



APRIL.

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COLLECTING HONEY PLANTS.

CLARENCE M. WEED.

Honey plants are every year becoming of more importance to apiarists; as new portions of the country become settled, and the marshes of older portions are brought into cultivation, the conditions surrounding honey production are not changed. Hence an acquaintance with honey-producing plants is almost becoming more important, that all such may be preserved where they are now growing in waste and out-of-the-way places, and planted where they are not growing. In view of this, as equally of many other facts, a few directions for collecting and preserving such plants may be of service. As most of the Fair managers now offer premiums for such collections, young people interested in bees and bee-keeping would derive both pleasure and profit from making and exhibiting them.

Whenever possible, collect when the plants are dry; if they are wet, more labor is required and poorer specimens obtained. Where the plants are to be carried some distance, some sort of a tin box is useful in preventing wilting. As a guide to the most important honey producing plants and time of each, nothing is better than the list in Prof. Cook's Manual. In all cases where practicable, the fruit as well as the root, or a portion thereof, should be preserved.

Drying.—For drying, old newspapers will suffice, but thick felt carpet-paper cut into sheets, called driers, 12x18 inches, are much preferable. Enough for the purpose can be obtained at any stationers or carpet dealers for a few cents. For holding the plants while drying, a sheet of thin paper, a newspaper is good, twice the size of the driers is folded once. These are called specimen sheets, and into them the plants are placed as soon as possible after being gathered. Between each specimen sheet two or three driers are placed, and over the whole a heavy weight transmits pressure through a board slightly larger than the driers. For a weight nothing is better than a stone weighing from twenty to forty pounds. For very tender plants less weight should be used than for hardier ones.

Twenty-four hours after the plants are put into the press, they should be looked at, and whenever a leaf or flower is out of place, it should be placed naturally; as the plants are in a sort of wilting condition, this is easily done. At this time, also, the driers should be removed and others substituted, placing those in out in where they will dry. This operation is repeated

every day for one or two weeks, when the plants will usually be dry. This is told by placing the plant against the cheek, if it feels cold it is not yet dry.

Where very fine specimens are desired with the natural colors preserved, heated driers should be used and replaced two or three times a day. By this method I have produced specimens which rival in beauty of form and color the fresh unplucked flowers of fields and woods.

After the plants are dry they may be kept in the specimen sheets an indefinite length of time, or until they are to be mounted. For mounting either for exhibition or for private purposes, I use heavy book paper cut 1 1/2 x 10 1/2 inches, this is the size used by botanists for herbariums. They cost about two cents per sheet. There are two methods of attaching specimens to the sheet, either by gluing small strips of paper over different portions of the plant, or by gluing it bodily to the sheet. For exhibition the latter method is much to be preferred. Any strong, light colored mucilage will suffice. I have used with good results a solution of gum-arabic.

As dried plants are liable to insect attacks, they must be poisoned. This process is very simple; apply a saturated solution of corrosive sublimate in alcohol by means of a camel's-hair brush to all parts of the plant.—Am. Bee Journal.

HIVING SWARMS OF BEES.

W. Z. HUTCHINSON.

My apiary is located in an apple orchard in which there are no limbs that cannot be reached by means of a ladder. My hiving implements are two clothes baskets lined with cotton cloth, and furnished with burlap covers sewed fast at one side. I might remark, parenthetically, that a long basket, like a clothes basket, is better than a round basket for taking down swarms, as the bees often form long clusters lengthwise of the branches. I also have a step-ladder, a pair of heavy pruning shears (with these, small branches can be severed more easily and with less jar than with a knife or saw), a fine-tooth saw for cutting large limbs (I do not often use the saw, as I am opposed to cutting large limbs from the trees). I also use a quart dipper, a fountain pump, two large tin pails, and if the apiary was not located near a small stream, I should add to the above a barrel for holding water.

When a swarm begins to issue, I carry a hive to the stand that I wish the swarm to occupy, and prepare the hive for occupancy. When the bees begin to cluster, I make an examination to see if they are clustering in a favorable location for shaking them into a basket. If they have selected a spot where two or more limbs cross, or small branches are interlaced, I take the shears and clip away some of the branches, and thus secure the cluster in a convenient location for dislodgement.

If the bees are slow in clustering, at a time when more swarms are momentarily expected. I sometimes hasten matters by sprinkling the flying bees, by using the spraying attachment of the pump. When the bees are fairly clustered, I first detach a small portion of them that perhaps are adhering to the twig, and place them at the entrance of the hive, without dislodging them from the twig. These bees at once commence running in and setting up that joyful hum announcing that they have found a home; and when the rest of the swarm is brought and shaken down in front of the hive, the humming at the

entrance ceases in the swarm at once; while, if the swarm is shaken down without this precaution, a large portion of the bees often take wing, perhaps the queen among the number, before the entrance to the hive is discovered, and the fact announced by joyful humming.

