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MAY, 1891.

The Bee



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THE



Bee World

VOL. I.

WAYNESBURG PA., MAY, 1891.

No. 4

MY CONCLUSIONS.

BY T. K. MASSIE.

Following are some of the observations and conclusions I have wrought out, (drawn) therefrom in my own little "Think Shop."

Editor Bee World:—Under the above heading, with your permission, I propose to briefly give your readers some of my observations and conclusions, and will state in the outset that I manufacture no hives or other bee supplies of any kind whatever; that I am not an agent for anything in that line, therefore have no "axe to grind;" and that when I commenced keeping bees I had no capital other than my little "think shop," which, like all other shops, continually required, (does yet and always will require,) additions and improvements, but that I have worked that shop to its utmost capacity in trying to "go to the top" with the *best hives* and other *necessary appliances*; the *best bees* and *best systems* of management. I especially emphasize the word "*necessary*," because a great many useless "rattle traps" are being sold, which are not only not necessary but a nuisance. I am going to keep on working that shop, trying, by close observation, to gather knowledge from all my surroundings. And in giving my "conclusions" I do so with no intention of injury to any one. I am looking for *facts*

and am willing to accept them from any source. I shall strive to get at the truth in all things, trusting that the feelings of no one will be hurt.

In the first place, then, I have observed that the large cumbersome chaff and other permanently packed hives are a *costly* nuisance. Also all swarming boxes and poles, Hill's Devices, loose division boards and other similar loose "rattle traps," which are usually thrown around for two thirds of the year, are an unnecessary ornament (?) to the Apiary. To all who are thinking of investing in such, especially the beginner, I would say don't do it. And the loose hanging frames, with nearly one-half inch space between the end bars and inside of hive, are, for my locality, also a nuisance. With us I find that our box hive, brethren, get swarms about as early as I can with my chaff hives, both on the "let alone" plan and with the most careful manipulations I can give them. Their box hives are frequently made of three-quarter inch lumber or round log "gums," but little, if any, thicker, yet the reviving and invigorating influences of the sun's rays upon these thin hives seem to put new life and energy in the bees. The hives are kept dry and sweet, and the bees build up quickly and strong in early spring, provided they have just the right quantity of stores. So I have gained but little by the use of my chaff hives and careful manipulations, certainly not

enough to pay extra costs, to say nothing of the extra labor. The reports from prominent bee-keepers, who have tried the permanently packed chaff hives and the "dead air space," would indicate that the space is best. Friend Root reports a case in which he had a colony in an unpacked chaff hive, yet, if my memory is not at fault, he could see no difference between the conditions of the bees in that hive and those in the packed hives. I think Earnest is about ready to decide that the "space" is about as good as the packing.

Therefore I have drawn the conclusion that a thin walled hive, protected by a winter case and packed on all sides with a cushion made of felt and filled with some non-conducting material—one that will prevent all radiation of heat—will be best. On every warm sunny day through the winter and spring, especially in the spring, we could remove the case and take out the cushion, spreading it in the sunshine to air out and warm up, thus giving the sun and air full force and play on all sides of our hives, yes, and *into them at top*, which would thoroughly warm up, dry out and purify them. All know the sun and free circulation of the air currents on and through our hives would do this; we would then be even with our box hive brethren, and at night when we wrap our hives up with the cushion so as to prevent all radiation of the heat taken up through the day, also that generated by the bees, and protect all with the winter case, we are certainly one step ahead of them.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

P. S. I hope all will wait till these

articles are concluded before attempting any discussion of the points I shall raise, as I will be too busy to answer any communications until these articles shall have been concluded.

For the BEE WORLD.

Instructions to Beginners.

BY M. H. DEWITT.

Spring feeding and building up weak colonies: If bees have plenty of sealed honey in their hives I do not think it necessary to feed them; but some times they run short of stores, and the bee-keeper should look well to his bees and see that they do not run short of stores or feed and starve. Now is the time we should begin by feeding your weakest colonies one-half pint thin sugar syrup daily, about the time the first pollen comes in, or if they have plenty of sealed stores, we can accomplish the same result by uncapping some honey every few days. To secure a large crop of honey we must have our colonies strong in number by the time the honey harvest begins. The brood combs should be filled with brood, and the hives overflowing with bees. Therefore we should continue to feed them as above described until we have them good and strong. If you have to feed do not feed them in the day time or outside of the hive, as that will teach them to rob. Feed them in the hive above the brood; fill your feeders at night and set them on the frames, and before morning all the feed will be taken down, and all danger of robbing is past; be careful that you do not get your bees to robbing while feeding them. If you feed as above directed there will be

