

APIARY IN MAY.

The weather during fruit blossoms, decides whether we have early or late swarms. Should the yield of honey be plentiful, good stocks will be prepared to throw off swarms the last of this month. But, should a scant supply be obtained through unfavorable weather, swarming would be put off indefinitely, and even second or third rate stocks may throw out the first swarms. It sometimes happens that strong colonies having a good supply of last year's honey, and gathering but little now, will consume it this month, rearing drones. They even make preparation for swarming—rearing queens so far as to seal them up. A dearth of honey nearly always occurs between fruit and clover blossoms. The drones are sacrificed to save the colony. The bees in such cases change their plans entirely. If they get honey almost immediately, it will take several weeks before they can again get into condition to swarm—providing another brood of drones and other preliminaries just lost. Stocks that were quite feeble in April, with light stores, that could not afford to rear a drone, and that used with economy what they had, will pass such season of scarcity without any suspension of breeding, and be ready for swarming first. This explains why poor stocks will occasionally turn out better than such as were best at beginning of Spring. Should a swarm issue during such a time of scarcity, it will need feeding, particularly if there should be cold wet weather. Some of the poorest colonies can not always be trusted to supply themselves at such times, and will need feeding also.

Swarming will not be general until white clover appears. Use for swarms no hives that have been recently painted. Have every thing in readiness for the swarms as they issue. When they have clustered, there should be no delay in getting them into the hive. The time lost in preparing a hive, and having the bees wait for it, often results in their not waiting. *Good luck* here, consists in getting all the swarm to enter the hive, carrying to the stand, shading from the hot sun, and raising the front side just a little, without delay.

Those who begin to rear Italian queens this month, will need a full colony of that kind. It will be hardly possible to procure a queen much before the first of July. A queen just introduced to a native colony, is just as good to breed queens from, as if she was in a hive of her own bees. To begin—the preparations already suggested—the first thing, after a colony is sufficiently strong, is to introduce the frame with small frames into the center of the hive, taking out an outside one, and moving the others outward to make room. The queen will soon deposit eggs in some of the small combs, when they are ready. Raise out the frame carefully—using smoke to keep the bees quiet—slip out one, put another in its place and return to the hive. Fasten on the top of this with screws, or pieces of wire bent around a thin strip of wood projecting half an inch beyond the corner, by which to suspend it. Three such combs are needed, but only the middle one need have eggs. Have ready before hand about a quart of bees—in warm

weather a less number will do—to introduce to this box, without a queen of course. Open a hole in a top of the box in which they are confined, and set the one with the comb properly adjusted over it in such a way that no bees will escape. Feed a little and keep shut up for two or three days. When bees can be procured at another yard a mile away, the shutting up is not important if set a little distance from any others. They usually construct three or four cells, and the first queen that matures will destroy all the others. To prevent this, about the tenth day take out the comb and cut off without injury all the queen cells but one; these may be given to other little colonies for maturing. The queen matures in twelve days after they are shut up, ordinarily, and will commence laying in eight more, when she may be introduced. It is found to be very hazardous to introduce an Italian queen to a colony of natives, sooner than a week after they have been deprived of their own. Let the stock be strong enough to divide, when half of the combs and bees may be put into an empty hive adding frames to fill each. Set two feet apart, each a foot from the old stand; the one that is like to get the most bees may be put further off. In a day or two the half without a queen will begin royal cells; and of course the other hive is the place to look for the old queen, which may be destroyed. In eight days look over the comb again minutely, and cut off *every queen cell*—success depends upon it. The queen now to be introduced, may be enclosed in a tumbler, with two or three bees as attendants, and secured with wire cloth. Remove the honey board—the board over the frames—and invert the tumbler directly on the frames where the bees are thickest; set over the cover two boxes, to keep them warm. In the course of twelve hours, the bees and queen will become sufficiently acquainted through the wire cloth to be allowed together. Take off the tumbler carefully without disturbing the bees, set on the cover again, when she will quietly go down into the hive, and commence depositing eggs at once. This is the whole process. The Italians seem to work more readily in this way than the natives. I think it quite probable that this mode of propagating queens artificially, will yet be generally adopted. The introduction of a mature fertile queen to a colony two weeks sooner than when they swarm naturally, is an advantage sufficient to pay for extra trouble. The time gained in breeding, is equivalent to a swarm.

If you cut off the back legs of your chairs so that the back part of the seat shall be two inches lower than the front part, it will greatly relieve the fatigue of sitting, and keep your spine in much better shape. The principal fatigue in sitting comes from your sliding forward, and thus straining the ligaments in the small of the back. The expedient advised will obviate this tendency and add greatly to the comfort and healthfulness of the sitting posture. The front edge of a chair should not be more than fifteen inches high for the average man.