

Q u e r i e s — AND — A n s w e r s

[Department conducted by Mr. R. H. Smith, St. Thomas, Ontario. Queries may sent direct to Mr. Smith or to the office of the Canadian Bee Journal.]

QUESTION

What do you consider is the best method for building up weak stocks in the spring? Is it wise or otherwise to take brood from strong colonies to build up the weaker?

Algoma

Subscriber.

ANSWER

The first fine warm day in the spring, after the bees are set out and they are flying freely, I see that each colony has a clean hive, plenty of stores, and a laying queen, any that are found to be weak in bees are confined with close fitting division boards to the number of combs with stocks they can cover, we place a thick cushion on top of the quilt, reduce the entrance to half an inch and they are let alone till we think they may need more room when a clean comb is placed to one side of the brood nest. This is repeated as the colony becomes strong enough to use them.

I do not think it wise to take brood from colonies in early spring to give to the weaker ones. However during fruit bloom, when the strong colonies are filled up, they might spare a frame of brood for the weaker colonies, and the space filled with an empty comb or full sheet of comb foundation. Be careful not to give a weak colony more brood than they can cover.

QUESTION

What is the best time to introduce new queens and how do you do it? Brant Co. Subscriber.

ANSWER

If the new queen is to replace another, there is no better time than when they swarm and it is a easy matter if the old queen is clipped. The new queen may be ran in with the swarm after removing the old queen, or perhaps a safer way would be to have the new queen in a cage with the small opening stopped with good candy so that the bees may release her. At any other time queens may be introduced safely by first removing the old queen and all unsealed brood, leaving the new queen in a cage as before mentioned. If honey is not being gathered feed a little every evening.

QUESTION

Providing you did not have sufficient drawn comb, would you place comb foundation in the brood chamber, and drawn comb in the super of the new swarm, or vice versa?

Grand View Ont.

D. H. T.

ANSWER

If the swarm is small or medium I would hive them in the brood chamber only, give them all the combs I had and fill up with full sheets of wired foundation.

Should it be a very large swarm, I would use the combs in the brood chamber if they were worker size of cells or dark. If however the combs were clean and new or drone size cells. I would place them in the super with a perforated metal board between the brood chamber and super, and use full sheets of wired foundation to fill up the brood chamber.

St. Thomas Ont.

R. H. S.