

ones may be kept from the time they hatch until they are required. The nurseries may be placed in any hive whether it has a queen or not, so long as there are enough bees to keep up the necessary heat. We keep the size referred to above, and the price is \$2.50 each. For two take a discount of five per cent. They can be made for other hives, and the price would be for odd sizes \$3.00.

### SPRING MANAGEMENT OF BEES.

*To Ontario Fellow Bee-Keepers.*

**B**EAR FRIENDS:—Being unable to avail myself of your kind invitation to attend your Convention I send a paper on the subject allotted to me, viz: "Spring Management."

This a well-worn subject, but perhaps not yet quite worn out. Many chapters have been written upon it, but the last chapter is yet to write. That will be after we are able to get our bees through the spring without loss. When fatal "spring dwindling" shall have been counted among the past misfortunes of the apiarist, then, I suppose, it will be time enough to cease writing on spring management. And if any of us have any new light on the vexed question now is the time to let it shine if it is to do any good this season, for already the balmy air of genial spring is fanning us with its gentle zephyrs—the thermometer to-day (Feb. 19th) being well up towards 60° and the "beautiful" rapidly melting away.

But the question is, "have we any new light to give?" For myself, I have not presumption enough to think I have much, if anything, to offer the old heads—the professionals in bee-culture—but I may possibly be able to do something for those of less experience. One thing, however, is certain. Where a man handles a hundred or more colonies of bees and does it all himself, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, (and this is what the winter does) he will be a very block-head if he does not learn something every year. Indeed, he will be quite unfit for an apiarist if he does not learn a good deal every year from his own experience. And of all knowledge this knowledge which comes of experience is the most useful, and takes the greatest hold on the memory. It is *dear* sometimes, no doubt, at first hand; but is generally worth the price paid, even to the purchaser. And the dearer it is bought the faster it sticks in the brain, and the more useful it becomes.

When does the Spring Management of bees commence? In the Spring; during the Fall

and Winter before; or away back in the previous Summer? Bee management during these three seasons is something like the modern, scientific presentment of the three departments of Nature—the inorganic, the vegetable and the animal—because they run imperceptibly into each other and cannot be separated. So with bee management the year round. It is a concatenation—one connected whole which cannot be safely separated. True, the manipulation is mostly local and chronological, but the management must be general and prospective. The thoughtful bee-keeper, in his Summer management and manipulation will have the next three ensuing seasons—Fall, Winter and Spring—distinctly in view, and will act accordingly.

The bees are now, however, in winter quarters, and they are as they are whether right or wrong. How shall they be handled in the Spring? First, when ought they to be put out? This of course depends mostly on the weather and the locality. For myself I have been "slowing up" for some time on this setting out business. I am leaving my bees longer in their winter quarters every spring, especially if the weather is at all unfavorable. If they show signs of disease or undue restlessness it is, of course, better to put them out for a flight, when they can be returned if necessary. Last Spring I commenced setting my bees out on April 16th and finished May 13th. Nor had the last ones set out been out before and returned. They had been in winter quarters since Nov. 24th, making a confinement of over five months and a half. Yet they were mostly in good condition, and did as well if not better than those first put out and nursed a great deal more. But why put some out so much earlier than others you ask? For various reasons, some of which have already been suggested. Those showing symptoms of diarrhoea or disquiet ought of course to be put out first. Then if any are short of pollen (and this fact must be noted in the fall) such should be carried out and supplied so that the brooding can go on. Those with plenty of honey and pollen, if they are fairly quiet, are much better in than out in this climate until the weather gets warm and settled even if that takes till the middle of May or later. And not only these reasons for *no hurry* in setting out, but I always make it a point to overhaul them and fix them up the same day I set them out, and this cannot be properly done in a day or two where there is a considerable number to go over. If they are not cleaned out and fixed up soon after being set out they sometimes get disgusted with the "Augean Stable" they occupy, or discouraged at the prospect of cleaning it out, and leave to seek a more decent domicile. This is popularly called "swarming out," and the bee-