no danger. The honey harvest lasts but a few days, or at best, a few weeks, so you must be ready for it and have your colonies in the right condition and at the right time of the season to store the honey. Have your new hives all ready and prepare them for your swarms when they come. Put all your sections together with good starters of comb foundation. Have your frames filled with brood foundation in them and when your bees swarm hive them on frames of foundation, and take a frame of brood and give each swarm. The frame of brood can be taken either from the parent hive or any other strong colony. This will prevent them from going off. Have all your frames evenly spaced before hiving your swarms. See that your hive is rightly arranged before you put the bees into it, and put a piece of oil cloth on the frames before you put the bees in. If you raise honey and extract it from the comb so as to return the empty combs to be filled again, you will raise more than twice as much after you have a sufficient supply of empty combs to keep your bees at work. If you raise comb honey only for your own use it will pay you to raise it in large frames 6 inches deep and the full length of the hive. If you raise it for sale it should be raised in one pound sections.

If you give your bees a good supply of empty combs before the beginning of the honey crop and keep them at work, they will rarely swarm. But if they once find themselves crowded and get the swarming fever, nothing will keep them from swarming. If you make any artificial swarms, you should raise your queens and drones from the best

colonies. A queenless colony will raise queens at once if it has larvae less than three days old, and these queens will hatch within ten to twelve days. Make but a limited number of swarms and make them strong and early. Late natural swarms should be returned to the parent hive within 24 hours after hiving them. How to get the bees started in the sections. Having your sections all ready before the honey flow begins with good starters, comb foundation in them, which is very quickly done with a Parker or Clark foundation fastener. Lay the edge of the strip of foundation in the middle of the top part of the section, you can then, with the point of a stiff table knife, if you have no foundation fastener, press the edge of the comb so firmly against the wood that the wax will adhere to it. To do this you must choose a warm day. If it is too cool the wax wont work. To start them at work in the sections it is best to put in some sections with some comb in them. If we have any unfinished sections left over from the previous season, which all bee-keepers will have, these are very enticing to the bees and will not fail to start them at work; especially if the honey flow is good and the bees are strong in number. Subscribe for the BEE WORLD the best bee paper out.

Sang Run, Md., May, 1891.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

My new strain, the *American Italians*, are taking the lead in breeding up this spring. I gave them the second brood chamber the last of April. See description and prices elsewhere.

Texas or Southern Department.

Conducted by Mrs. Jennie Atchley, Farmersville, Texas.

If you have many old queens in your yards, look out for the swarming fever.

We have a cold snap this morning, April 2d,—ice thick as a knife blade—very unusual for Texas.

Friends in the South can, if they wish, send their subscriptions to the BEE WORLD to me, 50cts. per year.

I found several hives with cells almost ready to seal yesterday. Swarming will begin now in earnest.

I believe Alley's self swarm hiver is going to prove a boom to keepers of out Apiaries. We have one and will test it soon.

Brother Alley, in a recent foot note, says, bees dont suffer in starving to death. Friend A. did you ever starve to death?

If you ever expect to be much of a bee-keeper make your bees do as you want them to, and don't depend altogether on books and papers.

Look out friends for June,
By that time we can get up soon,
And try to give something that's a boom.
And tell you how to get more than
50cts. per pound for our so-called
s-t-r-a-i-n-e d Southern honey.

If the moth has made a raid on your empty combs, bees wax, or even sealed honey and sections, soak all in clear water 24 hours and hang out to dry, or throw water out with the Extractor and hang so they don't touch and all is well; this beats fumigating.

Why is Doolittle credited with the queen idea, some one asks. I say because he is not afraid to tell it. If we knew the whole world and did not tell it, what good would it do others.

Friends and everybody else in Texas, who keep bees, get ready for the horsemint flower, which will begin about May 2d. The prospect was never better for a good horsemint crop.

If you want buckwheat to help you out in Texas, sow about May 1st; then in July when forage is scarce; it will keep the bees away from your grapes and preserves, and if it is not too dry you may get some buckwheat honey.

Friends of Texas and the South subscribe for the BEE WORLD and aid us in giving you a good Texas paper. We will try to give you the best in the sho, however poor it may be. Let us try to be truthful, for by lieing we pick our own pockets and insult God Almighty.

What information I will try to give will most particularly pertain to Texas and the South. We feel, before we begin to write copy, that we are plumb full of bee-lore, but find out that we can't write a v-thing. However, we will try to tell enough to keep from choking.

