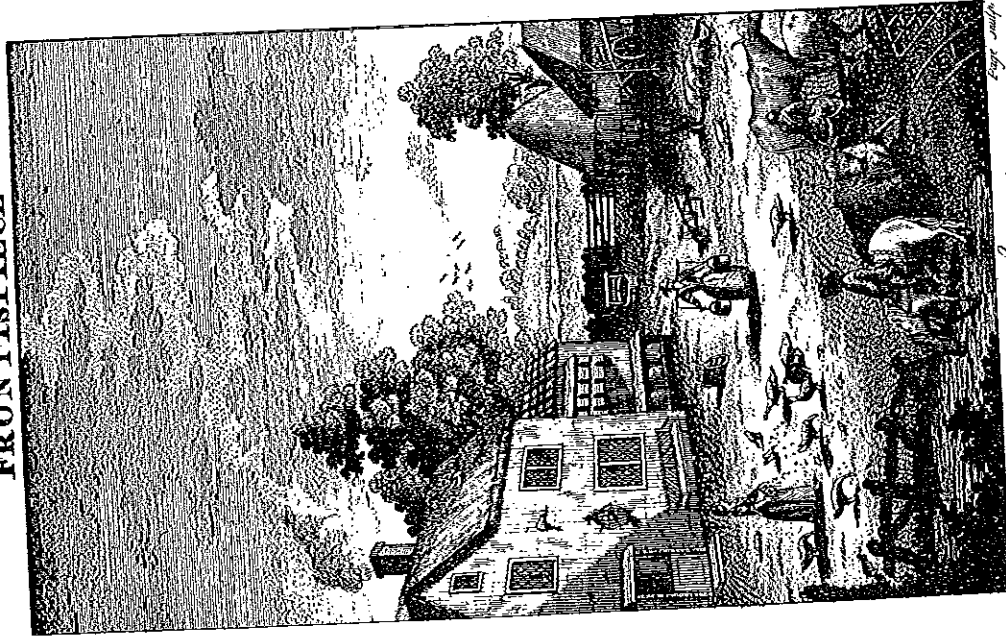


FRONTISPIECE



*To tend the Dairy, and the Poultry, rear,
Bake, Brew, and have the Bees, in seasons fair,
Taught by our Mother, the Housewife learns with ease,
And while she learns, still finds her Stock increase.*

THE FARMER'S WIFE

OR

THE COMPLETE

COUNTRY HOUSEWIFE.

CONTAINING

Full and ample DIRECTIONS for making BUTTER, and likewise *Gloucestershire, Cheshire, Silken, Sage, and Cream CHEESE.*
 Full DIRECTIONS for fattening PIGS, and for curing of BACON.
 How to make SAUSAGES, HOGS-PIDDINGS, &c.
 Full DIRECTIONS for making WINES from various Kinds of English Fruits, and from Smyrna Raisins.
 The METHOD of making CYDER, PERRY, MEAD, MUM, CHERRY-BRANDY, &c.
 DIRECTIONS respecting the DAIRY, to which is added
 The Art of Breeding and Managing SONG BIRDS:
 Likewise a Variety of RECEIPTS in COOKERY,
 And other Particulars, well worthy the Attention of Women of all Ranks residing in the COUNTRY.

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The Art of Breeding and Managing SONG BIRDS:
 Likewise a Variety of RECEIPTS in COOKERY,
 And other Particulars, well worthy the Attention of Women of all Ranks residing in the COUNTRY.

*Instructions, full and plain, we give,
To teach the Farmer's Wife,
With Satisfaction, how to do
The happy Country Life.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for ALEX. HOGG, in Pater-noster Row.

(Price One Shilling and Six-pence.)

c.1770 (facsimile reprint)

this two ounces and a half of beaten isinglafs; and to every pint of liquor put a pound and a half of loaf fugar. After it has boiled once up, strain it through a flannel bag. This done, put the syrup into a clean cask: draw the beer out of the hogthead into this; bung it up, but let the vent-hole remain open for three or four days, and after standing three weeks it will be perfectly fine.

