

CAPPINGS.

CUT FROM A VARIETY OF COMBS.

Vaseline for use in Bee Hives.

I HAVE been a diligent student of the Bee Journal for some years, and about two years ago one of your correspondents advised the free use of vaseline to prevent bees from glueing everything up with propolis. I immediately made experiments with it, and a very great comfort it has proved.

Very few things are more annoying to a bee-keeper than inability to manipulate frames without jerking, and sections without breaking them owing to propolisisation.

I have used it freely and cannot find any objection to it, and the comfort and pleasure in being able to move all the working parts of the hive and freedom from stings is very great. I use metal ends, which I thoroughly rub over with the vaseline, and also the sides of the hives, and everywhere where the frames touch edges of the sections and bottom of section rack, etc. I have learned many valuable hints from the Journal, but none, I think, that have been more serviceable than the use of vaseline. Like many more of your readers, I have lost fully half my stocks this winter, in most cases with plenty of natural stores and ample covering and every care. I suppose the severity of the weather is the chief cause. Everything here is extremely backward, and although I have fed my bees for some days, they seem to take but little of the syrup. What we seem to require is a freedom from north-east wind, and some nice warm showers. I say seem, because grumbling about the weather is only an indirect way of grumbling against Him who sends it, and 'we are of yesterday and know nothing,' or at least nothing to speak of.—EDWARD H. LANEY, Beecroft, Hove, Brighton, in British Bee Journal.

We shall keep this in stock; our prices will be found in another column and from experience we are convinced that it is one of the most valuable things that can be kept about a place. There are so many uses it can be put to where it is more valuable than any other thing for the same purpose in connection with the hive. Where the ends of the frames and the rabbit is slightly coated with it, no propolis will be found there, and in setting one hive on top of another or super, as the case may be. When the edges are slightly moistened with vaseline, no water will enter nor will they be glued together with propolis. A little rubbed on the hands will prevent propolis sticking to them, and keep them soft and free from chap. It does not injure clothes when it comes in contact with them, like grease, oil or similar substances.

CHAFF PACKING VS. AIR SPACE.

There has been a great deal of comment on this question, and I think the reason is that it has never had a fair test. The proper way to test it is to take a cold winter, not such winters as we have had in the last three years, and take colonies of all sizes from weak to strong. Usually they take colonies so strong that they would winter in a paper box. My experience is, the warmer and dryer you can get your hives the better bees will winter; and it looks very reasonable that five or six inches of chaff, well packed, will keep out more cold than two boards, if not, why is a log house plastered and sided warmer than a frame house with the same thickness of wall? Let some of the dead air men take a hive and pack in on one side and they will find the first cold snap they have their bees will be clustered against the side packed. I winter in chaff hives, and left one good colony without a cushion on and examined it often and never found it clustered at top of frame, while the others would be clustered against the cloth at all times.—GEO. W. ABEL, Kilgrov, O., in American Bee-keeper.

Friend Abel: We agree with you that the warmer and dryer you keep a swarm during the winter and spring the safer you can keep them, but we believe it is not dry cold but dampness that is most fatal to the swarm, and for that reason we believe a double walled hive without packing on sides is superior, for the moisture certainly passes off much more rapidly. Your example of a log and double walled house is good as an argument against cold, but not so when we consider moisture. A stone house everyone knows is very warm, but it is also very damp.

MICROBES AND FOUNDATION.

Mr. Cook, in Gleanings, thinks Friend Cornell is usually about right, but says that without doubt he drew it too fine when he was going to have, Foundation sow microbes broadcast. Long experience says "no no." On the same page he remarks, "why does our usually correct friend in speaking of Mr. Doolittle, speak of scouts looking up a new home while the bees are clustering? As I stated in my Beekeepers' Guide, I think the bees clustered to give the queen a rest, after trying her wings which are unwanted to labor. I supposed you settled that bees look out a home before the swarm issues. they certainly do sometimes, and if so, I guess always."

We know from experience that bees do not always select their homes before they swarm out as we have found bees clustered on fences and little bushes and sometimes after clustering in that way for hours or until the next day, they will search out a home.