

I find the last mentioned the most convenient way.

When shall we put them out? I don't deem it wise to defer putting out the bees until late in the spring; opinion seems to be veering around to early setting out, we used to be told to leave the bees in until the soft maples bloom, but that is usually too late, for if left in the ordinary cellar so late, they will suffer more loss of vitality and numbers than would be the case if they were set out at the end of March or beginning of April, as soon as the weather seems to promise to remain fine for a few days.

The bees being out, our first care is to see that they are well supplied with stores as a shortage at this time means a heavy loss in the returns. I, usually, in setting out the bees, mark the light hives with an entrance block and later give them combs of honey saved over from the previous fall or from colonies that have died during the winter, and I will admit I usually have a few. Lacking the combs of honey I prefer to fill combs with extracted honey, thinned with hot water. All the examination the heavy colonies receive at this time is generally limited to raising the front of the hive and glancing up between the combs.

As the bees are now on their summer stands, the question arises to pack or not to pack. I would say do not, as it will not pay for the labor. This conclusion I have arrived at from comparing results from my colonies wintered outside, which are left packed until about time to put on supers, and cellar-wintered ones which are never packed at all.

Some eminent bee-keepers have said that the bees by their clustering form a natural hive and so retain the heat. This I believe is largely true, nor do I think we can aid them to any great extent by division boards or cushions; while I believe this to be so in practice I endeavor to keep them as tight as possible on top. To aid in this direction I spread a newspaper or two on the thin board which is over the bees and crowd down the cover. The covers telescope half an inch over the hives.

This is generally all I do until fruit bloom appears, during the season of which I like to clip my queens, as I consider it advantageous to have all queens clipped, and think this the best time before the hives get to full or bees. Mr. Hutchinson, says he was brought to favor clipping by having so many five dollar arguments in its favor, meaning absconding swarms.

If spring feeding is at any time profit-

able, it is between apple bloom and clover, and to quote Dr. Miller, "I don't know," but think if one has any low priced honey it can be used to advantage at this time.

Another matter which rightly comes under spring management is spreading brood to increase the colonies' strength, although I fancy 'tis but little practiced. By a careful person it may, I think, be done to some advantage, but the novice, as a rule, will be safer to leave it alone, and the bee-keeper with many colonies has not usually the time to give to that which is at least a matter of doubt.

J. W. SPARLING.

Bowmanville, Dec. '97.

The President—This paper has been interesting to all of us, and it is discussing points which have been more or less a trouble to the whole of us and if any of you have any suggestions to make or any remarks to offer from the thoughts which have come to you while the paper was being read, we will be glad to hear from you.

Mr. Hall—I must say for Mr. Sparling, that I have never heard him read a paper before, and never heard him make a speech before, but this is the nearest thing to the best method of spring management that I know of. I can confirm him in putting his bees on his old stand. I have put out perhaps twenty hives at a time on different stands, and in about an hour after we set out those stocks of bees, we found them twenty-five or thirty feet from any other stand. What are they doing there, unless you come to the conclusion that they are looking for a home? When I found that out, I put my stock of bees on the stand it belonged to. They stand in blocks of four and are all marked on the front of the hive, north-west, south-west, or as the case may be. If you mix them all up you have lost all track of your bees. I believe in putting them on the old stands.

As to the time of putting out, I must say I have to go back on these soft-maple bloom fellows, and I want to put them out on the first of March, if they can fly.

Mr. Sparling—The season with you is a couple of weeks earlier.

Mr. Hall—I am simply speaking of my own locality. A number of years ago I put out a lot on the first of March. The thermometer went down ten degrees below zero after that, and I pitied the poor things, and they laughed at me and at the honey flow. They were about two or three weeks ahead of the other fellows.