It frequently happens through carelessness in a former brewing, that some of the wort will remain in the crevices of the vessels, which growing sour in the cracks, when the new wort comes in, occasions a false fermentation, which gives the beer an ill taste, and prevents the operation of the other. This is what the brewers term foxing, and is only occasioned through want of cleanliness. The following remedy is the only one I have tried with success. Mix half a pound of sea-biscuit, beaten fine, with a quarter of a pound of white wood ashes, and a pound of flaked lime; put this to the beer, and let it stand a fortnight, after which, if the taste still remains, make a fresh mixture of the same ingredients, with a small quantity of the seed of hop added to it; apply it as before. Let it stand for a month, when it will probably have the desired effect, and the liquor become sweet and wholesome.

Ample

Ample DIRECTIONS respecting the Management of BEES.

Ample DIRECTIONS respecting the Management of BEES.

THE bee is an insect celebrated by many writers, ancient and modern, for its skill and industry, and is valuable for the uses to which the produce of this industry may be applied: but the bees will require a considerable attendance on the part of the country housewife, in order to make them turn to the best account.

The place in which you keep your bees should be very near your house, that it may be convenient for you to pay a proper attention to them. Let this place be fenced round, to keep out fowls and cattle. Defend your bees from the high winds, but let your fences be so contrived as to admit the sun. A southern exposure is best for the bees, and some trees and shrubs should be planted (if they do not naturally grow) near your house, that when swarming-time comes they may have places to rest on.

Your bee garden being fitted up, you must provide stands for your hives, which should be placed in a sloping position, that the rain may not get into the hive, nor lay near the door of it. Each hive should be set on a single stool: for it a number of them are ranged on one bench, the bees, by mistaking their own hives, are apt to fight with each other. The stools should be placed at a little more than a foot from each other, and should be scarce any bigger than the

hive except in the front, where there should be a space of a few inches for the bees to lodge on before they go into the hive.

In some counties these stools are made of stone; but wood is preferable, because the stone is too hot in summer, and too cold in winter. Place your stools in straight rows facing the south-west; but most inclining to the south.

The best hives are those made of straw, and almost of a circular figure, but some of them should be larger than others, that they may suit the different swarms of bees. Make use of your biggest hives when you want a great quantity of honey, and of the smaller when you intend to encrease your stock of bees.

The following is an old receipt for dressing the hives: "Take off all the staring straws, twigs and jags that are offensive in the hive, and make them as smooth as possible. If you need but few hives, you may prune them with a knife; if many, singe and rub them with a piece of brimstone."

The hives being thus prepared, put either three or four splints in each, according to its size; fastening the upper end of the splints at the top of the hive, and the lower about a hand's breadth from the skirt. Exclusive of these splints you should drive four others into the skirts, to keep it from sinking when it is loaded; two of these forming the hind-posts, and the other the door-posts.

A short time before the bees begin to swarm, your hives should be rubbed with savoury, marjoram, thyme, hyssop, and other sweet herbs. When the swarm is lodged, take a branch of the tree on which they settle, and having wiped the
hive

hive clean with it, rub the inside of it with honey and milk, salt and water, small beer, mead, or honey only.

A mixture of cow-dung with sand, and with lime, or ashes, is proper to keep the hives close, and defend the bees from the cold, and on the approach of winter place a wicket at the door of the hive, to prevent the bees being destroyed by vermin. This wicket must have in it some small notches, just of proper size for bees to enter and go out at.

In an early spring you must look after your bees by the middle of May, taking particular notice of the signs that precede their swarming, watching those carefully that are likely to swarm first.

In cold, dry, and windy springs your swarms of bees will be few and late: but mild, calm, and showery weather is good for the swarming of bees.

