

tion is the temperature at which our hives should be when breeding ; and another is, how are we to get that temperature at the earliest possible moment so as to secure the required amount of bees to bring in the honey at a proper season ? I presume these are two, at least, of the many things that are required. The more bees there are together and the more closely they are confined the sooner will that temperature be arrived at ; the more room you give them the longer it is going to be, and the later in the season before they are going to start to breed, and the sooner they commence the sooner you may have something to replenish those old bees that have been laying back ; because if they were light colonies in the fall, the chances are that there are a great many more, and therefore, even if they are left to themselves I do not wonder if you have a number of them that are no use in the spring and die, because it is so long before they can replenish their number that they outlive themselves. My impression is that if you unite them in the fall, and they are still light in the spring, which sometimes they are, I would say unite them then ; you had better have one good one than half a dozen otherwise.

Mr. HALL : But you are not making them good by so doing.

Mr. PICKETT : The method we take to get them good is by increasing the number of bees at the earliest possible moment, and, if they have not got the heat, you know as well as I do all the honey you could pile into your bee-hive would not amount to much. You cannot get the bees if they have not sufficient heat.

Mr. McEVoy : What do you do in the last of May with weak colonies ?

Mr. HALL : The last of May with weak colonies, if we have any—sometimes we have and sometimes we have not : last year I think we had five—but, whether we have few or many, we simply go to a hive that will hold the brood, and we pick out what we think is the best queen, we take all the brooding bees away from the others and place into the hive with the best queen. Then we have a hive full of brood just fit for coming out, and just in right condition to commence on the clover bloom, and will give you lots of honey. We have a slate on every hive, and we mark what we have done, and we do not give that queen credit for anything that is good. We start with A, and we go down and go up. If you come into my yard and see the mark A 1, XX, you will know that the queen is worth her weight in gold.

Mr. WALTON : Before the end of May our weak colonies are nearly all dead. Then, it looks to me, when we have our colonies contracted to four or five or six combs of sealed honey, we do not give them an opportunity to breed until late in the season, and then we have to manipulate them. If the bees breed earlier in the season, and are left to themselves and have plenty of stores, I believe we are not troubled much with spring dwindling.

Mr. SIBBALD : There is another point in favor of contraction that has not been spoken of yet, and that is, getting the brood filled into the combs right up to the top bar. One reason why I favor contraction is because in the spring when we have only four or five they commence, and being good and strong they fill it right up to the very corner, and when we slide that back and put in two or three more they are ready to fill them up to the corners, and when we fill our hive we have it properly filled. It is hard to get them to fill like that, unless we practise contraction.

Mr. HALL : Mr. Sibbald does not keep a record on his hives. There are more than half the queens if left to themselves will fill those combs full from corner to corner. You saw the comb I had in Hamilton. That came out of the middle of a stock of bees.

Mr. SIBBALD : How many more had you like that ?

Mr. HALL : I will take you to one half of my hives and have them like that. If you had a record slate on your hives you would raise your stock from that sort of queens. If you keep your record on your hives, and just save those queens, you will see they fill up from end to end, from top to bottom, and you will find they are all like that, unless you live near a neighbor who raises drones.

Mr. ARMSTRONG : Do I understand Mr. Sibbald opened the brood nest and put two or three combs into the centre ?

Mr. SIBBALD : I did not say that. We slide back the division board, and, if the first comb has honey and no brood in it at all, it will go back with the division board, and then the added combs we put in next to the brood, and if there is brood on the outside combs we would leave them in too.

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