

Hints for Beginners

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After having the right blood to winter to the best advantage there is the question of hive. Upon this not much will be said by me, and argument of no profit might arise. Twenty odd years of bee-keeping, correspondence, and contact with many bee-keepers, has convinced me that bees may be wintered in almost, if not every, hive in use, providing the conditions are right otherwise. A perfect cellar in our Canadian climate will always be ahead of the best outside conditions obtainable. I am convinced of this, and many more have learned this by sad experience last season. But I wish to speak of the condition of the brood chamber. The combs of the hive should be right. Crooked combs which have been changed from the relative position in which they were in when built, are not desirable at any season of the year, not even in winter. One of many advantages in the use of full sheets of foundation is straight combs, which will maintain a proper bee space no matter where put. Colonies with combs giving, owing to crookedness, twice the bee space on one side and none on the other hinder the stock from doing its best, and may even lead to dissatisfaction and swarming out.

Combs clogged with pollen sometimes due to the colony having been queenless for an abnormal time, should be removed. These conditions should be looked to. "The constitution should be right," as our friend, Mr. McEvoy, says, and his years of experience examining this part of the hive should make him a master in this matter. Now contract,

as soon as the brood hatches sufficiently, the brood chamber to the size the bees will cover comfortably, and to give them sufficient room to hold the stores needed for winter and early spring. Each good colony should have not less than 25 pounds of stores for winter and spring. Weaker colonies require slightly less, but not much. Feed granulated sugar, and get the best, this kind found upon the market which when boiled shows bluing, and in fact some of the sugar shows it in the barrel, avoid, yes more, do not use it, even if it is bounty fed.

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When desiring to requeen, don't make the colony queenless before receiving the new queen. Wait until after the new queen has arrived.

Don't form a nucleus, to take the new queen, before the queen is received. It will be time enough after she comes.

These two "don't's" are suggested by the fact that we have known bee-keepers to unqueen a colony, and also form a nucleus, before ordering the queens for them. This might be all right if one were certain that he would receive the needed queens within the next 48 hours. But even if queens are advertised, and sent, "by return mail," the mails may be delayed, or the advertiser may not in every instance be able to send the queens so promptly. At any rate, there is no necessity of the bee-keeper doing a thing before the queens ordered are on hand. It is not safe to take any other course, for if there should be much delay in getting the queens it might be almost impossible to introduce them successfully, and yet it would be no fault of the queen breeder.—American Bee Journal.

A hive is better if the front faces the south or east, as the bees will get out to work much earlier in the morning and work later in the evening than they would if the hive fronted to the north.—Modern Farmer.