Many of the bees that take wing go back and cluster where they originally clustered, and if the queen takes wing she may go with them. If there is no small cluster that can be readily detached, I then dip off a quart of bees from the lower part of the cluster and pour them down at the entrance of the hive. After some of the bees are running in at the entrance of the hive, I hold a basket close under the cluster and shake the bees into it with a quick shake, throw the burlap cover over the basket to prevent any of the bees from leaving, carry the basket to the hive, strike one end of the basket sharply upon the ground 2 or 3 times, which will shake all the bees to one end and dislodge them from the cover; throw back the cover and shake the bees out upon the ground in front of the hive.

I do not shake them against the front of the hive, as the entrance would at once become clogged; but perhaps 18 inches or 2 feet from the hive. I do not sit right down by the hive and drive the bees in with a smoker, and keep a constant watch that the entrance is not stopped up, but I do go occasionally and see how things are progressing; and, if there is a great mass of bees clustered over the entrance, I poke them away and thus clean the way for another installment of bees to enter.

There is a great difference in swarms as regards the agility with which they will enter the hive. Occasionally there is a laggard that never gets inside the hive until the hive until the coolness of night, or till the bee keeper with a smoker drives it in. If the bees cluster upon a small branch of not much value, I cut it off and put it with the bees in front of the hive.

The fountain pump is a favorite implement with me. With it and plenty of water it is next to an impossibility for a swarm to abscond. I have had three or four swarms try to leave, but I compelled them to stay, and in one instance there were no trees near and they clustered upon so small a shrub that I held it up until they had finished clustering, as it was too small to support their weight.

In controlling a swarm in the air, the spraying attachment should not be used, as the water cannot be thrown far enough; but by using the nozzle attachment, and giving a swinging or sweeping movement to the arm as the stream is thrown, the water is so scattered that it falls in a shower. The pump is also useful in preventing swarms from uniting. Only yesterday I had two swarms issue at the same time from hives only about 20 feet apart; and yet I kept them from uniting, and induced them to cluster in trees several rods apart. I did this by keeping a constant spray of water between the swarms as they came out and circled in the air; and sometimes I almost despaired of accomplishing the object, but I persevered and succeeded.

Among the colonies purchased during last year and this season, were some having queens with clipped wings, and I had more trouble with swarms from their colonies than from those with queens having unclipped wings. If the swarm is not seen the moment it issues, the queen sometimes gets out of the hive and crawls and hops some little distance away, and while look-

ing for her, one is liable to stop on her. The bees circle about for a long time, and if another swarm issues they are almost certain to join it. When they do finally decide to return, they sometimes make a mistake and enter the wrong hive or hives; and when they do find the right hive they sometimes cluster all over the outside of it instead of going in. When the queen is released, as the bees are going in, she sometimes comes out again, after having entered the hive, thinking, perhaps, that she has not swarmed; when, of course, the bees follow her. Placing the caged queen at the entrance of the hive aids the bees in finding the hive.—A. B. Journal.

ANOTHER BEE-PAPER GONE.

The New England Apiarian is dead. The June number of that paper contains the following valedictory:

My expectations have not been realized, and I find that I have lost considerable money during the past year, with a prospect of losing a great deal more this year. I think none of my subscribers or patrons desire me to run this at a loss, and certainly I do not feel like continuing to publish it unless it receives proper patronage. I propose to discontinue its publication, and want to be honorable and just with every subscriber. Those who have paid in advance I will arrange with some other bee-paper or magazine to send them copies for the time they have paid.

EXPOSING HIVES TO THE SUN.

"A story is told that in a village in Germany where the number of colonies kept was regulated by law, a bad season had nevertheless proved that the place was overstocked, from the great weakness of the colonies in the neighborhood. There was but one exception, that of an old man who was generally set down as being no wiser than his neighbors; and this, perhaps, all the more because he was very observant of the habits of his little friends, as well as careful in harvesting as much honey as he could. But how came his colonies to prosper when all the rest were falling off? His cottage was no nearer the pasture. He certainly must have bewitched his neighbors' hives, or made an unco' canny' bargain of his own. Many were the whisperings, that what the suspicious that no good could come of the gaffer's honey thus mysteriously obtained. The old man bore all these surmises patiently; the honey harvest came round, and when he had stored away just double the quantity that any of the rest had saved, he called his friends and neighbors together, took them into his garden and said: "If you had been more charitable in your opinions, I would have told you my secret before. This is the only witchcraft I have used," and he pointed to the inclination of his hives—one degree more to the east than was generally adopted.

The conjuration was soon cleared up; the sun came upon his hives an hour or two sooner by this movement, and his bees were up and stirring, and had secured a large share of the morning's honey before his neighbor's bees had roused themselves for the day."—Bee Quart Review.

HOW TO MAKE CANDY.—This book gives full directions for making all kinds of plain and fancy candy. The recipes for making caramels, chocolate drops, French mixed and all other kinds of candies contained in this book are the same as used by the leading city confectioners. Any one can have these candies at home at less than one third the usual cost. Sent postpaid for 50 cents (no stamps taken). Address

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