

The Canadian Bee Journal.

D. A. JONES & Co., Publishers.

OUR OWN APIARY.

IS we have two short-hand writers in the office, we shall be able almost every week to drive to some or all of the yards and report the various operations going on from time to time. At the "Wallwin yard" there is one thing we think we have not mentioned before; just opposite the entrance to the bee yard stands a clump of willows; the peculiarity about them is that they have bloomed every year about the same time as ground or dwarf maple. Their ordinary appearance is very much like other willows in the locality, yet they bloom much later, and since noting this fact we have found a number of others in the locality blooming about the same time. The bloom continues from about six to ten days, and they yield honey very liberally. Now, this is very important, as the gap between fruit bloom and white clover, is thus filled in. We have pressed some of the blossoms and intend to exhibit them at the Toronto Exhibition. At this yard a large number of grape vines are planted in front of the hives to shade them. Rows of sunflowers also assist in shading the hives. As the number of colonies in this yard usually runs from one to three hundred, we have not grape vines enough to shade all the colonies. We have not allowed the grass to grow for several years in this yard, and the soil is very light and sandy. Having had much windy weather this season, the sand has drifted about considerably, and we have about come to the conclusion to sod it over again, as the sand drifting into the hives is very disagreeable. We have about 40 nuclei hives in which we keep young queens to draw from. We find that in spite of the large number of nuclei we are making,

they have about doubled the number by artificial and natural swarming; then they are filling the combs so full of honey, we have to extract every three or four days. Looking at the barrels of honey in the bee houses one would almost wonder where it all came from; yet when we see the immense number of bees passing in at the entrance of each hive laden with their precious loads of honey we can easily account for the large quantity produced. Taking into consideration that each one passing in represents one drop of honey, and that they enter five or six times as fast as the sap usually drops from a maple tree, so where two or three gallons of sap is collected daily from them, the only wonder is that we have not more to extract than we have, and we can only account for the difference by the quantity being used for brooding. Here in this apiary, as well as the others, we keep a number of queen nurseries, which every bee-keeper with over five or ten colonies should have. For instance, in one hive in which was the old queen, they were gathering honey and carrying on brooding in the ordinary way, and there were two queen nurseries filled with queens ready to be introduced to other colonies, or shipped if desired. Each queen nursery contains twenty fine queens, without in any way preventing the colonies from carrying on their ordinary work. From 20 to 100 queens may be kept in each colony by these nurseries. We have made a great improvement in them over the original queen-nursery. One improvement is a tin pocket very simply arranged, which holds sufficient food to last the queen and her attendants for two or three weeks. Heretofore the food in the cages was liable to become dry, or the bees sometimes put their proboscis through the screens and removed some of it, besides there was danger from daubing or leakage. The value of a queen nursery in every well regulated apiary can scarcely be estimated.