Come on Bro. Heddon with your new hives, Bro. Alley with your new fixens and Bro. every body else with your improvements; that's what we want at this time; but I am going to know that they are improvements before this gal buys much of them, for we have found that kind of stove wood too costly by past experience.

I am so sick for that person who can't handle bees without tobacco smoke.

Questions will be cheerfully answered by me through the BEE WORLD. Give us the milk on bee culture and we will be content to do our own skimming. I don't like milk after it has been skimmed, no hc w, nor do I like all cream, for when it is churned we don't have butter milk enough left to go in biscuit—lets have all together.

W. Z. Hutchinson advises hiving bees on empty frames, and a man in California liked to have died with the W. Z. in his stomache before the old woman got there with the campfire, on account of it, and Dr. Miller says use full sheets of foundation. Now, Dr. look out, have your pills ready, somebody may have Miller in his stomache. Moral friends lets be careful about advices that go out to the world to beginners as well as veterans. It wont hurt the latter, but the former it may.

Do you want to have some fun for the children? If so, and you have an irritable colony of bees, soon as they get strong cage, a virgin queen at the entrance on the frames a few days, and then call on the children to see the bees swarm. Raise out some frames till you find the old queen, then hold or cage her and smoke the bees all out of the hive, and turn the virgin queen loose with them and see how nice they will settle and act like a natural swarm, then put the old queen back and the workers in the field, and those too young to fly make the old colony, and it works nice, too, and sometimes we make our swarms this way.

For the BEE WORLD.

How a Woman Began Bee-Keeping:

One day Joe said to me, "well that bad debt of neighbor K's is settled at last. I saw him just a little while ago and he said, 'If you will take two swarms of bees and an empty hive I'll try to pay the rest in money.' I thought about it a moment, and although I dont consider the bees worth anything, decided that a part would be better than none of the debt, so I told him I would take them. He will bring them over to-morrow, and if you think you can do anything with them you can have them, or I will never bother with them.'" Neighbor K. is one of those people who are always trying to find some way to make a living without work—had tried bees as an experiment, and as might be expected had not made a very great success of it. "There is nothing to do," said neighbor K. "but catch them when they swarm and take off the honey in the fall. The hives will make good chicken coops if they are good for nothing else." I knew but little of bees and their habits, never having lived where many bees were kept, still I did not propose to utilize the hives for coops till I had tried what I could do with the bees. Now mind you, I had never seen a bee book; had no acquaintance with any one who kept bees except neighbor K., and did not even know where to send for books treating the subject. Not a very promising beginning, you will say. I soon grew to be interested in the little workers, and tried to study them as well as I could. When I tried to watch them

they took particular pains to let me know that I was not wanted in that vicinity, and when they swarmed they took the liberty of swarming when I was'n't watching, and left for parts unknown. At the close of the first season I had but little honey and no increase. Watching for all stray information on the subject, an advertisement in an agricultural paper gave the name of a dealer in bee-keepers' supplies from whom I received the first bee catalogue I had ever seen, which contained what was to me valuable information—where books on the subject could be obtained. And now the study began in earnest. It was now near the close of the second season. This year I had caught two swarms, but lost two, one of the old and one of the new. I asked one of the old-fashioned bee-keepers, who happened to stop at our place to look at the bees and see if he could tell me what was the matter with them; it was one of the swarms that I lost afterwards and they were queenless at that time. He told me to find an old queen cell in one of the other hives and the bees would raise a queen in it, but how or when he did not know. Joe said "I tell you they are no good; better make chicken coops of the hives," but I told him no, let me try one more year. I spent the winter in study of the subject and—well I'll tell you with what success if the editor thinks best.

MAY MAPLE.

Yes, tell us about the success.—ED.

THE OUTLOOK IN CALIFORNIA.—The season here is very late this year. It has been cold and backward. But the "filleree" is out in all its glory, and the bees are booming.

THE * BEE * WORLD.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

W. S. VANDRUFF, Editor & Proprietor

TERMS:—50 cents a year in advance, two copies for 90 cents; three for \$1.30; five for \$2.00.

WAYNESBURG, PENN'A, MAY, 1891.

Entered as second class matter at the Waynesburg, Pa., Post Office.

Editorial.

The American Italian Bees.

