

back to the sun, took out a comb, looked at the front side of the next one before looking at the one in my hand and so on to the last; then put them back in the same order. No queen, however, did I see. Every bee seemed to be playing hunt the queen. They raced across the comb and fell in showers on to the ground, and I then learned why you are told to tuck your pants in your socks whilst working with bees. I closed the hive and left them till after dinner, when I again returned to the attack. I lifted out the combs as before, but with the same result, and on looking into the hive found a ball of bees the size of a small egg, which on examination proved to be a balled queen. I poured some thin syrup over them, but too late. Two day later the bees started queen-cells in all directions. Needless to say I did not clip queens that year. Soon the swarming season came, and the other hive was boiling over with bees, so I decided to "shook" a swarm as I did not have time to watch them. I don't know whether I shook any energy into the workers, but I did succeed in "shooking" the spark of energy out of the embryo queens in the cells with the result that I had not much honey, but obtained some very cheap and valuable experience. I also felt that I had been a little "fresh" and must go slowly, but possessed more determination than ever to become a bee-keeper worthy of the name. The following year I started with four colonies in fair condition, experimented less, and had consequently more honey. That season I had great difficulty in getting bees into supers, and accidentally fell into a system which I have since read is the method of one of Canada's leading bee-keepers. It consists of taking out the back comb, generally containing honey and inserting in the centre a frame of foundation. As soon as it is drawn out and the queen commences to lay, I take it and put it

up in super and return the original comb to hive as before. Finding this worked alright, I decided to use supers same size as brood nest and to lift combs as soon as safe and desirable. That fall I had over 300 lbs. of honey, and had increased to nine colonies. During the following winter I was much occupied with the question as to whether I knew enough to justify buying out a neighbor who owned 40 colonies, but who let them run themselves and consequently got little honey. Before spring I had decided to do so, provided they could be bought reasonably. In April I bought bees and fixtures, but found that they had dwindled down to 25 colonies, which with my 9, made 34 spring count. As I had lots of empty comb I expected but few swarms, but to my surprise over 20 swarms issued during June and July. I hived 17 and then decided I had enough, and returned later ones. My returns that fall were disappointing, amounting only to about 1,300 lbs. It now became a problem how I was going to winter the bees. My cellar, a small earth one, containing vegetables, etc., was too small, so I enlarged it, and put them in; and by leaving cellar door leading into the house open at nights, I brought them through, alive and strong. I might say I have not yet lost one colony by bad wintering, since my experience with the wire netting, although I find about four per cent. of the colonies queenless in spring. After last year's experience "swarm control" became a real thing to me. I wanted honey and only increase from approved colonies. I had found out that many of my colonies were useless as far as honey gathering was concerned. I studied systems with a view of finding something that would suit my requirements and locality, and finally decided upon the following modification of various systems: "Clipped queens," raising of two combs of brood to super as soon as colony is strong

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empty comb or fou
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year; 3,000 lbs, from
count, 60 colonies i
though rather too w
best.

Wishing the C.B.J
and the compliments

IMPROVEMENT OF BEE

Indexed
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