

TIME TO SET BEES OUT.

When bees ought to be put out of winter quarters on to their summer stands must depend upon the season and some other conditions. As a rule it is not well to put them out until the weather becomes warm and somewhat settled and natural pollen appears. This time will vary according to season and locality, all the way from about the middle of May. The bee-keeper must use his own judgment in the matter, as no invariable rule can with safety be given. But there are certain principles which apply under all circumstances and conditions, in spring management, one of which is, that food in plenty is required for brooding; and another equally important is, that a certain degree of heat is always required. Both are imperatively essential. We can supply both, and therein will largely depend our success in getting our bees through the spring in good condition for the harvest. More bees are lost in spring than winter. "Spring dwindling" is the dreaded Nemesis of the modern bee-keeper. But equipped with the modern knowledge of his art, he can meet and vanquish this enemy. What is spring dwindling? Most of us know by experience, more or less dear, what it is. It is the gradual, often rapid, dying off of the old bees in the spring faster than the young bees are brought forth to take their place. The obvious remedies are, first, to prolong the lives of the old bees in the spring; and, secondly, to hasten the raising of young bees sufficiently to meet and fill the loss of the old ones. The question now is, how is this to be done? Conserve the life of the old bees by keeping them quiet; that is, so far as out-door exercise is concerned. Let their energies be spent inside the hive rearing brood. When an old bee begins to forage in the fields in the spring it will very soon shuffle off its mortal coil. Simply do away with the necessity of this. Prevent it from spending itself in that way. How? By supplying it with plenty of food within the hive, so that it need not go out for it, and by supplying it with sufficient heat for brood-rearing. But some bees, like some bipeds, like to be fussing about whether there is any need for it or not. This can be remedied in case of the bees by leaving them in their winter quarters till they get well on with the brooding.

Upon referring to my apiarian record, I find that in the spring of 1885 I commenced setting my bees out of cellar April 16th, and finished May 13th; while the fall record shows that the latest out did as well as those out first or later. The spring was backward, and those having plenty of stores for brooding, and remaining quiet, I left in till late, with quite satisfactory

results. In 1886, I commenced setting out April 13th and finished May 2nd—the first natural pollen appearing in the fields April 19th. In 1887, I commenced April 10th and finished same time as previous year, May 2nd—the first pollen appearing on that date.

The reader will see from the above records that I am not in favor of rushing bees out in the spring the first warm day that comes. Some that are restless, or from other causes, will require to be put out before others. I commence with those requiring the change most, and keep on in that way till all are out. Every one must use his own eyes and judge for himself in this matter as in others.

For the Canadian Bee Journal.

Mexican Bees.

I HAVE just come across the following interesting story published over fifty years ago. It is an extract from *Basil Hatty's Travels in South America*. If there is any truth in it I would like to get some of those bees. Why, everybody could keep a hive or two then!

"From the Plaza we went to a house, where a bee-hive of the country was opened in our presence. The bees, the honey comb and the hive differ essentially from those of Europe. The hive is generally made out of logs of wood, from two to three feet long, and eight or ten inches in diameter, hollowed out, and closed at the end with circular doors, cemented closely to the wood, but capable of being removed at pleasure. Some persons use cylindrical hives made of earthenware, instead of the clumsy apparatus of wood; these are relieved by raised figures and circular rings, so as to form rather handsome ornaments in the verandah of a house, where they are suspended by cords from the roof, in the same manner that the wooden ones in the villages are hung from the eaves of the cottages. On one side of the hive, half-way between the ends, there is a small hole made just large enough to admit a loaded worker, and shaded by a projection to prevent the rain from trickling in. In this hole, generally representing the mouth of a man or some monstrous head of which is moulded in the clay of the hive, a bee is constantly stationed, whose office is no sinecure; for the hole is so small that he has to draw back every time a bee wishes to enter or leave the hive. A gentleman told me that the experiment was made by marking the sentinel, when it was observed that the same bee continued at his post a whole day. When it is ascertained by the weight that the hive