This new "strain" originated with my experiments about three years ago. Two years ago I reared a lot of queens, six or eight, I believe, from a colony that had wintered well, and these queens produced colonies with the same characteristics, viz: *great wintering qualities*; yet at the time, I took no particular notice of them, and made no effort to rear queens from them any more than from other colonies—in fact not so much—as I was experimenting with some noted strains with the hope of getting the best; but as spring came around my attention would be called to these bees simply for the fact that they had *out-wintered* any in my apiary, and that without any special care or protection. Finally I began looking after these bees and gave them more particular notice, to see if they were anything more than common in appearance and character than other bees. It has been about one year only since I have been giving these

bees particular notice. In the spring of 1890, when I was in the act of looking my bees over, I found as usual that they had wintered better than others. They were the very strongest colonies I had. I will say just here that about that time I was coming to the conclusion that the *strain* of bees had *more* to do with the *wintering* problem than any thing else, and another winter's experience has so confirmed my conclusions that I would not give standing room in my apiary for any thick double-walled, packed or unpacked hive with which I am acquainted; and yet after the experience up to the spring of 1890, with the wintering qualities of these bees, I was foolish enough to purchase some of those high-colored fancy bees that are being boomed up nowadays and introduced several queens last season, and I must say that if it had not been for the colonies I had of my own strain, I would have been *practically out of bees this spring*. But this last experience has been of great value to me, as it gave me another chance to test the difference in the wintering qualities of bees, and also confirms my conclusions that it is the *strain* of bees and *not* the hives that figure in the wintering problem. I have now one select colony of this strain, from which I will rear all my queens. It has wintered as well as any colony of bees I ever saw.

They were apparently as strong on the first of March as they were last fall, and I gave them the second brood chamber the last of April and I think they will need the third by the time the honey season opens up. This colony was in a single-walled hive with no extra care or protection; not even any packing on top—nothing but the cover laid on loosely; nor was it sealed down with propolis. I often raised the cover during the winter to see their condition, and since spring has come they have remained the same way with no spring packing. This strain of bees has been wintered the same way for the past three winters. I have come to the conclusion that chaff hives, dead air spaces, outer cases etc., cut no encouraging figure in the winter problem, but on the contrary it is the *strain* of bees. Show me the strain of bees that will winter well in chaff or packed hives and I will show you a strain that will winter as well or better in a single-walled hive, with no protection.

DESCRIPTION.

Since my attention has been called to these bees I have taken more notice to the markings of bees in general than ever before. I find the American Italian to be differently marked from any strain of bees I ever examined. The regular Italians have three yellow bands, usually inclining to a golden color and

the hairs of the body of the same color of the other three bands; eyes, legs, etc., are from a dark brown to black. With my *American Italians* the markings are different. They have three orange-colored bands, and the hair of their bodies is a light silvery gray, while the balance of their color is a rich, glossy, jet black. It is not a dark brown or mottled dirty black. Holding a frame of bees in the light of the sun they present a light silvery gray appearance, contrasted with a glossy jet black and three orange-colored bands, showing at a glance that they are entirely different from ordinary Italians, and all bee-keepers who have examined them agree in their different appearance. I also find them quite different in their

CHARACTERISTICS

from ordinary Italians. Aside from their *greater* and more *fixed* wintering qualities, I find them superior in many other respects. It is well known, and a trait often complained of, with the ordinary Italians, that they are slow to enter the surplus boxes—not as good comb builders as they should be—and some strains too much inclined to swarm, and many of them cap their honey dark, giving it the well known “water-soaked” appearance—caused by placing their cappings close on to the honey, thus making it unsalable. Now with my new strain, I find *none* of these faults. They are fine

comb-builders, enter the surplus boxes readily, and cap their honey very white; neither are they excessive swarmers. They are my “ideal bee.” I have tried all the noted strains of bees that have been put on the market for the past ten years, and tested them extensively, and I have yet to find the equal of the American Italian, in all respects, and never expect to find their superior. The prices for American Italian queens are as follows: Untested queens, each, \$1.00; tested, \$2.00; select tested, \$3.00. All buying queens this season will receive the BEE WORLD free up to Jan. 1892.

THE present number of the BEE WORLD is printed on paper not so highly glazed as that used for former issues. The paper heretofore used was very good, but was objectionable in that it was dazzling before the eyes. This has a heavier body.

REMEMBER, all ordering queens get the BEE WORLD free from the present time until January 1, 1892. Send in your order at once and get started with the best strain of bees you ever possessed. ORDER NOW.

“FOGY’s” article is crowded out of this issue. It may find room in the June number. We will see by that time how he succeeded with his new hive.

