The Apiary.

Wintering Bees.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,- As the time is near at hand when bee keepers should be making preparations for wintering their bees, I send you an account of the way in which I have wintered mine for the last three winters. After the two first winters they came out in prime condition. This last winter, with the same treatment, they did not do quite so well; but that might be attributed to the bad season. I commence as follows: -I lay down thick boards or two-inch planks, on blocks eight or ten inches thick. I place my hives on the planks as close as they will stand until I have the plank full, and then lay down more blocks and planks, according to the quantity of hives. I give them plenty of ventilation at the top, and close the bottom entrance to about half an inch. I then put rafters over the row of hives just the same as you would on a building, only the foot of the rafter stands in a bit of a ditch about two inches deep, just to keep them steady until you have got the sheeting boards put on. I first nail the boards across both the end pairs of rafters. I then put up the inside pairs, and then one board at each side of the clamp, a little above the ground, to hold the rafters steady until I pack every vacant place in the building with dry pea straw. I then put on the other boards. I put the boards on at the sides of the building with screws; they are more convenient to take apart in the spring, and they can be packed away somewhere until the following winter. I have two pipes in every twelve feet for ventilation; that is if the building or clamp be two boards in length, I have one pipe in each gable end, and one in the centre. The pipes are eighteen inches or two feet long, with a space about three inches for ventilaton. A hole is cut about five inches square in the top board in the gable end for the end of the pipe to go into, which is nailed fast. A piece of board is nailed over the other end of the pipes, to keep the snow from drifting in. The bottom board of the pipes is about three inches shorter than the rest, which leaves a passage for air; it is covered with a piece of wire cloth. The centre pipe is made the same way, and it ventilates to the south, if convenient. I then cover the clamp, or bee-house, with dirt, in the same way as you would cover a potato pit to keep it from freezing. The ends of the clamp I build up with sods when convenient, if not, I drive down two or three stakes at each end, and rear up a piece or two of old board to hold up the dirt to be piled against them. I am like many beside myself, I cannot afford to put up a large expensive bee-house, and one like the above is soon put up the second winter, and it answers the purpose just as well as one that might cost fifty or one hundred dollars. I have not lost a single hive these last three winters. The principal thing to be observed is to build it on a dry piece of ground, say, for instance, on the potato ground. I don't make a ditch under the bees, nor yet at the outside of the clamp, as the drain, in my opinion, only creates damp, which should be guarded against by all means. In the spring, a week or two before you take out the bees, make a hole with a spade, say a foot wide, at the south side of the clamp, and thrust a thick stick through once or twice into the inside of the clamp, just above ground. This will make a downward ventilation, which will be very acceptable as the weather is beginning to be warm.

JOHN JEWITT.

LUCKNOW, Nov. 2nd, 1867.

NOTE BY ED C F We publish the foregoing communication as a suggestion, with this caution, however, that unless great care is taken to provide plenty of ventilation, we should fear the method prescribed would be likely to keep the bees too warm, or even smother them. It is our intention to try several modes of wintering our own bees this season, and we shall be happy to give the results of our experience in the spring.

The Delaware Grape.

HORTICULTURISTS differ as to the merits of this grape, but our own opinion, alike from observation and trial of it, is very decided in its favour. Its delicate habit of growth in the earlier stages, and the smallness of its berries, make against it in the view of nurserymen, who naturally incline to prefer a strong, quick-growing variety, bearing showy fruit; but making all due allowance for these drawbacks, it is a choice grape. Its flavour rivals that of foreign varieties grown under glass, while its earliness and hardiness are strong recommendations in a climate like ours. We believe it may be depended on to ripen in any part of the Dominion of Canada, and as we most want a good grape for the million, since only a very few can afford the expense of glass structures, it must be regarded as a valuable sort by all who are desirous to see every man have his own vine to sit under. With high culture this grape attains a very respectable size. We saw some bunches in the garden of Norman Hamilton, Esq., of Paris, this fall, that were so large, we should have supposed them Dianas instead of Delawares but for their habit of growth and shape of bunch. Mr. Hamilton says this grape wants rich soil and liberal manuring to reach its best condition. Some varieties are injured by over manuring, but there is very little danger of this in the case of the Delaware. With regard to its hardiness, we may state that as an experiment we left a vine on the trellis all last winter, and in the spring it was alive and vigorous almost to the extremity of the shoots. This was in the latitude of Guelph. We believe in laying down grapes in the fall, and covering them either with soil, evergreen brush, or litter of some kind as a partial protection, but a vine that will stand our winter on a trellis without injury, must have a robust constitution. We recommend all our readers who can do so, to plant a variety of the most hardy grape vines known, but to any who can only plant a single vine, or at most two or three, we would strongly advise a trial of the Delaware.