The bees will drive out the drones, though not perfectly grown, when the hives are full; and the bees will hover near the hive. When the mornings and evenings are cold, a moisture will appear on the stool, and the little animals will hurry backward and forward with unusual haste. On sultry mornings and evenings they will lay without the hive, and go in when the weather is more moderate.

Bees are particularly fond of rising to swarm during a hot gleam after a shower. Sometimes they assemble on the hive, or the stool on which it stands: and when you observe them to hang to each other, you may be sure they will soon rise if the weather does not change.

When

When your bees accustom themselves to lie abroad, under the stool, or behind the hives, it is a sign they will not swarm. They are likewise prevented from swarming by stormy or windy weather, which occasions them to lie out; and the longer they do so the more unwilling they are to swarm.

Some people, in order to make them swarm, keep the hives as cool as possible, by watering and shading them and the place on which they stand: then they enlarge the door to give air, move the cluster gently with a brush, and thus drive them in. If after this they lie out, then, on the next warm day, about noon, while the sun shines clear, put in the greater part with your brush, and sweep away the rest from the stool; not permitting them to cluster again. The bees thus swept will often hum in the heat of the sun, which enticing the others out, they will swarm of course.

Another method to make them swarm, is to place a large pewter dish under the clusters of bees, as they hang out in the heat of the sun, which sometimes produces the effect, by the heat being strongly reflected on them. If they still lie abroad and will not swarm, rear the hive sufficiently to let them in, and then close up all the parts round it except the door.

About ten or twelve days after your first swarm is gone, another brood will be ready, and overfill the hive. Then, in the morning before they swarm, they will come down near the stool, and call each other; and at the time of swarming they go down to the stool, and answer each other, on which those within come forth. When the chief

chief swarm is broken, the second casts and swarms the sooner: and after this a third, and sometimes a fourth swarm will arise; but within a fortnight they have generally done swarming.

When your bees in swarming have fixed on a place to rest, they get together in a cluster, and when they are settled, hive them when the cluster has been a short time at its largest size. Choose from among your hives one of such a size that the swarm may fill it that year, and rub the hive with sweet herbs as directed above.

It is necessary that the person who hives them should wash his, or her, hands and face with beer, or be otherwise protected. If the bees hang upon a bough, shake them into the hive, and set the same on a cloth on the ground; or, if the bough be small, you may cut it off, and lay it on the cloth, and set the hive over it. If they light near the ground, lay your cloth under them, and shake them down, and place the hive over them. Those that gather together without the hive wipe gently with your brush towards it; and if they take to any other place than the hive wipe them off, and rub the part with may-weeds, wornwood, or nettles.

When the swarms separate, if they light in sight of each other, let alone the greater, and disturb the lesser part, and they will fly to their fellows: but if not in sight, hive them both in two separate hives, and bring them together, shaking the bees out of one hive upon the cloth whereon the other hive stands, and place the other full hive on them, and they will soon unite.

When your bees swarm late, after the middle of June, and few in number, then put two or three swarms together, whether they rise the same

same day or not; for by this uniting they will labour carefully, and produce much honey.

They should be united in the following manner. When it grows dusk in the evenings, having spread a cloth on the ground near unto the stool, where this united swarm stands, set a pair of rests, for two supporters for the hive; knock down the hive out of which you propose to remove your bees, upon the rest or stand: this being done, lift the hive a little, then clap it between your hands to get out the bees, set the stool to the supporters to which you would add them, upon the supporters over them, and the bees will soon rise into the hive; and the few that remain will fly to the rest.

The best prevention from being stung by bees is to be provided with a net, with meshes so fine that a bee cannot get through. This net should be knit with fine thread or silk, and should cover the hat, and be fastened down to the collar of the coat; or, if a woman wears it, it should cover her whole bosom: but when a person is stung the remedy is to hold it as near the fire as it can be borne, and then anoint it with mithridate or honey.

