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FERTILIZING QUEENS.

BY AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

The following is the bee-keepers' secret for securing the fertilization of young queens by any drones desired:—Procure a wire cloth dish cover nine or ten inches in diameter, fasten to a piece of thin board, with a door made in the board large enough to put in your fist, and you will have as good a fertilizer as can be made. They cost, generally, only thirty cents each. If no dish covers are to be had, make a cage of fine wire cloth, twelve to fourteen inches long, by six or eighteen inches in diameter; fasten on the inside of the fertilizer a piece of empty comb (drone comb is the best) three or four inches square, which, when required for use, fill with honey and water, taking pains not to spill any honey about or the queen and drone become daubed up so as to prevent them from flying. On the morning of the day a queen is to leave the hive, usually the fifth day after hatching, catch her and put her with four or five selected drones into the fertilizer. The drones that are to be put with the young queens should be good, strong, vigorous fellows, and should be caught as they are about to leave the hive. Those returning from a trip will not answer, as they are too "muchly" fatigued. Lay the fertilizer, when fixed, so the warm air can get into it over the frames of the hive, to which the young queens belong; if a dish cover fertilizer, put the rounding side downward. The fertilizer can be put on any hive. I have put three on one hive at a time. Put on the cap, which should have an opening in the side or top, covered with glass, to admit light. Leave her there thirty-six or forty-eight hours, a shorter time usually answers. At the end of that time, if a dead drone is found, examine it, and if the copulating organ is gone release the queen and she goes down into the hive and commences to lay in a few days, or give the bees of a nucleus a dose of smoke and put her with them until required. If you doubt whether she has become fertile, and think she will leave the hive to meet the drones, clip her wings, or shut up the hive until she begins to lay as I have often done and your doubts will vanish quietly. The important discovery is this: "That queens will be fertilized in confinement if shut up about the time they would have flown, with four or five selected drones," no matter how the thing is managed or what kind of a

fertilizer is used. I look upon it as the most important discovery that has ever been made in bee culture, as it presents all loss of queens when flying, and enables us to breed bees with as much certainty as can be done with horses, cattle and other stock.

C. T.

THE SWARMING FEVER—CUTTING OUT QUEEN CELLS AND RETURNING BEES, ETC., ETC.

BY J. A. WARD.

In a former article I have contended that the worker bees are the *bosses* and govern the swarming process, and everything else that pertains to the work of the hive, and my late experience has not been such as to lead me to change my mind in regard to the matter.

I commenced returning my bees to the parent hive after first cutting out all queen cells, about the 1st of July, with the intention, of course, of keeping them strong for early fall work, and as the honey flow at that time was rather abundant from the bottom bush, large smart weeds etc., that had just begun to bloom, I had rather a lively time for the first twenty days, as from one to three swarms came out daily, and the largest that I have ever seen. One hive, a hybrid, sent out an immense swarm early one morning, and after cutting out the cells from the old hive, I returned it.

The bees all went in kindly and proceeded to work as though nothing out of the usual course of events had happened, and in a few days had their surplus boxes filled, when out they came again. And as it had not been more than a week since I had cut out the queen cells and returned the bees to the old hive, I concluded that I must have overlooked a queen cell, or that they had constructed new ones, and hence swarmed out. So I went to work removing comb after comb, making the most particular examination, but not a single queen cell could I find, either new or old. Thinking that I might have overlooked a cell I carefully examined every comb in the hive a second time, but not a queen cell of any kind was visible.

I then examined each sheet of comb, and found nearly every cell that did not contain honey or pollen to contain an egg. Being satisfied that the bees, intending to play a trick on me, had swarmed without leaving either queen or queen cell in the hive, for me to destroy, I turned them back again, where they remained, working like Turks, as the saying goes, for another week, when here they come again, swarming out (by the almost million), I again examined the hive most thoroughly, but failed to find queen or queen cell, and so put them back, but on the second day they swarmed out and being engaged at the time, I put them in a box, intending to return them as soon as I got the time, and so left home for a few hours to find upon my return that they had gone to the woods.

Now I am almost positive that the workers had, from the first time that they swarmed, determined to go to the woods, having doubtless picked out a location before they made the effort to leave; and, notwithstanding their return to the hive and detention for over two weeks, they made no further preparation for the benefit of those that they were intending to leave behind, but persisted in leaving until finally they succeeded. I have also had a like experience in two other cases, with the exception that the bees after being returned appeared to be satisfied, and made no further

attempt to swarm out and leave. But they certainly swarmed without leaving either queen or queen cell in the hive. In every instance, however, there were plenty of eggs and larvae, of all ages, left. This happened after the queen cells had been cut out once or twice, and the bees returned.

Now I would like to have the experience of some other bee-keeper, as regards this matter, and if convinced that I have been deceived by the bees and that there was a young queen hid away in some little nook in the hive, I will give it up and be more particular hereafter. But, until I hear what others, of more experience than myself, have to say about it, I shall hold on to the idea that the workers will, at times, and during the height of the swarming fever, swarm out and leave the parent hive, without leaving anything more than eggs and larvae for the bees left to procure a queen from. This, of course, would throw them back several weeks, and if they failed in the first effort to rear a queen, would leave the colony to perish as a queenless hive.

We have had the best honey season so far that I have experienced in the state, there having been a constant flow of honey from the time of fruit bloom up to the present, and, if nothing happens to prevent, the flow will doubtless continue until frost. The yellow Spanish needle, (*Coreopsis americana*), is just beginning to bloom, which bids fair, at present, to give a good yield. This bloom continues about six weeks, and has always, until this year, been our only chance for surplus honey, after which clover ceased to bloom. But, perhaps on account of a good deal of rain during the first of the summer, we have an abundant supply of what is called large smart weed, (*Polygonum Pennsylvanicum*), which, perhaps if we have rain, will doubtless continue to yield more or less until we have frost. After the failure of the Spanish needle and smart weed, the asters, which are looking more than usually luxuriant for this season of the year, may give us some surplus during the first of October.

I enclose a flower of the Spanish needle, for your inspection. This bloom yields a rich golden-yellow honey—which is very thick and is a favorite with a great many people in the west, especially for winter use.—*Bee-Keepers' Exchange*.

SWARMING BEES.

There are many who keep bees in a small way who do not wish to have their bees increase beyond a certain number. This can be done almost completely, so much, that the increase can be easily disposed of. About the time you think they will begin to get an idea of swarming see to it that they have an abundance of room for storing honey, placing sections filled with nice thin comb foundation down both sides of the brood nest and on top, having, of course, had some surplus receptacle on before this. Added to this the hive needs to be shaded from the too direct rays of the sun, but not in too dense a shade. Keep all underbrush trimmed up so there will be a circulation of air, for it is hotter in a grove with thick underbrush than right out in the open air where there is plenty of breeze. With a large amount of surplus honey room and hives kept from being too hot you can keep the bees from swarming to a great extent. But you can make it almost sure by going over the hives once a week thoroughly and pinching out every queen cell, not omitting the little cups, like acorn cups, just started,

I have never had a swarm issue from my apiary when these conditions were followed. But the search for queen cells must be thorough, clear through the hive on every comb, or you will now and then miss a queen's cell in some old corner. Some make claim for the Italians that they will swarm without any preparation whatever, but I have failed to see this verified. It will take considerable work to go through every stock once a week, but it is not much more of a task than to be watching and living swarms, chasing some across the country, perhaps, and with your stock swarmed down so weak that they are no profit.—*Prairie Farmer*.

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