

Comb Foundation.

(Concluded from p. 96.)

WO Obtain a Stock of Spare Combs.—This is coming to be regarded as a necessity in every apiary of any size. Such combs are of the greatest use, as we have seen, for giving to new swarms, and they come in handy at the close of the season for giving to lots of driven bees. They are also the mainstay under the extracting system, and doubtless the magnificent reports of yields from single stocks which we regularly receive from America owe their origin, or, at least, their credibility, to the well-known use the Americans make of old combs. It is quite possible, of course, to start the extracting system with foundation alone; but, besides the extra care required in handling the newly built combs, there is always considerable delay while they are being built out. Beginners may commence by storing away all combs that can be removed from the stock hives in autumn, and, instead of retaining these next spring, give comb foundation. We prefer comb foundation to old combs at this season for various reasons, only, as the giving of them usually forms part of the operation known as 'spreading the brood,' extra precautions must be observed. They should only be given when the bees are closely covering all the combs they already have, and only in conjunction with an income in honey or syrup feeding. Combs thus obtained are eventually the best for all purposes. They seldom show any trace of sagging, and, being usually bred in quite up to the top bar, are throughout of equal strength. Here we would caution beginners in extracting combs that have only been partly bred in. On turning these, even at a moderate speed, in the extractor, they will often be found to give way, while the comb on the other side of the cage, that may never have been bred in at all, will stand the ordeal. The break takes place exactly along the junction of the portion bred in, and is the result, we suppose, of the two portions yielding unequally to the centrifugal force.

At times in early summer it is possible to get more sheets drawn out in a hive than the bees are able to use for the little honey coming in, or the queen to furnish with eggs. In such times it is a good plan to remove the sheets inserted next the outside after twenty-four hours, replacing them with fresh sheets. These partly worked combs are as good as any for swarms.

An addition may also be made to the stock of worked combs by extracting hives that have swarmed three weeks before, and replacing the

combs alternately, or even entirely, by foundation.

We do not advert to the method of using combs newly drawn out in the body of the hive for cutting up and inserting in sections, except by way of warning. It is claimed for such combs that they are thinner than those drawn out at first in the sections themselves. This we not only question, but from careful observation deny. There may be some truth in it when no special super foundation is used, but we should never use yellow brood foundation in supers, however worked out. It always betrays itself.

When asked as to the desirability of using full sheets in brood frames, unhesitatingly we say yes. Every expert knows now very generally all comb built out below the strips of foundation is drone comb, and it is poor policy to save a little expense in foundation and lose it ten times over in consequence of unlimited drones. If from three-eighths to half an inch be left clear at bottom, and even less at the ends of a sheet, the bees will readily contrive to build quite enough drone cells to meet all necessary ends. The observation also disposes of queries as to the use of drone-cell foundation.

Shall we use full sheets of foundation in sections? That is a question depending so entirely on the nature of the foundation used that we rather incline to err on the safe side, and say no. As we make our own foundation, and know just how it works, we are not afraid to fit sections with it, the season being favorable. But still we should, and do, keep on the safe side by using starters from three-quarters of an inch to one and a half inch deep. The occasion on which we feel safe in using full sheets is when we require to place our supers on a hive some time in advance of the honey season. There is then abundant time for the bees to make the best work; but during a glut of honey the work is too hasty to be so well done.—From an article by the late Wm. Raitt.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.
Punic Bees at Medina.

WHAT THE REV. L. L. LANGSTROTH HAS TO SAY OF THEM.

HAVING had, for the first time, an opportunity of seeing the so-called Punic bee in the piary of Mr. A. I. Root, I will give my impressions of it, formed from what information I could procure from the apiarist, Mr. Spafford, who has the care of Mr. Root's bees.

The single colony in the apiary was far from being strong when put into winter quarters. At the present time, June 4, they are much stronger in bees and brood than any other colony that