

Pollen from Spear Grass.

WHIS morning going through the bee yard we heard a great humming near a pear tree, where two swarms alighted yesterday, and we wondered if some of the bees had returned to the tree, as they occasionally do, if they are allowed to mark the locality, and the hives are moved away. On examining the tree we could see no bees, but looking down on a knoll of spear grass we found the bees by the thousands gathering the pollen from the grass. It was amusing to see them fly up to a head of spear grass and take out the pollen. By shaking the heads we found there were immense quantities of very fine particles of pollen in the spear grass. In the middle of the day the bees did not work on it much, but they were busy early in the morning taking off this spear grass pollen. We tried to see if there was any honey being gathered, but could not discover any, although they frequently remained hanging to the heads for some time, working their proboscis among the fine blossoms or bloom. Is it a common thing for bees to gather pollen from spear grass, and do they get any honey from it? Who can tell us something about this? The other day two swarms issued about the same time in our apiary and went together all lighting in a large cluster. We set two hives down about eight feet apart, one on one side of the cluster and one on the other, and commenced dipping the bees off from the cluster, first pouring a dipperful down one hive and then at the other, which is a very good plan, but must be done properly; and we think a little instruction right here will not be out of place. We use an ordinary tin dipper, but dip it in cold water just to cool it off, if it has been where the sun was shining on it. We recollect once seeing a party use a dipper to take off bees, the tin being so hot from exposure to the sun that it would almost burn your hand. It so exasperated the bees that very few remained in the dipper, but instead they attacked his face and hands. If the dipper is wet and cool the bees will remain in it like so much grain; if dipped off quickly. For fear some should drop on the ground, it is better to have a second dish much larger than the dipper to hold underneath which also must be wet and cool. After we had clipped off

all we could, and emptied every alternate dipperful at each hive, thus dividing them as quickly as possible, with the swarm catcher we shook the rest into the wire basket and emptied them down. Then we instructed the student who stood by watching the operation and assisting us to see if both hives had queens. He immediately remarked:—"How will I know?" "Why," we said, "just watch, and if both queens are in one hive the queenless colony will commence running about, become agitated and fly out, and light on the other hive." In a few minutes it was evident that both queens were in one hive, as the bees became quite contented and commenced drumming at the entrance, while at the other they became agitated, rushing about, out and in the entrance, around the front of the hive, and commenced to light on and go into the other hive. We told him to open the other hive and hunt for one of the queens. Taking out a frame of comb with the bees on it, and examining it, he soon found a queen which he set in the hive that was being deserted. Unfortunately not being faster than necessary in manipulating hives, the bees destroyed one of the two queens, and so only one remained. The result was that when it was set over into the other hive with the queenless bees, and that hive moved to a new location the bees remained quiet. In less than half an hour the bees in the hive where the queen was taken from became as agitated as the other, and it was evident from their movements that they had discovered they were queenless. After finding out the difficulty we had to place the two swarms in one hive, or rather we took the combs and put them in a second story, setting on the brood chamber with the queen in. We would therefore warn those having swarms together after they are hived to ascertain the queenless one as soon as possible. It is better to watch them run in at the entrance, and catch one of the queens, and as soon as you find the queenless colony let this queen run in.

We notice that our worthy President Mr. Allen Pringle, is sowing the foul brood treatment broad cast throughout America. We find it in the Farm and Home and a great many of our exchanges.