enough yet for any definite statement to be made regarding the ultimate success of beekeeping as an independent industry. From a personal point of view, however, I regard the outlook with optimism. In Natal, it is stated that beekeeping has not been very successful as a whole, owing to the presence of so many sugar-cane fields. The bees have, apparently, developed the habit of visiting these fields, and have



neglected their legitimate work almost entirely, so that the product of their hives—it can not be termed honey—is little above the standard of sugar and water. Of course, this is the case only in those districts where there is the least natural flora. In other parts beekeeping can be pursued as profitably as elsewhere

#### African Beekeepers' Associations.

Just now things are making a stir agriculturally. Societies are being formed in many districts for promoting the scientific management of bees; and the parent association, with headquarters in Johannesburg, is aiming at instituting a co-operative depot, with branches, for the sale of honey and wax, the product of its own and affiliated societies' members. Indeed, so enthusiastic has this parent association become that already it has succeeded in influencing the parliaments of the five colonies to pass a bill prohibiting the importation of bees and honey, and even foundation which has not been subjected to a temperature of 150 degrees Fahrenheit. But I think this action will not meet with general approval, in view of the fact that large confectionery manufacturers could not obtain all the honey needed, even ordinarily, before the impost, while the general public have had a similar grievance. Regarding foundation, it seems as if some one is aiming at creating a monopoly locally; but even so it is doubtful if the local product would be as good as the imported article; and then, again, it surely will not pay to put down an up-to-date plant for the manufacture of wax equal to that now being manufactured in America—at least for many years to come.

Hives and hive fittings—their names are legion—are very dear here, and in that way prohibit any but the most enthusiastic, or those in good positions from taking up the pursuit. Speaking

from an unbiased point of view, I think a Langstroth hive is as good as one can get for the South African climate. Of course, it requires watching like any other make; but, apart from that, it is better adapted to local requirements than any other make with which I am familiar.

There is no special legislation with regard to the keeping of bees in South Africa; and, providing no ravages on the part of our "little friends" are reported all goes well. But I am of the opinion that the near future will witness many changes all round, especially as there are so many bee enthusiasts now in touch with one another through the various societies; and as a concluding remark I will say that I could easily commit a greater libel than by stating that beekeepers in South Africa have a good time ahead.—"Gleanings."

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#### THE PRODUCTION OF COMB HONEY AS COMPARED WITH THAT OF EXTRACTED.

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Leonard S. Griggs.

There seems to be an increasing tendency to abandon the production of comb honey for that of extracted, but I firmly believe that the man who is well-located and equipped for the production of either kind better do a lot of thinking and investigating before making any radical change; and let us not forget that a samped to extracted honey production means a scarcity of comb honey at a higher price. For years I have produced both comb and extracted honey, sometimes a whole apiary has been devoted to one kind, and sometimes there has been a combination of the two in one apiary. According to my experience, the comparative advantages and disadvantages of producing the two kinds, are something as follows:



Most of the work in producing comb honey may be done in-doors. Putting together sections, putting in foundation, cleaning sections of propolis, grading and crating can all be done in the comfort of the honey house. The only outside work is that of putting on and removing supers, and hiving swarms, if swarming is allowed. There is little heavy lifting to do, and, if bee-escapes are used, the removal of the supers is little more than a form.

Comb honey sells at a higher price than extracted, and usually meets with a more ready sale; especially early in the season.

When an apiary is devoted to the production of comb honey, the colonies are usually heavier in stores in the fall, thus making a saving in the amount and labor of feeding.

If foul brood, or any contagious disease finds its way into an apiary, it is much more readily controlled and eradicated in a comb honey apiary.

#### Disadvantages of Comb Honey Production.

In producing comb honey, there is an expense, each year for supplies—sections, foundation and shipping cases. It calls for more work, especially that of a skilled order; consequently, not so many bees can be kept. Swarming is more difficult to control.

When there is a poor season, or interrupted honey flows, not much first-class honey will be secured.

If the crop is abundant all over the country, and prices are low, it is scarcely practical to hold comb honey over for a raise in prices.

Comb honey is very fragile, and there is great danger of breakage in shipment; particularly so in cold weather.

Not so many pounds, per colony, of comb honey can be secured.

The production of extracted honey calls for less labor, and much of this can be of the unskilled order. Swarming is very easily controlled. These two factors allow of the managing of a larger number of colonies. Fewer visits to the apiary are necessary; as super room may be given in advance of the needs of the bees, as it is quantity that we are after, not appearance. Quality may be secured by giving the bees time to ripen their product.