Field Strawberry Culture.

A FRIEND who grows a considerable quantity of strawberries near Oakville, gives the following information respecting his method of culture. We choose light sandy land, and plough, work, and manure it thoroughly: then in August we set out the plants. These are set in rows, from one to three feet apart in the row, and the rows wide enough asunder to allow of horse-hoeing and cultivation, like corn. The cultivator and horse-hoe are kept going when required between the rows, to keep the weeds down, and the rows are hoed out by hand by women and boys, with an over-looker. The plants throw out suckers in all directions. These are allowed to take root and grow anywhere in the row, but those which encroach too far into the spaces are cut off by the cultivator. By the second year the rows of plants are from a foot to fifteen inches wide all through the field, with blank spaces between them. If they get over-thick in the row, we sometimes take out some of the plants. All the cultivation is done in the summer and fall, after fruiting. When fruiting, the plants are not disturbed. We cover the rows with pine bush or straw lightly in the fall, and leave all that does not cover up the plants to protect the berries in the spring. Every three years we renew the beds, ploughing down everything, and richly manuring, then plant afresh.

Orchard Culture.

A. D. H. writes as follows:—"Will you, or some one of your numerous correspondents, inform me through the columns of THE CANADA FARMER, so that other people may benefit thereby as well as myself, which is the most beneficial mode of cultivating an orchard just beginning to bear? My orchard has been under hay for two years, and is now under pasture, and I have had my hogs pasturing there for two years. I want to know whether it is better to plough or top-dress. Also, please inform me if grafting or budding is the preferable mode of propagating fruit trees. Can you inform me of any method of making barren plum-trees bear fruit? Some in my possession blossom profusely, like all good bearing trees, but when the blossom falls, the stem falls likewise, with the exception of a very few. These ripen into plums of a very large size and delicious flavour. Were it not so, the trees would have been cut down and cast into the fire long ago."

ANS.—We believe that it is better to keep the ground of an orchard cultivated with the plough, rather than laid down in grass. The latter plan saves trouble, and when it is adopted, top-dressing will be found beneficial both to the herbage and the fruit trees. Pasturing with hogs also answers a useful purpose in ridding the orchard of the embryos and larvæ of many noxious insects. Grafting is best for apples and pears. For peaches and cherries, budding is preferable. The method of performing these operations would require a lengthened description, and the aid of cuts. We will bear the subject in mind, and bring it forward again in some future issue. With regard to the tendency of plum-trees to cast their fruit or blossoms prematurely, the accident complained of is of frequent occurrence, and with some varieties of plums especially very difficult to prevent. We would recommend a trial of careful pruning of the branches, and perhaps of the root as well.

Preservation of Dahlia Roots.

BEING fond of good dahlias, and grieved at the frequent losses that come under our notice, we beg to commend to the attention of those who too often have to lament the loss of their favorites, the following effective mode of preserving their roots; and we mention the subject thus early, so that all our subscribers may get our hints in time. The tops being killed by the autumn frosts, and thus become unsightly, must be cut away, leaving the roots undisturbed for several weeks in order to feed the nascent buds destined to break the following spring. For, if on the time of removing the plants from the ground these buds are immature, there is a great probability that the tubers will perish before the spring; or should their vitality remain, there will be found a difficulty, if not an impossibility, of getting them to "break." The next business is to lift the plant from the ground; and in doing this, the greatest care should be taken to preserve their fibrous roots, for the plant requires constant nourishment. A number of these rootlets will, however, under the most careful handling, be broken off and the supply of sap interrupted until new roots are made; but with those plants that have well-swollen buds their reproduction is soon effected. When the tubers are raised from the ground, they should immediately be transferred to their winter quarters, where their fibrous roots must be carefully spread upon a thin layer of sand or earth, and at once covered with about an inch of the same, leaving the greater portion of the tuber bare. During winter they should be kept slightly moistened. For wintering these tubers there is, perhaps, (unless a special place is provided for them,) no better place than under the stage of a cool green-house; but, whatever place may be assigned them, it is indispensable that it admits a moderate amount of light, is kept cool, but above the freezing point, and that the atmosphere is such as suits growing plants generally; alike free from both saturation and dryness, which will with equal certainty engender putrefaction.—*Ladies' National Magazine*