

The Apiary.

Spring Management.

BY G. B. JONES.

Having placed our bees upon their summer stands, and so arranged that each colony has a good laying queen, we should proceed to stimulate brood rearing to the highest possible degree, to build up our colonies to great strength in time for the early harvest. Spring feeding stimulates the bees to breed faster than they would if left without fresh stores till the flowers open, and thus more bees are ready to forage when the flow begins.

For stimulative purposes candy should be used until the honey flow is near, and the weather warm enough for the bees to fly without being chilled. Place the candy outside the division board, or upon the cushion, whose corner have pressed in so as to give the bees a passage way to and from the feed. Later, a syrup of two lbs. of water to one of sugar may be safely fed; or, if the honey gathered be sufficient to sustain the bees, or nearly so, water merely sweetened will suffice. I advise granulated sugar at all times for making syrup, though some authorities recommend the cheaper grades on the score of economy. The quantity fed should depend upon the honey flow; care being taken that the bees are constantly well supplied with stores in their combs, and that they be not allowed sufficient to crowd the brood chamber. Feeding should be continued till the bees can gather enough honey to sustain breeding, and have a little to spare. The syrup should be given in feeders; during the day, when robbing is likely to be induced, they should be placed inside, and out of the reach of stranger bees, unless they be robber proof, in which case they may be used at the entrance. The evenings, when sufficiently warm, afford the best opportunities to feed. After the bees have ceased to fly place a feeder at the entrance of each hive and fill it. If one filling is not enough it may be re-filled before dark.

Having established fast brooding, let us take advantage of it, and force "building up." After each strong colony has been fed about ten days, and the weak ones fifteen, place the combs containing the most brood on each side of the brood nest, and those with least, in the centre. Repeat this a week later; and if the colony be crowded for room, place an empty comb, or one with a little honey at the top, in the centre of the cluster. Repeat this every three days when the bees can stand it, till the colonies are upon the full number of brood frames. After some are built up, take cards of hatching brood from them, and give to the weak ones, and so help them along; put these cards in the centre of the weak cluster, but see that neither the queen nor any old bees accompany it. Supply its place by an empty comb or sheet of foundation. Continue shifting the combs till every cell in the brood chamber is occupied.

Take special care that the cushions are well tucked down, and that the entrances are contracted, except during warm spells; that the smoker be sparingly used, and that no pieces of comb or traces of honey or syrup be left within reach of the bees, lest robbing be induced.

ROBBING.—Should this once become fairly started, contract the entrance so that but one bee can pass at a time, and sprinkle the bees thoroughly with water by a fountain pump or a watering can; or place a bunch of loose hay the size of a bushel basket over the entrance, and saturate it well with water. If the trouble does not cease in half an hour, interchange, if possible, the position of the robbing colony with that of the robbed one.

BUYING BEES.—The best time to buy bees is during the first fortnight in May; or, if the spring be unusually early, the last week in April will not be too soon. By this time all fear of spring dwindling will be over.

If at all possible, buy your bees in the frame you intend to use; they will be worth two dollars more to you than in any other, and two and a half if in the same hive. Next to this try some other movable frame and transfer, and, if necessary, pay one dollar more than for the same bees in box hives. In buying bees it is better to choose medium sized colonies with good, straight worker combs, than strong ones on old, dirty or uneven combs. The value of the queen is best determined by the amount of brood present in proportion to the size of her colony; that of the bees by the quantity of honey present in proportion to their strength. But remember that much honey and much brood cannot exist in the same colony prior to the clover harvest. Better to have much brood and little honey.

The best general purpose bee for the beginner is the Italian.

MOVING BEES.—Prepare the box hives by raising them from their bottom boards; lay a factory cotton cloth under each, set the hive down again and secure the edges of the cloth to its sides. Of the frame hive remove the cover and place the cloth over the frames and fasten to the sides of the hive; fasten the frames securely to their places. Load the hives upon a spring wagon or lumber wagon with hay rack, and four feet of hay or straw on it. Have the cloth side of hive up, and no cover on, and combs running lengthwise of wagon. Pack the bees at night, and let them fly as soon as convenient after they are on their new stands, but never before. Before opening the entrances place a conspicuous object before each, as directed last month for "carrying out," to cause the bees to locate themselves.

Transferring, swarming and dividing next month.

Concentrated fertilizers are extensively used in the United States so far west as Ohio, and are rapidly pushing their way westward. It is surprising that these fertilizers are gaining ground so rapidly amongst the farmers, when it is considered that so many of them are adulterated and are applied without system and with little knowledge of their composition and the special requirements of the different kinds of soil. Surely it would be cheaper to "go west" than to cultivate such soil and study its requirements. Canadian farmers should profit by these movements.

"I have taken the *ADVOCATE* for the last eight years, and intend to continue it so long as I can see to read it."

AMHERST, N. S.

SUBSCRIBER.

Garden and Orchard.

Small Fruits.

BY W. W. HILBORN.

There is so much difference in soils that it is impossible to give any one plan for working and preparing for planting that will do in every case. Sand or gravel loam may be ploughed in spring, and if manure can be had that is fine enough to work in nicely with the soil, it should be spread on after ploughing and well harrowed in. Clay loam should always be ploughed in the fall, and in spring it should be well cultivated with a two horse cultivator. As soon as it is dry enough not to bake, spread on manure and give thorough harrowing.

If it has not been already underdrained, do not fail to have it well drained before planting.

Any soil that is rich enough to grow good corn or potatoes will grow good small fruits.

Success does not depend so much on having the soil made very rich, as it does on giving good care and thorough cultivation after planting. Many people are afraid to plant until they have worked the land enough to germinate all foul seeds, but it is not necessary. If it has been worked enough to kill all seeds before planting, your plants will not get worked as much as they require. All who have grown small fruits or vegetables know how apt we are to leave cultivating and hoeing until the weeds begin to grow.

The constant stirring of the soil is what is required to give the best results; hence I regard weeds as friends to some fruit growers, instead of enemies.

Any soil that is rich enough to send up weeds very fast is rich enough to grow first class small fruits; and if cultivating and hoeing is done often enough to keep them down, your plants will grow very rapidly; while if there were no weeds to fight, they would not be apt to get the cultivation often enough, and so would not do so well were the land ever so rich. Remember that it will not take as much time to cultivate and hoe the land twice before weeds get up, as it will to clean them out once, if you allow the weeds to get up several inches high before working.

In planting all small fruits, shrubs or trees, be careful never to allow manure to come in contact with the roots. There have been many failures from this cause alone, and the blame has been thrown on the nurseryman who supplied the plants. It is poor economy to buy cheap plants, as first class plants cannot be furnished at the low rates quoted by some nurseries, no more than a first class cow can be bought for twenty dollars. If you have good plants of your own, plant them; if not, and you know where you can get first class plants, do not send your order to some other man because he offers them at a lower price, because your labor and money will all be lost if your plants are not good and true to name. Competition in the trade has been so great that many have been induced to offer plants at a price that will not pay to furnish first class plants. They are grown too closely together, and the nurseryman cannot afford to take sufficient care in packing them so as to insure their arrival in first class condition. They will not sell at a loss, so that if you pay a very small price, do