

Uniting Bees.

G. M. Doolittle writes in the "American Bee-keeper" on the above subject in reply to a correspondent who says "I have some weak colonies of bees which I fear will not winter as they are. How would it do to unite two of these weak colonies together?" The reply:—"This is the proper thing to do, and the time to do it is the later part of September or the first of October; but if you are on the lookout for a warm day it may be done even in November, though it is not best to wait as long as that as a rule. Two weak colonies kept separate will consume nearly twice the stores which both would united, and very likely perish before spring, while, if put together, they would winter as well as any good colony. To unite such colonies late in the season, the following is a good plan: If one of the queens is known to be inferior to the other, hunt out the inferior one and kill her, so that the best queen may survive; otherwise you need pay no attention to the queens for one of them will soon be killed after uniting.

Having the queen matter disposed of, go to the colonies you wish to unite and blow smoke quite freely in at the entrance, pounding on top at the same time with the doubled-up fist or with a stick of wood with a cloth wound around it so it will not mar the hive or make too sharp a noise rather than a heavy jar. When both have been treated in this way, wait four or five minutes for the bees to fill themselves with honey, when one is to be put on a wheelbarrow and wheeled to where the other stands, and both opened. Now select out the combs out of both hives which contains the most honey, settling them in one hive. In thus settling in it is always best to alternate the frames, whereby the bees are so

mixed up, as well as being full of honey, that they have no desire to fight, for each bee touched by another is a stranger, filled with honey. Then, their being full of honey makes them so they are not inclined to take wing and fly back to their old home under our manipulation. After the hive is filled, arrange the quilt or honey-board and put on the cover. Next put a wide board down in front of the hive, leading up to the entrance, and proceed to shake the bees off the remaining frames, taking first a frame from one hive and then one from the other, thus mixing the bees as before. After all are in set the wide board up against the front of the hive, sloping over the entrance so that the next time the bees fly they will bump against it, so to speak, thus causing them to mark their location anew, so that none will turn to their old location and get lost. Also remove all relics of the old hive, so that there is no home-like appearance about the old location to entice them back. Put the remaining combs away in some safe place for next season's use, and the work is done."

CELLAR WINTERING

To another who asks the question—"will it do to put bees in a cellar where persons are going in after vegetables every day and how is it best to arrange the cellar?" Mr. Doolittle replies:—"A cellar that will keep vegetables will answer very well for bees, and the going into it every day need not disturb the wintering bees, if the persons entering are cautious about jarring them, or needlessly disturbing the hives in any way; especially if the bees are placed so that the light from the lamp cannot shine direct into the entrance to the hives. If the cellar is kept dark during the winter all that is necessary to do is to