

CAPPINGS.

CUT FROM A VARIETY OF COMBS.

Dry Sugar Feeding.

FROM the advance sheets of the Rhode Island Experimental Station bulletin, kindly sent to us by Mr. Samuel Cushman, superintendent in charge of the apiary, we glean the following with reference to spring feeding, which will apply to our apiaries:—

"That the colonies might be built up quickly and made very populous by the time of the honey flow from apple blossoms, we desired that each should receive daily a small quantity of food to stimulate brood raising. As our visits to the station at that time were made not oftener than once in ten days, the usual plan of regularly giving in a feeder a small quantity of this syrup could not be followed, therefore to accomplish the same or similar results we adopted the plan of feeding soft undissolved sugar in the hive. As with daily syrup feeding, though in a less degree, this could not be done, without danger of greater loss than gain, until the weather allowed the bees almost daily flights. Up to that time those colonies having sufficient stores were not fed or their stores uncapped, empty combs only were given as required; but early in May good moist sugar was supplied in frame feeders hung next to the brood combs and sufficient given to last until another visit. This was renewed as needed, and the result was all that could be desired. As apple bloom apparently failed to secrete nectar, the feeders were allowed to remain until sometime previous to the honey flow from clover, when they were removed from all colonies that were to be used for honey production, and at the commencement of the harvest all combs of stores that might contain this feed were also removed and given to nucleus colonies. This method of

DRY SUGAR FEEDING,

as it was called, was brought before the public by Mr. Samuel Simmins, of England, and is described in various English books and publications on bee culture, but we believe is little understood or followed in this country. After several years trial of this plan, on a somewhat extended scale, we do not hesitate to recommend it. It is well suited to the management of our apiaries, where but occasional visits are made, and in all cases, though possibly in a dry country not so effective as syrup feeding, saves the trouble of making syrup and the time required in its daily distribution, while the danger of the disastrous results of occasionally omitting the daily ration is avoided. Instead of dry sugar, moist sugar like good grades of molasses and C sugar are best, but the former should first be well drained. This, placed in a feeder where the heat and moisture is confined, is slowly licked up or liquified by the bees. The rapidity with which this is done depends upon the heat and moisture in the hive. By placing an enameled cloth enameled side down, over

the frames in place of the porous covering, the loss of moisture, so desirable in freezing weather, may be lessened, while by removing the warm cushions or quilts from part of its surface, condensation of moisture takes place upon the enameled face beneath and furnishes water to promote more rapid work. The sugar may be placed in an ordinary syrup feeder or wrapped in cheese cloth and laid over the frames, but the arrangement we prefer and use here is similar to Mr. Simmins' pattern, and consists of a hollow dummy, having the same length and depth as the brood frame, and a similar top bar and a movable side that does not reach the top bar by $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. This is filled by removing the side, while the space at the top allows the bees access and but little escape of heat. If the inside space is more than an inch wide comb will be built therein. This mode of feeding is not only suitable for spring stimulation but is invaluable in a poor season to prevent starvation, for queen rearing, for building up nuclei and working for increase or drawing out foundation, as well as for promoting brood rearing after removing what is in some localities the only honey crop of the season. By using soft candy of best granulated sugar it may be made to piece out scant stores in the fall.

When in the production of comb honey, dummies are needed to fill space in brood chamber of new swarms, they may be made from these unused feeders by nailing on the movable sides so as to exclude the bees."

FRAMES WITH THICK TOP BARS.

Our friends, the Roots, are making considerable change in their dove-tailed hive for the coming year, changes which we are for the most part glad to see, because they fall in with our own ideas of what is right and practical. Ernest writes as follows:

"Now that I have come home, and the enthusiasm has somewhat subsided, so that I can take a somewhat cool view of the situation, I am thoroughly satisfied that we should do beginners a great harm by offering them slatted honey-boards next year, when there is something so obviously better and cheaper. Your "committee" (as one of our subscribers has already begun to call it), comprising J. T. Calvert, business manager; J. S. Warner, our superintendent; A. I. Root, the "big boss," as he is familiarly called; Dr. C. C. Miller and your humble servant, after talking the matter over in all its bearings, have decided to offer the Dovetailed hive the coming year without the honey-board; and, in lieu of it, thick top-frames in the brood-nest. The bee-keepers of the East do not exactly use this style of frame, but they use a top-bar heavier and wider than those of the West ordinarily do. Their bars are, as a general thing, from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick, to about an inch or a little over wide. To be on the safe side, our top-bars of the hanging frame in the new Dovetailed hive are to be $1\frac{1}{4}$ wide and $\frac{3}{4}$ thick. With the exception of the thick-top-bar frame and the absence of the honey-board, its general appearance is the same as before. But we have