There is one advantage about a winter flow that the competition is less as wild bees have closed their establishments.

Hoping that you will have a good season, believe me.

Yours faithfully,

A. C. SEWELL.

Prevention of Increase During Natural Swarming.

By C. P. Dadant.

The prevention of increase by returning swarms to the parent colony shortly after swarming was tried by me accidentally on a large scale a number of years ago—I believe it was in the years 1877—78. It happened in the following manner:

We had at that time made arrangements with an apiarist some 14 miles from us to furnish him hives for his swarms and take care of his bees at the same time, taking one-half of the honey and of the increase for our pay. He was to harvest the swarms as they issued. The season was exceedingly favorable, and we were crowded with work. The number of swarms were greater than we had anticipated, and our man found himself short of hives for two or three days. When I arrived at his apiary with a load of some 15 or 20 hives, he had been hiving his swarms in all sorts of boxes, nail-kegs, etc. Upon my arrival at his apiary I at once went to work to transfer, to the new hives that I had brought, all the swarms that had issued within the last two days, as they had but little comb built. But each of them had several pieces of comb with eggs in them, in almost every instance. They were so ill-pleased with my unceremonious transfer into freshly painted empty hives that every swarm left those new hives and returned to the parent hive from which it had come forth a day or two previously.

Subsequently we ascertained that none of those colonies swarmed again that season. I thought that I had made a discovery, and used this method repeatedly afterwards with very frequent success, but I later found that my original discovery had been put into practice years ago in Europe, by the box-hive bee-keepers.

In his Cours D'Apiculture, the first edition of which was published in the 50's, Hamet, the well-known champion of the box and eke hives in Paris, describes his method of returning the swarm to its parent colony. This method he uses for all seconday swarms, and he considers it necessary in order to secure strong colonies, or rather to prevent the "swarming to death" that weakens the parent colonies and furnishes worthless swarms. His method is to hive the swarm as usual in a plain box, and on the evening of the following day return this swarm to the hive from whence it issued, by shaking it in front of that hive.

His explanation of what happens is that by the end of the second day the bees have usually destroyed all queen-cells and have kept but one young queen When the swarm is returned thus unexpectedly, the two queens come together and have a duel, in which one of them is killed. It would perhaps serve the purpose still better if the queen of the swarm that is returned was killed by the apiarist at the time when the swarm is returned.

As I said before, Hamet used this method only upon secondary swarms. It is quite likely that he had never tried it on primary swarms, for the reason that natural swarming was considered by him as the best method of increase, but my accidental trial and further experiments have con-