

GENERAL.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

Killing Surplus Bees.

THE ethics of the killing or preservation of bees is a matter that must be left to the individual interested. The question has two sides with good men on both. But the question has an economical side too. Is fall killing of bees the best disposition we can make of our property? It can hardly be said that it is in our present circumstances. For granted that there is no market for them in the fall, the case is different in the spring. I know that there is a considerable spring trade in bees between Canada and the United States. They are brought north in pound lots, in nuclei and in full colonies. And the price in Canada for colonies in May and June ranges from five to ten dollars. Now it will pay to keep our stocks over the winter even should we sell them at four dollars each. And at this price who can doubt that a market can be had for all our surplus stock. There are thousands of farmers in Canada who have not a single stock on their farms and who would be induced to buy at the lower rates.

J. R. BLACK.

Barrie, Feb. 15, 1890.

There is force in what our friend Black says regarding the purchase of "bees by the pound." Why, if we are to have surplus bees, for purposes of destruction in the fall, will it not pay to keep them over till spring, even if you sell them "by the pound" in April and May. There will be money in it, to keep them over thus, and sell them even at the low prices asked in the South.

For The Canadian Bee Journal.

Destroying Surplus Bees.

THE article by Geo. Wood under the above caption, in the C. B. J. for January 29, touches upon a subject which has interested me for some time, and I well know that the views expressed there are not generally popular, and to such an extent is this true, that a beekeeper entertaining them may almost be considered to lose care. I believe in destroying bees in a humane manner, when that serves our best interest, just as I believe in killing animals fit for food when that serves our best interest. The killing of the animal does apply I hold, so far as humanity is concerned, especially calves, in dairy districts. I have, for a considerable time,

advocated that there is nothing to be gained by "doubbling-up" colonies in the fall, if either colony is of average strength, and has a good queen. A colony for some time queenless, and requeened after the most of the breeding season is over, is one dangerous to winter. Much may be done towards successful wintering by destroying doubtful colonies. A good judge of bees, and an experienced hand should, if he has 150 colonies, and destroys thirty, have the advantage over another bee keeper with the same number, and of which he has destroyed none. He can dispose of colonies not liable to winter successfully. By so doing he saves the honey given to the colony which will not winter. It does then to destroy bees, if we cannot dispose of them to advantage. As a beekeeper, it does not pay me to raise up competition (I am not one of those who would, by giving others the dark side of bee keeping, prevent them from keeping bees), in my line of business, yet am I not courting it by giving my bees away to my neighbors, if it pays them to take them. Right here, I claim it does not pay any man to take bees, without hive or combs after the bulk of the honey flow is over. A fall flow of honey is one to be depended on less than any other, and although in rare instances more, very much more may be secured, yet on an average not more, and not even so much, as would be required for winter, can be secured. When a hive has to be purchased, foundation purchased, and the risk run of food for winter having to be purchased, to say nothing of expenses on bees, freight and packing, I maintain that it is unwise for any one, and especially for a beginner to take bees in that shape at that time of the year. It will generally pay better to purchase colonies in good condition in the May and June following at \$8.00 or even \$10.00 each, he then has lost no honey. From these latter colonies first class swarms may be anticipated, which is a very important item in securing a large average yield in an apiary.

HOW TO DESTROY.

Yes, bees consume much stores after the close of the honey season, and right here it would be well to say, be sure you know when the honey season closes. When you are certain there is no source from which you can secure any more honey, take the colonies you are going to destroy, and remove all combs without brood. Put the balance with as few colonies as you can, putting on one or two upper stories to contain them, and put the brood further advanced together, facilitate removal when hatched. Then brimstone or chloroform the bees which have been shaken from the combs. This is