

Restricting Increase With Natural Swarms.

—G. M. DOOLITTLE.

Napanee, March 14.

Please find enclosed 25c for three months subscription to Canadian Bee Journal, also kindly answer the following question: I have five hives and wish to get as much honey as possible with as little expense for hives as possible. Could I attain this object by placing the first swarm in a new hive and the second where the first came out and so forth throughout the whole season.

Yours truly,
G. H. EVANS.

[In reply to the above, Mr. Doolittle writes the following.]

The following has been sent to me, requesting that I would give my views in the matter, by way of an article in the Canadian Bee Journal: "I have five colonies of bees and wish to secure as much honey as I can with as little expense for hives as possible. Could I obtain this object by hiving the first swarm which issued from any hive, in a new hive, and then hiving the second swarm which came out, where the first one came from, the third where the second came from, and so on, thus increasing only one colony during the season? The restriction of increase as suggested by the correspondent's question is no new thing, for the same idea was advanced to the public years ago by Prof. A. J. Cook, through the different papers of that time and was said to be just the thing for every bee-keeper to use who desired plenty of surplus honey with little or no increase. At the time this plan was made public I had not attained the number of colonies I desired to keep, so was working for increase, rather than no increase; but I made a note of the plan in my "reference book," (the convenience of which book I have frequently spoken of in my articles), and when the time came that I was placed in the position of the questioner, I went to work to test the plan. We were given to understand that, when we came to a point in our bee-keeping work where we wish no more increase, all we had to do was to hive the first swarm of the season in a new hive; the next swarm where the first came from, and so on to the end of the season, with no more work than would be required in hiving the swarms which came, in empty hives; while by so

doing we could keep down all increase, do away with all after swarming, and secure a much larger yield of honey from the apiary than was possible where the old plans of increase by natural swarming was allowed. The whole seemed so nice that I was infatuated with it, and as soon as I had secured the number of colonies I wished to keep I went to testing the matter, and will here give the results of that test. The first swarm of the season that year, issued on the 19th day of June, according to the diary kept, and the second on June the 21st. As soon as the swarm was fully clustered it was taken down, carried to the hive which cast the former swarm, put down at the entrance, supposing that the bees would begin to run in with fanning wings, as they always do when they are placed at the entrance of an empty hive. But as the bees did not run in as I expected them to do, I took the smoker and smoked them a little, at the same time stirring those at the entrance with a little stick. At this they began to run in the same as they would have done in an empty hive, when I left them to do a little pressing work, which I had to do. This work kept me away from the bees longer than I intended, and you can imagine my feelings when I returned, to find that whole swarm lying dead in front of the hive and being dragged out by the bees which had possession of the hive when I placed the swarm in front of it. Knowing that crying over "spilt milk" would avail nothing, and upon a little thought having concluded to blame myself for not taking some precaution in this matter, as I had known from former experience that I could not run a swarm of bees in with any colony where I desired without their being killed, I did not turn from the plan in disgust as I at first thought of doing, but made up my mind that by thoroughly smoking the colony that was to receive the swarm, before they were run in, I would be master of the situation. This thing I did with the next operation of the kind; but while the bees from the swarm started immediately into the hive, from hearing the buzzing within which the smoke caused, yet quite a few was killed later on. Being determined not to be beaten by this killing of bees trouble, the next hive was treated in this way: As soon as the swarm had mostly clustered I went to the hive that had last before cast a swarm, opened it, took out the frames and shook the bees from the first frame near the entrance, from the next frame a little farther away, the next still farther, and so on, till I had a string of bees for six or eight feet from the entrance of the hive out, all