If the weather be fine the bees begin to gather wax and build combs as soon as they enter the hive; so that there will be complete combs in a few days. The bees, from the industry of their nature, crowd so thick that few of them can work till the combs are of considerable length; and then some of them will finish the remainder of the cells, while the other fill those that are already finished.

The number of bees decrease towards the end of summer, and they become still fewer in the winter.

winter, as may be discerned from their very different numbers when they swarm, and those killed when you take them; for the bees of the last year's breed do now by degrees waste and perish by their extraordinary labour, their wings decay and fall them; so that something more than a year is the usual age of a bee, and the young only of the last spring survive and preserve the kind till the following season.

Old stocks of bees should be removed a little before or after Michaelmas; but if this business be then omitted, you must move them about the end of February or beginning of March, before they go much abroad, lest it prevent their swarming. The best time to do this is in the evening, next after hiving; and the method is this: Take a board about the breadth of the bottom of the hive you intend to remove, and in the evening, or two or three evenings before, lift it up, and brush the bees that are on the stool forward, and let the board be a little supported by two ledges, to prevent the death of the bees on the stool. On this board set the stock, and so let them stand till you remove them. When you come to move them, stop up the door of the hive, and set the board whereon the hive standeth on a hand-barrow, and convey them to the place where you intend they shall remain.

No great advantage arises from feeding of bees; first, because those that have not a profitable stock of honey to serve them over the winter, are not fit to keep; and then because they that keep bees, and do not take care enough of them to keep them from spending of that stock they have in winter-time, must not expect to reap any great profit from them.

But

But in the spring there are some stocks of bees that are well worth preservation. These are such as are numerous, though their honey is but small in quantity, owing to the season being dry and cold; which may prevent their having made as much as they might do in more favourable seasons; yet these bees may afterwards prove a good stock.

The mode of supplying bees with food is by means of small canes conveyed into their hives. This practice should be begun in March, because at that time their combs are full of young, and continued till the advance of the season affords them sufficient food.

As honey is more natural to bees than any other kind of food, so it is the best that you can give them; but mixing it with good sweet wort makes it go the farther. Some persons put bread sopped in ale into the hive, which they will eat with great avidity. Others give them bean-flour; and others roasted apples, bay-salt, &c. Salt is very good for bees, which is proved by those thriving best which are nearest the sea-side; and for this reason salt mixed with water should be always near your bees.

The following is deemed a good method of improving the number of your bees. Take half a dram of musk dissolved in rosemary, one dram of camphire, a handful of baum: of yellow bees-wax, and oil of roses, equal quantities of each. Pound the baum and camphire very much, and put them in the melted wax with the oil of roses, and make the whole into a mass, letting it cool before you put in the musk, for otherwise the heat will fume away most of the scent. Take of this mass so much as a hazle-nut, and leave it within

within the bee-hive; it will greatly increase the number of the bees, and you will also find both honey and wax three times more profitable than if this method be not adopted.

Many modes have been tried to obtain the profit of bees without destroying them, but as these have all failed we shall only describe the common method, and that is, the taking of combs by killing the bees.

Towards the latter end of August, consider with yourself what stalls you will keep and what you will kill. The best swarms to keep, are those of one or two years standing; and those of three or four, which by reason of their swarming the last summer are full of bees, and are the most likely to be the best; but those of that age which have cast hives, not being likely to continue, are to be taken, as are also poor swarms not worth the feedings, and all light stocks, and such as do not carry out their drofs, and drive away the drones in good time: also those whom the robbers easily assault, are to be suspected; and if their combs be once broken, delay not their taking; and also all stalls of three years old, or upward, that have missed swarming two years together, especially those that have lain out the summer before, and did not swarm the last summer, for these are seldom prosperous: wherefore it is better to take them while they are good, than to keep them till they perish, in expectation of their increase. Those that have missed swarming two years together are seldom good, except some particular sorts which always maintain themselves; and these may be kept nine or ten years.

