



Eva Crane Trust

ECTD_007

TYPESCRIPT Research and the Beekeeper

SOURCE: Eva Crane's personal collection

DATE: 1950

7

W F. 24
19803

RESEARCH AND THE BEEKEEPER

Research is very much in the air just now, and most enquiring beekeepers are asking themselves how they can keep informed about the results of research which is being done, so that they can apply them to their beekeeping. This problem of getting the results of useful research to the beekeeper himself has also caused considerable concern to many of those who carry out research.

When a research worker starts working on a new problem, one of his first jobs is to find out what has already been discovered about the problem. He does this usually by consulting "abstract journals", which give summaries of scientific papers published. For instance, Biological Abstracts, which is published monthly, gives summaries of thousands of research papers on various biological subjects each year. By looking up his subject in the index of a number of volumes of biological abstracts or other suitable abstract journals, he can discover a number of papers written on his subject, and each of these papers in turn will give references to earlier work.

His next job is to get hold of the actual papers concerned, that is to find the volumes of the journals in which they were published. These may be in the library of the University or Institute in which he works; if not he can apply through the National Central Library to borrow them from their libraries.

For the beekeeper things are much more difficult. To begin with, he generally has not easy access to a scientific library, not facilities for using the National Central Library. Moreover his subject (and this applies to the professional research worker in Apiculture) is one of the very few important ones for which no abstract journal is published. Results of research on beekeeping and allied subjects are published, not in one journal, or even half-a-dozen, but in at least five hundred. The problem is thus difficult enough for the research worker trained in searching for information, and with good library facilities. How much more difficult it is for a beekeeper!

The problem of finding suitable ways of informing beekeepers about the results of research has occupied the attention of the B.B.K.A. Research Committee and of the newly formed Bee Research Association. Several steps are being taken by the Bee Research Association which should materially improve the position. First of all a bibliography of scientific bee literature is being completed. The basis of this bibliography is a card index containing about ten thousand references, compiled by Major D.M. Morland while he was in charge of the Bee Department at Rothamsted Experimental Station. This bibliography is being brought up-to-date by the addition of about five thousand references to more recent papers. Several beekeepers are taking part in this task, one of the chief of whom, Mrs. Marshall of Mansfield, is a member of the Nottinghamshire Beekeepers' Association. This card index will finally be classified according to subject, so that

anyone working on a particular problem should find out what has been done previously. Lists of references to papers, e.g. on certain subjects, will probably be published by the Bee Research Association as and when required.

In addition to this it is hoped to publish a quarterly abstract journal, Apicultural Abstracts, which will contain summaries of important papers on beekeeping and subjects connected with it. Various research workers have offered to take part in preparing these summaries from the papers.

For many years now the Bee World, under the editorship of Miss A.D.Betts, has been the chief channel through which the results of bee research in various countries has been brought to the notice of beekeepers. Every month this journal, published by the Apis Club, contains in Press Mirror and Bee Laboratory, short accounts of research carried out by various workers.

The steps to be taken by beekeepers wishing to keep abreast of modern developments should thus take two steps if they have not already done so. Firstly they should read Bee World regularly, and try to obtain the original papers on subjects in which they are particularly interested; secondly, they should become members of the new Bee Research Association, and avail themselves of its services. Particulars of membership of this body can be obtained from the Director, Dr.E.E. Crane, 55 Newland Park, Hull, Yorkshire.