Even in a poor season, we may secure a fair crop—certainly every pound that is gathered. If the crop is abundant, and prices low, the crop may be held indefinitely, for better prices.

Once an extracted honey apiary is equipped with surplus combs, supers, and other appliances, there is no more expense, except that for honey cans, or barrels, in which to store the honey; and, as soon as the honey is extracted, if it may run directly into these receptacles, when it is already for immediate shipment. There is no sorting, nor cleaning off of propolis, nor crating for shipment.

If good packages are used, there is practically no danger of loss in shipping extracted honey any distance at any time of the year.

In producing extracted honey there is much heavy lifting and hard work that must be done in hot weather, or in a hot room, that the honey may be thin enough to leave the combs readily, and pass through the strainer.

If a light colored flow of honey is immediately followed by a dark flow, as that of buckwheat, it is impossible to keep the two kinds separate, and have all the honey well-ripened. The last gathered of the white honey must be left in the combs to go in with the dark honey, otherwise it would be unripe when extracted.

Extracted honey brings a lower price and is not so saleable, especially early in



the season.

The colonies worked for extracted honey are almost certain to be short of stores in the fall, thus calling for the expense and labor of feeding.

One of the greatest objections to the production of extracted honey is the increased difficulty in combating foul brood as it appears in the apiary.

#### Combining the Production of the Two Kinds of Honey.

As a rule, there is less complication, and more profit, in producing only one kind of honey, but the man who produces both kinds is often able to thereby make sales earlier in the season, which is sometimes quite a help to the man without a bank account.

I have also found one advantage in producing both kinds of honey in the same apiary, and that is this: We often find a colony here and there which is very backward about beginning work in the comb honey supers, or is very slow or poor comb builder. Such colonies will often do excellent work if given extracted honey supers.

#### The Writer's Preference.

I am still producing both comb and extracted honey, and may continue to do so; but, if I were to drop either, it would be comb honey.

I can keep more bees with less labor and much of that unskilled, in producing extracted honey.—“Review.”

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#### **Selling-Methods make Honey-Prices low Compared with that of Other Commodities.**

---

Orel L. Hershiser.

This is certainly a question of prime importance to a large majority of beekeepers, and you, Mr. Editor, have opened up a subject for discussion, which, if followed persistently, will, in my opinion,

yield to your readers handsome returns. To produce a crop of fine honey should be the highest aim of every beekeeper; but just a little lower than that highest aim should be another one; viz., to sell the crop at its full market value.

#### Prices of Honey have not Kept Pace With that of Other Food Products.

You, Mr. Editor, believe that “market conditions are vastly superior to what they were years ago.” I fancy that I am one of many who do not wholly accept that view. Years ago, in the 80's and 90's, honey was selling a little lower than at present. My recollection is that fancy comb sold as low as from 11 to 13 cts., when the market was at the lowest ebb, and white clover and other fancy extracted as low as 6½ to 7 cts. But remember, that was when wheat, that makes the “staff of life,” was selling at from 45 to 60 cts. per bushel. I will remember that, in the summer of 1894, wheat in Northwestern Ohio was selling as low as 42 cts. per bushel. All other products and provisions were low. It was only natural that honey should be low. As compared with prices in those days, wheat is more than 2½ times as high; hogs more than twice as high; and farm land is certainly from 25 to 35 per cent. higher. In 1894, with wheat at 45 cts. per bushel, and best, extracted honey at 6½ cts. per lb., it took approximately 7 lbs. of honey to purchase one bushel of wheat. Now, with wheat at \$1.15 per bushel, and best, extracted honey at 9 cts. lb. (and I think a lot of beekeepers would like to know where they could get 9 cts. net) it takes 12 7-9 lbs. of honey to purchase a bushel of wheat. To make it an even shake, we would have to have 16 3-7 cts. per pound for the honey. In other words, with wheat at \$1.15 per bushel and honey at 16 3-7 cts. per pound, it would require 7 lbs. of honey to purchase a bushel of wheat, same as it did in 1894, when wheat was 45 cts. per bushel. Likewise,



when pork, live weight, was 5 cts. per pound, it took approximately 7 lbs. of honey to purchase 9 lbs. of pork, or 45 cts. worth. Now with pork, live weight, at ten cts. per pound, it takes 10 lbs. of honey to purchase the 9 lbs. of pork.

