

Unless one colony is queenless, it is perhaps not well to unite—sooner build up weak colonies, and near the honey flow unite them, or the brood. To build up weak colonies at the expense of the strong should never be dreamed of.

I would like to have all colonies packed above during the spring, and until all danger from cold nights has passed away; but it is quite a trouble and expense; and I cannot always do as I would like to do. This spring I have used on top, first the sealed cover, then one or two thicknesses of paper, finally a cushion filled with absorbents or mineral wool. I have an idea, if the cost is not too great, and I think not, that this article has a great future before it, for the purpose of winter and spring packing of bees. The above protection, with a properly regulated entrance, is all I give a strong colony.

The weaker ones I try to pack in winter cases, and in this way help them to make the best use of the warmth they produce. Some would argue that when a colony is weak in the spring, the indications are that the queen is a poor one. There can surely be no reason why this should be the case. There is no necessity for destroying such a queen—she may be good and she may not, and the question should be tested before coming to a conclusion.

Many, very many, have failed to make a success of spreading brood. No novice should attempt such until settled warm weather, and even then it should be undertaken with caution. As a rule, the colony will enlarge the brood chamber quickly enough, but there is a time when, to a certain extent, spreading brood can be practised with success. The best method is to turn the combs on the outer side of the cluster; about that is the sides towards the centre of the hive turned towards the outer side. By so spreading it is done gradually, and no great harm can result.

Brantford, Ont.

Farmers as Beekeepers.

Should we encourage farmers to keep bees? is a question we have frequently discussed at conventions, and as a general rule most beekeepers say no, because that would increase the supply of honey and consequently reduce the price. Again, others say it is not worth while, as they will not give it the attention necessary to success, and will only fail and then condemn the bees and fault us for getting them into it.

Well, now in some cases this might be true, but will it justify us in selfishly withholding our influence and knowledge of the

profession from them, and thus prevent them from enjoying this rich luxury? Now let us see what there is in the matter of reducing prices. In the first place, farmers have not time enough to spare as a rule, to keep more bees than would supply honey for their own use. In fact this is about all they care for, consequently they would have no honey to put on the market, and as very few farmers will indulge in the luxury of honey if they have to buy it, we find that our honey market is not controlled to any noticeable extent by the common farmer.

We are frequently asked by farmers and others if we would advise them to keep bees, when many others are making nothing but failures out of it; and we invariably answer yes. If you will give them your attention, and inform yourself on the subject so that you will be able to make a proper start, and then take care of your bees as you would of your cows and horses, they will surely pay you as good a dividend on the investment as anything you can keep on the farm.

In beginning it always pays to get the best. Go to your nearest practical beekeeper, and get one or two good colonies of Italian bees, and if they are not already in a good movable comb hive, get some of the modern make from your nearest supply dealer, and transfer into them. It will never pay you to fool with the old fashioned box hive as we frequently see demonstrated by those old fogies who don't know a good thing when they see it.

It is astonishing to see how ignorant the mass of people are about the little honey bee. Some time ago, a man who was a painter by trade and who was raised on a farm where bees were kept, came to my place, and seeing my bees, asked if they were the Italian bees. When I told him they were, he said that when the Italians were first introduced into Missouri his father sent off and bought a king and a queen bee, for which he paid \$25 each. Now of course he was simply lying about it, but you see he had not yet learned that there were no king bees. Many other similar remarks we hear, such as—How many eggs does the queen lay at one time?—How long does it take her to hatch them?—and how many queens does one colony have at one time? etc. In conclusion, I would say, let us ever be ready to teach those who desire to learn, giving them the advantage of our experience, and showing them as best we can, the way to success; that they, too, may enjoy the product of the blessed honey bee. —A. A. WEAVER in the *Progressive Beekeeper*.

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