

Superseding Queens and Wintering.

—Jacob Alpaugh.

To have my colonies winter and all do well the next season, I prefer young queens and from good stock. To do this I go around just after the honey harvest is over, and hunt up all the colonies containing old queens, or colonies that did not winter well or do but little for me through the season. All such queens I kill as soon as I can after the flow, before the drones are all destroyed, I just let those hives start and raise cells, about eight days after I go through and destroy all cells where I do not wish any queens raised. Then I go to some hive where I killed an old queen that had previously done well, and take out cells and distribute them in the other hives where I had destroyed all cells. They will all accept them and in a few days will all have young queens and from good stock. Such queens are almost sure to do well for one season providing they are properly wintered. If I wish to change the blood in a few of my hives I would send to some reliable dealer and get queens, and have them ready to put right in when the other ones were killed, my experience with superseding in this way and at the above time is this, it prevents the colonies from using up a lot of stores, raising young bees only to die off and help to clog up the entrance in the winter. Where there is a fall flow it would probably be better to have young laying queens to replace the old ones.

Now the next thing is to prepare for winter. About the first of September or when the brood is pretty well hatched out. I weigh each hive and mark the weight on it, next I come along with the feed, weigh out just what each colony needs and give it to them all at once in large feeders. Where there is a fall flow this would have to be done later, but in all cases it is better to weigh them, and make sure that each colony has so much, than it is to guess at it. For out door wintering I pack just as soon as I get them fed up, if I have the packing. Four years ago I had three out apiaries to pack (out doors), the first one containing 104 colonies I packed about the middle of September, it wintered without the loss of a single colony. The next one containing 40 colonies I packed about the middle of October in this apiary I lost four per cent. The last one containing 40 colonies I packed about the middle of November in this apiary I lost ten per cent. Now these

apiaries were all fed up about the same time, to the same weight and on the same kind of stores. So I came to the conclusion that I had a clear case against late packing. With the exception of a few experiments, I have always used forest leaves for packing and I do not know of anything better. I have my hives in clumps of four, quite close together, two facing one way and two the opposite direction. I have come to the conclusion that it makes no difference which way the hives face, north, south, east or west. I make a box to hold four hives and pack them right where they sit during the summer. This is less expensive than packing them singly and one helps to keep the other warm in winter. A word or two more in favor of early packing I think it prevents the first cold spells from condensing the moisture of the bees in side of the hive where it would likely settle on the honey and probably cause it to be thin and sour, which would injure the stores for the bees to live on during a long cold winter. I usually leave them packed until they show signs of swarming, as they can brood up faster without the danger of the brood being chilled.

For cellar wintering I prefer to set them in early, and out again early, say March, if I can get a day fit for them to fly I like a warm damp cellar. I used to winter in a temperature of 50° to 55° and they came out in fine condition, in fact I always wintered well in the cellar, but for all that, I am not on very good terms with cellar wintering. It used to worry me when I could not get a day fit to put the bees out until away near the first of May, and probably that would be Monday or Tuesday, just when the neighbors had their clothes out on the line, of course I had to go around and show my authority by ordering them all to take in their clothes as if I owned the whole city. In the country it is quite different, you do not have that fun.

It will be a little late by the time this gets to readers or I might have done a few hints on the production of comb honey. I may do so at some future time.

The Canadian Northwest for Bee-Keeping.

During my travels in the Province of Manitoba and the Northwest Territories last fall and early part of winter I was enabled by writing and conversing with several beekeepers to form a fairly intelligent idea of that part of our country as it relates to apiculture. I have previous to