In this comparison we would have to get 12 6-7 cts. per pound for our honey in order to get the same equivalent as in 1894.

I might compare the prices of butter and eggs, two great staples, with honey in the same way, and with similar results, and so on, with almost everything used by the husbandman. I tell you, honey is ridiculously low, and conditions from my view point are not "vastly superior."

Another reason why honey should be higher is that it costs more to produce it. Sections and hives are much higher than when lumber was cheap. And comb foundation is higher because b-e-c-a-u-s-e—not because wax is so much higher, not because it costs more to manufacture, not because of the use of new and improved machines and processes that turn out the finished product many fold faster than did the old methods, but just because the manufacturer gets a larger profit.

Some of the Reasons why Honey is too Low in Prices.

Why is honey so low and everything else so high? Oh, there are numerous reasons. One reason is the ignorance of a great percentage of beekeepers.

Ignorance of Beekeepers one Cause for Low Prices.

It is really surprising how many beekeepers there are who produce honey in considerable quantity, and take no bee periodical, and hence are way behind the times, and know nothing of markets or crops beyond their own neighborhood. The produce a greater or less crop of

honey and they cry: "What in the world will I do with it?" A man of veracity and an acknowledged expert with bees informed me less than four weeks ago, that he recently ran across a beekeeper who had produced a crop of about 1,000 pounds of section honey, which would grade from No. 1 to fancy, part white and part mixed, who was in "straits," and did not know what to do with it. "How much do you want per lb. for the lot," queried the beekeeper expert. "Oh, I'll take 6 cts.," replied the distressed farmer-beekeeper. "It is sold," responded the expert, who forthwith had it packed, and on his way home stopped at the farmer beekeepers' home-town and sold the lot at 12 cs.; not because it was not worth more, but because he was satisfied with "small profits and quick returns."

How the Dealers' "Smartness" Takes Advantage of the Producer.

Beekeepers who do not know what to do with their honey when they get it, and will not inform themselves, influence the market downwards, and dealers are too ready to quote the lowest figure as the ruling price when purchasing. The dealer has the advantage in his thorough acquaintance with markets. He thinks and talks consecutively and almost automatically. With all his knowledge and resourcefulness that is born of constant practice, is it any wonder that he has the beekeepers who do not inform themselves at a disadvantage? The tradesman has a highly developed faculty of writing and talking in a confidential style, just as though he were studying how he could render the greatest service to the beekeeper, and the latter, in most cases, fails to understand that the average tradesman is talking into his own pockets and serving, the while, his own interests.

Take some of our honey market quotations for example. I have noticed in



one of the bee journals the quotations from one of the prominent honey merchants several times during the past season in which the complaint is made that owing to "high prices honey is not moving off as rapidly as expected." That some producers have been inclined to hold their crops for exorbitant prices, and they are now offering them at "much less," which has a tendency to "drop" the market some. And near by, in the same journal, the same parties advertise for honey and state the large quantity being handled.

The demand for honey indicates that it is moving. If we had not been up against the game of "bluff" a few times, we would wonder why such a paradox.

Don't Ship Honey to Market until  
it is Sold.

An extensive beekeeper, who produces honey in large quantities, related to me a remarkable transaction in the disposition of a quantity of honey a few years ago in New York. A beekeeper of the South had produced and shipped to New York several thousand pounds of fine, extracted honey, the same being contained in barrels. When the shipment reached its destination the beekeeper was on hand to sell his crop, and, approaching one of the prominent honey merchants of the city, he stated that he had his crop of honey down at the docks, and inquired the price. **After an examination of the goods a ridiculously low offer was made;** probably on the theory that the producer was helpless with his honey in the city and unsold. The beekeeper declined his offer for the time, and stated that he would look around and see if he could do better. The dealer had no fear of losing the chance of purchasing the honey, for he had a 'phone, and when the beekeeper got around to the other honey merchants' establishments he received exactly the same offer as the first.

He returned to the dealer who gave him the first quotation to talk over the situation, and finally decided, and stated, that before selling at the quoted price, he would run up to Boston and see what he could do there. But there are wires between New York and Boston, and evidently they had been used, for when the beekeeper arrived in Boston, quotations were the same as in New York, and the beekeeper was finally obliged to sell his honey at the first quotation.

This transaction was related to my informant by the dealer who made the first quotation and who is said to have slyly intimated that the telephone and telegraph had been used with such disastrous effect in plucking the beekeeper.

