

Best Method of Starting Cells for Queen Rearing.

--Mrs. Jennie Atchley.

After trying all the plans that have been given for procuring cells, I have now concluded to use only the following plans this year as I consider them best. I have a plan or rather a modification of the Doolittle plan which I use most, to wit: I dip all cells a la Doolittle except I use a cell stick with a small end. The small end makes a place that just fits the cocoons or linings of worker cells or makes a sink in bottom of cell cup just right to take in the cocoon. I set in old dark combs into the breeders hives, and when larva is about 12 hours to one day old. I take out a small piece containing about as many larvæ as I think I need at the time, take a sharp knife or razor and pare down the cells as close to the larvæ as I can not to disturb it, then take a small pair of watch-makers tweezers and remove the cocoon larvæ and all right into the bottom of my wax cups and if properly done the cocoon will just come up even with the bottom of the cell cup proper. When I have thus prepared about 12 cells I place them in a strong broodless hive so made a la Alley and I tell you it will surprise you to see how nice the bees will save them and what large and fine cells and consequently a fine lot of queens one gets. I dip my cells good and strong so that they can be handled easily without injury. This is what we call the Doolittle plan—the Alley plan and the Atchley plan combined, and I tell you I like it. We use some hives in the old or Doolittle way that is, save some cells built in upper stories. For laying queens also, we some times use the Alley plan, but the one that pays best and the one that I consider best is as above. You may make a failure the first time or two, but if you take a good strong colony of bees and keep them in an empty hive over night without a queen, next morning give frames of honey and the dozens cells prepared as above and see what fine cells you will get. I place my cells right on the comb, and not on sticks as some do. The cells are easier taken off the combs and by pushing the base of the cells against the combs hard enough to stay letting the point stand out from the combs a little. It is a good idea to always keep the cells point down in handling.

BEEVILLE, Texas, U. S.

The Production of Comb Honey—Other Items of interest.

Except that for the past ten years I have persistently declined writing for our American publications I would be pleased to send you an article for publication—but you can see that I cannot do it without discourtesy to them. I appreciate the task you have undertaken. You have put yourself in the midst of a field where you can do manly hard work for your generation. As to my experience with full sheets or starters in sections. I have experimented and satisfied myself for myself on this point. I can best answer this by saying that I am now making over one hundred and fifty (150,000) thousand sections for my own use, and shall put full sized sheets in every section, (shall use VanDeusen flat-bottomed F'dn 14 feet to the pound). I insist on a light F'dn. The bees will generally thin any F'dn, but often they will leave it very little worked down. The improved appearance of the section when filled is quite an argument in its favor. Another point is that the sections in clamp are worked more uniformly with full sheets, which is quite an advantage in practical work, right here let me say that many bee-keepers spread out so much that some sections are filled and sealed, when others in the same clamp are but part filled. No practical man can afford to handle sections. As recommended by some noted bee-keeper in producing comb honey, handle clamps or get out. Some bee-keepers fail because of a slipshod system of doing their work. A swarm is examined in October, it appears to have bees and stores enough for winter, this will not answer my purpose. I must have positive knowledge. The age and capabilities of the queens are of more importance than is generally supposed more especially in the management of a large number and for comb honey. My practice is not to winter any queen two years old. i.e. if a queen was hatched in June 1890, I would not winter her in preparing my bees in the fall of 1892; in other words, I aim to change my queens one-half each season. As to a system of management for comb honey I have no settled system of management. I really believe I have changed it every year since I have been in the business. I worked fifteen years for a practical system of non-swarming, greatly, as I now see it, to my disadvantage. If, by careful ventilation, preventing crowding and careful manipulation I can hold a swarm through the season without any great desire to swarm, I consider that management a success. If a colony as you think is bound to swarm the sooner you humor it the better. The great