Having fixed on the falls you intend to take, begin your operation between four and five in the evening: dig a hole in the ground nine inches deep, and nearly of the size of the bottom of the hive: put the small earth round the edges of the hole: then provide a small stick slit at one end, and taking a brimstone match of six inches long, and the size of your little finger, and having fastened it in the slit, stick it in the middle or side of the hole, so that the match may be nearly on a level with the edge thereof: and if one match be not sufficient, provide yourself with two. Having set fire to the matches, instantly place your hive over the hole, and close up all the crevices at the bottom with fine earth, so that no smoke may come out, and the bees will soon drop and die.

Having taken and housed your hive, lay it carefully on the ground on the sides of the combs: make the ends of the splints loose with your fingers, and loosen the edges of the combs with a wooden slice: then take them out one after another, and having wiped off the half dead bees with a good feather, break the combs into three pieces while they continue warm.

That honey which first runs of itself, is called virgin honey, as is also that which runs from the first year's swarm. This is by far the best, being more chrysaline and of a finer taste than that which is squeezed out of the combs, and may therefore be kept for particular uses, or for making mead which is intended to be of a particularly fine flavour.

When no more honey runs from the combs put up what you have warm into pots by itself, and

and it will for two or three days work up the scum of coarse wax, dross, &c. which must be taken off. The other honey, which is the coarser sort, must be got from the combs by pressing them, which you may likewise pot, except what you design for immediate use in making of mead. Having so done, put what remains into a hair bag, and wash it in a trough or other vessel, and when the sweetness is all out, try the balls for wax; the manner of ordering which is as follows: take the wax and dross, and set it over the fire, pour in so much water as will make the wax swim, that it may boil without burning, and for this reason, while it is gently boiling over the fire, stir it often; when it is thoroughly melted, take it off the fire, and presently pour it out of the kettle into a strainer of fine thin linen, or of twisted hair, ready placed upon a screw or press: lay on the cover, and press out the liquor (as long as any wax comes) into a kettle of cold water, but first wet both the bag and the press, to keep the wax from sticking: the greatest quantity of water will come first; then moist wax; and at last there will be more dross than any thing else.

As the wax hardens make it into balls, from which you must squeeze the water; and this being done, break the balls into crumbs, and put them in a pot over a slow fire. As the wax melts dip a spoon in cold water, and stir and skim it therewith, and when it is clean from the skum, and perfectly melted, it must be poured into a pan, or mould, the bottom and sides of which have been rubbed with honey; but you must take care not to pour the dross in with the wax.

the top of it may not cool too fast for the center; and thus let all its parts cool as equally as possible. If the cake sticks in the vessel, warm it a little, and it will readily come out.

The qualities of good wax are that it should be of a sweet smell, yellow colour, light, firm, and pure. English wax, with these properties, will sell for at least five pounds the hundred weight more than foreign. Its use in making candles is well known, and it is used on many occasions by the gentlemen of the faculty.

Bees-wax, when used physically or chirurgically is deemed a medium between hot and cold, between dry and moist, being the ground of all scarcloths and salves: it mollifies the finewe, and ripens and resolveth ulcers; the quantity of a pea being swallowed down by nurses, dissolveth the milk curdled in the breast.

Oil of bees-wax cures wounds of great depth in ten or twelve days, and will heal small wounds in three or four days, by only anointing the wound therewith. It is likewise good for inward diseases; if you give one drachm at a time in white wine it will provoke urine, help stitches and pains in the loins, the cold gout, and all other complaints which arise from a cold, which is the common source of most disorders.

The use of the honey is almost equal to that of the wax; it is of subtil parts, and therefore pierceth as oil, and easily passeth the parts of the body;

very much, and breedeth good blood. Honey should always rather be taken clarified than raw, as in that state it is more nourishing, and more easy of digestion.

Such being the transcendent virtues of honey, our country readers will not think we have engaged too much of our book in describing the management of that industrious little animal, the BEE.