Beekeepers, if you are ever caught in a similar predicament, do not "fall down" too easily. Remember that while there are dealers who would pluck you, that there are also friends who would aid you. There are storage warehouses in large cities that are glad to store goods at a fair rate, and a few days' time is all that is required to communicate with some of the editors of the bee journals for advice, or with reliable dealers in other quarters. —"Review."

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### Have Faith in Your Business.

I have a feeling of kind regard, in fact, I might almost say, affection, for beekeepers. I like to see them succeed. I am doing all in my power to help them to succeed. I wish to drive from their minds all doubts and fears, and hesitancy. I wish to inspire them with faith in their business; so that they will dare to go ahead and increase their business; and start an apiary here and another one there, and make money so that they can ride out to their apiaries in an automobile. When I am dead and gone I wish to deserve the epitaph: "He taught us to keep more bees."—Ed. "Review."



## **HONEY.—**

The market is still very dull. Choice quality liquid is slow of sale at 2½d. to 3d. per lb., while medium and good is difficult to dispose of at 2d. to 2½d. Good Canded is selling at 2d. to 2½d., and inferior is obtainable at from 1d. per lb.

## **BEESWAX.—**

Prime Bright is selling at 1/3 per lb., and Dark is worth 1/- to 1/1½ per lb., according to quality.

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# **Simplex Uncapper**

**Is now only £2 10s. cash.**

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It works absolutely perfect.

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Direct Shipment of Queen Bees: Select Tested, \$5, U.S. money; and stock in hives to all parts of the world,

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CATTLE (all Breeds)	..	..	..	..	March 16
SHEEP AND PIGS	..	..	..	..	March 16
POULTRY	..	..	..	..	March 17
DOGS ..	..	..	..	..	March 20
FARM PRODUCE	..	..	..	..	March 21
FOODS ..	..	..	..	..	March 21
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**Only one Disease Called Rheumatism,  
and Bee Stings Won't Cure That.**

A. F. Bonney.

I differ from my worthy rural colleague in that I have but one emotion on reading the many articles written by beekeepers, and some medical men, about rheumatism, and, incidentally, the poison of the bee as a remedy for it. Editorial comments alike excite my pity, for if I know anything, it is that there is but one disease called rheumatism, and that is what is variously known as Rheumatic Fever, Inflammatory Rheumatism, Articular Rheumatism. I know doctors speak of "Muscular Rheumatism," while admitting that it is Myalgia. They also talk about "Gonorrheal Rheumatism," while it is only a name for pains in the joints resembling rheumatism in those who have gonorrhea.

Of course there are various conditions arising from an acute attack of rheumatism which we all call chronic, but the cause is the same. It is rheumatism "gone to seed," with the bent bones, the hardened tendons, the ossified joints. These in no wise disprove my assertion that there is but one rheumatism, and I opine that no beekeeper ever goes to treat (with bee stings) an acute case.

Some of the statements you comment on in the article copied from "Gleanings" are all right. For instance, "anyone who is looking for a cure for rheumatism is searching for what he will never find," though "never" is a long time, and until now I had hoped that the Art of Healing might advance. I am doubly surprised that my colleague thus puts a bar to progress, for he unmistakably belongs to a "school" founded by Mr. Hahnemann to reform the medical practice of the world. This is apparent in paragraph 5, and others which follow, as in 8, he states that "the virus of the bee is a commodity in the drug market," for the writer has

been a pharmacist for 30 years, and never saw nor heard of bee sting poison as a medical remedy until he began investigating the reputed "cures" by bee stinging. "It is to be had from pharmacists for dispensing," is not an exact statement of fact, for not one of the catalogs of pharmaceutical products which I have, contain mention of any such a drug, and, for fear of being in error, I wrote to one of the very largest manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, and they add their testimony that there is no such a drug as *Apium Virum*, while a homeopathic physician to whom I wrote quotes me *Apis Melifica*, their remedy for rheumatism, "where the swelling simulates the swelling caused by the sting of the bee." I am at a loss to place Country Doctor.

"Those who know how to use it, and who understand its clinical indications, rely upon it with as much confidence as is reposed in any drug." If the editor of "Gleanings," or the "Review," will make out a list of 50 doctors belonging to the traditional school (allopathic) and ask them if this statement is true, they will, in each and every case, receive a negative reply, but the same number of queries sent to homeopaths will be replied to affirmatively.

