

CONDITION OF BEES.

Although August was too cool for a surplus yield of honey, the bloom was so abundant and the September weather so fine that brood rearing was well kept up. As there has been but little frost even up to date in this locality, (25th Oct.) and the fall unusually fine, the bees appear to be in fine condition, with a prospect of successful wintering.

ALLEN PRINGLE.

Selby, Ont., Oct. 25th, 1890.

Taking Away Comb After Honey Harvest.

REGARDING your experiments as related on page 302 C. B. J., I have never tried the experiment of taking the combs away from a colony, as you describe your experiment, but in a modified way I have often seen the same thing you describe. Perhaps you have noticed that I have in some of my writings on bee culture mentioned as one of my methods of controlling undesirable increase the effective and simple plan of taking all the honey from colonies that I desired to dispose of, and leave the bees to take care of themselves. In these experiments I have always given the deserted bees some empty combs to cluster on and take care of, and in every experiment I have been surprised to see how long these deserted colonies have kept bright and clean without any perceptible income in way of stores. I don't remember of ever seeing one of these colonies perish outright till the first shock of winter overtook them. In my experience I don't remember in any case where a colony without stores as above described ever *survived* the first severe shock of winter. This is precisely what we would expect to see in such a condition of things. Food is necessary to excite animal heat in cold weather. I have often changed my plans and saved such colonies as I had thus condemned at the beginning of winter by supplying them with winter stores, and they have come through as well as any that had stores to consume all the while. I have often thought the plan of taking away their stores and thus preventing them from consuming it to no profit during the latter part of the season and then restoring it to them at the beginning of winter, might solve a question of economy not heretofore understood. I can't see that the difference between an empty brood chamber for the bees to cluster in, or a set of empty combs in the brood chamber would cut any figure in the experiment. But I may be wrong about this, a matter easily settled by a little trouble and ob-

servation. The only difference I have observed when experimenting in this line, between colonies with queens and queenless colonies, is found in the fact that colonies put on short rations, having a queen, are more likely to "swarm out" than a queenless colony is. The reason for this is when the bees indulge in a general airing flight the queen becomes excited by reason of being left nearly alone, and if she takes wing with the bees there is no certainty as to what they will do. Generally it results in a case of "swarming out." In my opinion this is the true cause of all cases of "swarming out." But to return to the matter in hand. If the plan of taking the stores away from bees for a time in the latter part of the season, to be restored to them at the beginning of winter, should prove to be practicable, it would destroy the pet theory of many bee men that late brood rearing is necessary to best condition for safe wintering. The season for white surplus honey here was very satisfactory. My average yield of white honey—from white clover—was about 66 pounds per colony. The fall flowers were abundant, but unfavorable weather intervened, and our bees have done nothing more than made themselves ready for winter, and some colonies have hardly done that.

G. W. DEMAREE.

Christiansburg, Ky., Oct. 27, 1890.

Is there a difference as you say between them clustering on combs or without combs? Might there not be a difference in regard to them swarming out? Will bees clustered as a swarm in their hive be less liable to swarm out than those that have the comb without honey? We have never tried the experiment on a large scale, but we are now inclined to the belief that they *will* cluster in a bunch without combs, and be less liable to swarm out than they would with empty combs. They become, in fact, more like a colony that has swarmed out and taken up a new location, and they seem to settle down quite comfortably after they have commenced building comb. There is one grand feature about this experiment which, to my mind, is well worthy our consideration, and we believe that this may yet be one of the favorite modes of getting rid of foul brood. All the combs can be taken from a foul broody apiary and rendered into wax, and the combs made into foundation. Then put the foundation into clean frames and hives, and after the bees have disinfected