READ T. K. Massie's article, to be found in this number. It is full of good ideas and shows some good conclusions wrought out from his "Think Shop." He is no doubt possessed of much experimental bee lore, and proposes to give the readers of the BEE WORLD the benefits of his researches. His articles will continue for some time. If you wish to get the benefit of these articles you should subscribe at once, so as not to miss a single one.

MRS. JENNIE ATCHLEY'S Texas, or Southern Department, will be read with interest by bee-keepers of both North and South. The southern friends wishing to send in their items of news will please forward them to the author of that department.

THE indications for a good honey crop were never better than they are this season. The fruit bloom has been excellent, and bees are breeding up fast, with clover very promising.

IN a future number I will try to give my readers some information in reference to the immense proportions of the bee business in the United States.

THROUGH an oversight the address of Mr. T. K. Massie was omitted in his article on the first page. His address is Concord Church, W. Va.

AN INTERESTING LETTER FROM CUBA.

500 Colonies of Bees in One Apiary,
With a Product of 70,000 lbs. of
Honey in a Poor Season.

Friend Root:—Another year has gone, and left behind it one more short crop. As this was the first season since I came to Cuba, when I have had what I called bees enough in one apiary to test the honey resources of any one locality, I naturally felt disappointed that the weather was such that it was impossible to arrive at anything like an accurate estimate of what 500 colonies of bees in one apiary would do. Well, now, for the results. We began extracting Nov. 3 (that is, to go over the bees and take out what old honey they had left over from the summer, which amounted to only 500 pounds). The season was opening up fairly well, and the bees did well through November, we taking 10,000 lbs., an amount never before taken in the month of November. The first ten days of December we took 1200 lbs., and with us we think by the 10th of December the season is hardly begun; but on that very day a cold wave struck us, and for 47 days the wind blew from the north, cold, cold, every day. The cold weather in England, France, and Spain, did not spend all its force there; but in crossing the Atlantic it seemed to have got the "grip," and for eight weeks it held us Cubans with a grasp we could not shake off. The records show this last winter to have been the coldest since 1855. Now, from Dec. 10 to Jan. 27, 47 days, is the heart of our surplus season. To prove there was something wrong, look at

the record of the last two years. The fall and spring of 1890 and '91 (then we had about 300 colonies of bees) in November we took 3600 lbs., this year, with over 500 colonies, we took 10,425 lbs. Last year the first ten days of December we took 3,275 lbs. this year, 1200 lbs. Last year for the month of December we took 19,000 lbs.; this year for the same month, 24,000. Last year in Jan. we took 25,500 lbs.; this year, same month, 19,025. Last year in Feb. we took 5,500 lbs.; this year, 10,400 lbs. Last year in March we took nothing; this year, 6150, making for the crop 70,250 lbs. By looking at the amount of honey taken in the two last seasons, and comparing dates, you will see that up to Dec. 10 (when the cold weather began), we had taken 22,400 lbs., against 6,975 lbs. for the same date the year before. Then you will see, in Jan. we took only 19,025 lbs. against 25,500 lbs. the year before, and we consider Jan. much the best surplus month of the year; but it was too cold this year.

I think I told you last year, that, when the business here is so managed that two good active men can take care of 500 or more colonies in one apiary, and take 75,000 or 100,000 lbs. of honey, then the business would pay. Now, with such a winter as this last one has been, we have produced 70,000 lbs., and at this date our bees are in fine condition, with hives full of bees and honey, and swarming daily.—*Gleanings*.

The Bees of the Old World.

P. H. BALDENSBERGER TELLS ABOUT THEM.

In the south of France, the beekeepers (or, rather, keepers of bees,

for there are none that are real apiculturists) possess between five and one hundred hives, which they keep in long square boxes about three feet high and one foot broad. The top is nailed with a board, while the bottom is open, and put simply on a flat rock or stone, the unevenness of which forms different flying-holes. Some are also kept in hollow tree-trunks with big flat stones on the top, on an inclined plane for the rain to run down, and, at the same time, by its weight to keep the hive from falling in case of wind. Generally they place them against a wall to shelter them from the north and west winds. They expose them to the south or east.

The way they now work the hives is as primitive as can be imagined. The swarms are lodged in a box or trunk of a tree, as above described, and left alone. In autumn all hives are visited, and 75 per cent. are left untouched "for seed," as they call it. The other 25 are sulphured, and the combs, with the honey, sold to dealers who come yearly to buy all they can. The 75 are the stock left to swarm the following spring. Such hives are full of honey and pollen, and are capable of giving good swarms. This part is very humane but not very remunerative to the owner.—*Gleanings*.