There is a mean saying current among practising physicians in this part of the world: "If a man cannot make a living in general practice, he will start a hospital." That Mr. Root seems to find it necessary to fortify A Michigan Country Doctor's misstatements is the only reason I mention it.

That a Michigan Country Doctor is at least careless, is demonstrated by the remark he makes in paragraph 2, where he says: "Some have fever with rheumatism, and are sick abed." I wonder if he ever saw a case of rheumatism where there was not fever. The rest of the paragraph is so distinctly homeopathic



that, case-hardened old allopath that I am, I shall not discuss it.

The above was written in a spirit of pitying levity. Now to be serious: The superstition that the sting (poison) of the bee is a cure for inflammatory rheumatism originated with the homeopaths, and is based on the postulate that "like cures like," and the remedy to be effective must only be applied where the "form" of rheumatism simulates the effect of the poison locally applied, as in case of a sting by a bee. For this they use a dilution in alcohol or sugar of milk, and 3 x is the favorite strength, and equals a 1 to 1,000 mixture. One drop of bee sting poison in 1,000 drops of alcohol or grains of sugar of milk; and a Michigan Country Doctor does not say that bee stings used hypodermically is a cure for rheumatism. Hence I guess he is homeopathic.

I have often within a year been referred to a German doctor who has made some wonderful cures, and writing to England secured a copy of the "British Bee Journal" in which he recited one of the man's cases. He gave a patient a matter of 15,000 stings within four years, and cured him. I have written to more than 100 doctors within a year past, 99 of them being of the traditional school and one a homeopath. The latter was the only one who claimed to know anything about bee sting poison as a remedy for the disease mentioned. None of the others who wrote me knew of such a remedy, though one did suggest that "the remedy would be worse than the disease."

If, as the homeopaths, including our Michigan Country Doctor, claim, the vastly diluted poison of the honey bee given internally will "cure" rheumatism, why torture the sufferer with stings, for more than a few stings is torture. I am about as stocial as the average, but half a dozen stings applied to one spot, as

the inside of the forearm, will drive me to shelter. Imagine, then, what it must be applied to a tender, swollen joint. Anyone who will apply such a remedy is worse than a quack, he is a heartless fool.

There is but one form of rheumatism, which is rheumatism itself.

There has not yet been discovered a radical cure for rheumatism.

Rheumatism is a self limited disease. It continues from one to six weeks, then abates without treatment of any kind; but may assume the chronic form. It very often does, whether treated or not.

Chronic rheumatism may hold a person bedfast for weeks, then may apparently leave them, but in a week, month, year or decade, it may return, and all so-called "Cures" and "Reliefs" depend on this peculiarity of the disease.

"Patent Medicine" men knew this well, and guarantee to cure. Hum.

For a year past the bee journals have been filled with alleged cures by bee stings. Why do not the editors write to some doctor of repute, say one of each school, and, getting the opinion of educated men, print that instead of articles by men who do not know myalgia, plumbism, gonorrheal and syphilitic pains from rheumatism?

After reading "Gleanings," the "Review," the "British Bee Journal," and scores of newspaper articles, I wish to go on record as saying that there is not a well authenticated case of rheumatism cured by the poison of the bee. — "Review."

[The general public and many physicians, have classed as rheumatism several forms of aches and pains; and judging from reports, some of these forms have been relieved by the application of bee stings. Dr. Bonney asserts that, according to strict medical science, there is only one form of rheumatism, and that is never relieved by bee stings.



It seems to me that the argument is largely in regard to terms rather than facts.—Editor "Review."]

### **A Veteran's Views on Selling the Honey Crop to the Best Advantage.**

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By J. E. Crane.

Friend Hutchinson:—I fear I can add but little to your instructive and stimulating editorial in the May number of the "Beekeepers' Review," on "Selling Honey to the best advantage." The fact of working for months to produce a crop of honey, and then selling it in fifteen minutes, looks on paper as though something were wrong, but I think not so much so as would seem; at least in this part of the country. Those beekeepers who read bee journals usually know what honey should sell for, and those who do not read them, are not slow, hereabouts, in inquiring of those who do. In fact, I think those who do not read nowadays are apt to ask more for their money than those who are well posted.

The production of a crop of honey requires months of manual labor, while the selling is a mental process, and can be done by a person of active mind in a very few minutes.

