

from the clusters must have been greatly diminished, and this, no doubt, is the true explanation.

It is certain that the more bees that can be safely wintered in a colony the more honey will that colony store in the coming season; and it is about equally certain that bee-keeping is about to advance in the direction of larger clusters. The difference in price between a nine-inch plank and a broader one for making bee-hives will have to be revised and overlooked by bee-keepers' associations. Bees are handicapped by cheap planks that are not deep enough for their clusters.—A. W. SMYTH, M. D., in the Irish Bee Journal.

## Shook Swarming

### WHAT TO DO WITH THE SURPLUS COMBS

Mr. George Shiber, Franklinville, N. Y., writing on this subject in the "Bee-Keepers' Review," says:—

First, let me lay down the premise that combs built from starters whether by natural or by brushed swarms, are always built at a profit. I am sure of this. This is the same logic that you have used so strenuously for so many years, Mr. Editor, and I think that this statement can almost, if not quite, be laid down as a maxim in bee-keeping.

I am now talking about comb honey production. The question will be asked, what will be done with the surplus combs? For one thing, they may be sorted over, rendering the poorest ones into wax. In cutting out the combs about an inch and a half of the comb should be left attached to the top-bars, thus making ideal starters for new swarms to work

on. I would rather have them than to have foundation, for, with the comb starters, no pollen is put into the sections. The wax secured by this method is quite an item, and the stock of combs is continuously being improved without any cost for foundation to use in the brood-frames.

### GETTING QUEENS FOR THE INCREASE

Another thing that has not been touched upon in the shook swarm discussion is, where to get the queens for the increase. Dr. Miller, in a "stray straw," in Gleanings, spoke of a plan which I have practiced, and that is to rear queens from the best honey gatherers, and have cells ready for the old combs of brood, and the bees, at the right time. I have read of all the talk about the superiority of "swarming-queens," but I believe that the ones reared "by hand" are every bit as good. But that will make no difference as to their swarming, for when the conditions are right for swarming, they will swarm.

In my humble opinion, this task of breeding a non-swarming strain of bees is a delusion. The most profit in bees comes from gratifying the swarming-desire so that it will work to our advantage. After a colony has commenced queen cells the bees usually slack up in storing honey in the sections. If, at this juncture the bees are shaken into a new hive furnished with starters, the old hive set at one side, or on top, they will commence to do business with a vengeance. Draining the old colony of every bee will work to the profit of the swarm.

Older readers of the journals will remember that Mr. Heddon, in describing his "new method" of transferring, which is practically the same as "shook-swarming," said: "If there is any nectar in the fields, this colony will show you comb honey."