Dodd's Queen Catcher.

Catching queens is somewhat like gathering the eggs of the "guinea fowl," it is very essential to find the eggs before gathering them. Almost any one can catch a queen after she is found, but it is the "finding" that gives us the trouble, especially with the black or hybrid

bees after the honey season is past. Even the expert may spend much time in finding queens, at least that has been my experience for over fifteen years. I had occasion to remove a dozen black queens in the month of November to be replaced with Italians, after the bees had formed their winter cluster, and to find the queens by examining each frame would be a tedious job, and liable to excite robbing. And as "necessity" is the mother of invention; I went to my shop and constructed a trap, and returned to test it and it gave perfect satisfaction, and found I could catch a queen and close the hive in six minutes. I made a box 20in. long by 13in. wide and 12in. deep, with the bottom nailed on; the board at one end is only 10in. wide, which leaves a 2in. space at the bottom, the entire width of the box; nail cleats on the inside of the box 2in. from the bottom; cut a piece of perforated zinc the same size as the inside of the box and tack it to the cleats, which will leave a 2in. space under the zinc. Now shake all the bees from the frames into the box and return the frames to the hive and close it and place the end of the box on the alighting board so the bees may pass out through the opening into the hive, blow some smoke on the bees and they will go through the zinc and into the hive, and the queen being larger than the workers, cannot pass through; the perforations will be found on the zinc. If two or more swarms cluster together when swarming they may be shook into the catcher and be driven into a hive or box and divided and a queen given to each swarm.

CHAS. F. DODD.

Rushville, N. Y., March 28, 1891.

Excelsor for Packing Bees.

(BY J. E. THRUSHER.)

The bee journals have mentioned Excelsor as being used in place of chaff for packing bees, but nobody seems to know very much about it. Now I wish to speak a few words in its favor. I packed my bees—eight colonies—with Excelsor, on the 18th of last November, more because chaff was difficult to get than because I thought there was any virtue in the excelsor. I use the American hives and left them on their summer stands. The American hive as used in this section is two stories high, the lower story being 2ft. long by 13½ in. wide, and the top story 2ft 2 in. long by 13½ in. wide, inside measure. Both stories are 12 in. deep, a permanent bottom board is used. My bees are on nine frames in the central part of the lower story, which leaves a space in each end of the hive outside of the division boards about 4 inches wide. I filled these spaces and the top story with excelsor, placing it in loose. So the bees are protected on top and at both ends, leaving the front and back of the hive unprotected, but the result has been highly gratifying. My bees at this date, March 28th, are in a good deal better shape than they were at the same time last year when they were packed in chaff, according to the latest approved methods. Of course they might have been in just as good shape had they been packed in chaff, but I have demonstrated to my own satisfaction at least that excelsor is just as good, if not better. Excelsor is easy to get if you go to your hardware stores and request the merchants to save it for

you, and they never think of charging for it, at least they did not charge me, being glad to have it taken out of the way.

Then you do not have to go to the expense of making bags to put it in, as it is just as handy to place it in loose. If you get the right kind get the fine, white, soft kind it is just as easy to take out and put in as chaff in cushions. It is not a bad idea after you have the top story full, to put a board that fits in the hive nicely on the top of the excelsor to weight it down, as it is inclined to lay up loosely; any kind of a rough board will do.

There has been no appearance of dampness about my hives this winter, which is more than I can say for them last winter. There is just a little bit of mold on the lower back corners of a few combs in one hive, while last winter I had combs nearly ruined by the mold in several hives. Everything is dry about the hives, and combs and bees are as nice and clean as a new pin.

Last year was a very poor honey year in this section of Ohio, S. W. Too much rain in early spring and summer, continued dry weather the remainder of summer and fall, and as to bees being generally in a starving condition in the spring may be attributed the cause of failure. I think 12 pounds would be a fair estimate of the surplus honey per colony in this locality. Bees are in prime condition in this part of the country as far as I have been able to learn, excepting the fact that some very few colonies are rather short of stores.

In a future article will give my experience in clipping and caging queens.

Martinsville, O., March 28th, 1891.

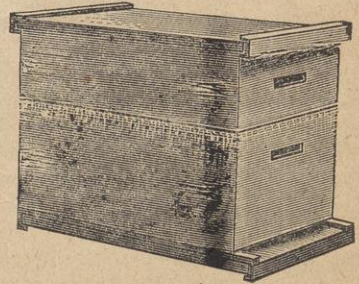
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