The great problem is, how to get our honey to the consumer with the least possible cost. I have said to myself, over and over again, it is too bad that honey that the producer receives only seven or eight cents for, should cost the consumer from twenty-five to forty cents a pound; but 'tis often so. The suggestions you make as to the necessity of studying the problem is a good idea.

The value of beekeepers retailing their own crop, either by peddling or through mail orders, cannot be worked in some sections; where population is sparse it is doubtful if it will pay. [A mail order business is all right anywhere—

Editor.] Some of my neighbors, in seasons when the price of comb honey was low, have carried it over a year, and sold when prices were much higher, with decided profit; but we can hardly advise the average beekeeper to do this; and yet, a skilful beekeeper with the right conveniences will make it pay.

For more than forty years I have produced honey in considerable quantities, and bought and sold also, and can look on both sides of the subject with some degree of fairness. Sometimes those who have bought my honey have lost money in so doing, and this always makes me feel bad, and, sometimes, we have bought honey only to little or no profit, or even an actual loss.

What you say as to the manner of putting up honey is to the point. In the long run, honey well graded, will bring more than honey poorly graded.

### **The Folly of Dishonest Grading and Packing.**

We have found cases packed with well-filled combs outside, while those in the centre were little more than half full, if that. In one lot, a year or two ago, we found combs a year old, granulated nearly solid, and the cappings cracked and wet with honey, packed with new honey. Those who pack in this way would do well to think about marketing fifteen days instead of fifteen minutes.

I remember, many years ago, I was puzzled to know what honey would bring or was worth. All the honey quotations I could get were from the New York Tribune; and these were meagre indeed. So I left my work and went to New York City, 260 miles away, and learned that honey was unusually scarce and high. I came home and bought all the honey I could find for sale, about 2,000 lbs., got it ready and shipped with my own, some 6,000 lbs. in all. I paid every one, of whom I bought, all he asked, from 27



to 30 cents a pound, and, after deducting commission and expenses, netted about 35 cents. I should probably have sold outright for 30 cents early in the season, but, by taking the trouble to look up the markets first, it netted me five cents more, or \$300, on my own with what I bought.

That was in 1872, before bee journals gave us every monthly or semi-monthly, the size of the crop and the prices in all the principal cities of the country. And, while I made well on the sale of my honey, it is doubtful if those of whom I bought, could have paid what it cost me to find out what the market was, and made any thing, as they did not have enough to make it pay. But times have changed, and all may know just about what honey should sell for, in a very short time.

#### Profits made in Saving Freight.

We still buy honey, paying the producer what it will net him by shipping to the large cities. It costs us about the same to sell honey that it does the large wholesale dealer, but, if a man sells to the city dealer he has to ship it to him, and then it has to be shipped out again. We ship more direct. Suppose a man up in Maine wants fifty cases of honey, we can sell and ship to him direct, while my neighbor who sells to a wholesale house in Boston, and pays cartage from railroad station to store house, and back to the railroad station, and then the freight to Maine, which would amount to about a cent more a pound than it would for me to ship to him. A cent a pound is a small profit, for there is considerable risk in shipping comb honey; but the use of corrugated cases has eliminated the risk to a considerable extent, and are very helpful in shipping a few cases to the retail dealer without extra packing. A large amount of honey in former years has been sent to Boston to be sold, and then sent back into our

State, sometimes only a short distance away. We are trying to save this expense.

#### Difficulties and Expenses in Buying and Bottling Honey.

You say that good extracted honey ought to bring 10 cents a pound and you afford to pay that price for bottling. It seems almost incredible that it should cost so much to reach the great mass of consumers. The cost of honey, the cost of bottles, and labels, freight on bottles and honey, and again on both when put together, as all go for honey, the loss from breakage, the loss from honey left in tin cans, or from filling defective bottles, or leaky cans, or some of light weight, the time and fuel, will run up to nearly 20 cts., and then the retail dealer wants from five to seven cents for his trouble in selling, and this leaves but little to pay for bottling. Only last week, in melting up a few hundred pounds of honey, one can had a nail hole in the bottom, and, of course the most of the honey ran out into the tank of warm water, the water running in to take its place. Out of 96 dozen pound bottles, 22 were defective, had a crack or a very small hole in the bottom, not discovered until partly or wholly filled with hot honey. I am hoping that the use of paper bottles will help us out some in the sale of extracted honey. At ten cents a pound I believe the honey producer has decidedly the best end of the business.

—"Review."

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When you want Honey Labels send for  
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