

Chaff hives are too expensive and too heavy to suit many bee-keepers. If the bees cover fairly well five or more combs of an eight frame Langstroth hive, put an enamel cloth or several sheets of paper over the winter quilt; above this put a sawdust cushion (it packs down well). The cushion should be put in a super and upon this a lid. The entrance should be contracted. If the colony is below average strength pack the hive in a rough outer case and leave them so packed until the honey flow. Bees should have abundant stores, and be left largely alone. *Never* united until the beginning of the honey season. Brood should only be spread by an expert and not often by him. If the lower story is crowded put on an extracting super and put on no queen excluder until the honey flow begins.

—Ed.

FIRST STEPS IN BEE-KEEPING.

KEEPING EVERLASTINGLY AT IT
BRINGS SUCCESS.

QUESTIONS SENT IN BEARING UPON FIRST STEPS
IN BEE-KEEPING WILL BE ANSWERED IN THIS
DEPARTMENT BY THE EDITOR.

WORK FOR APRIL.

SOME people think that all the difficulties in bee-keeping are "wintering." The fact is that there are difficulties connected with the keeping of bees during every part of the year. The person who keeps bees cannot make the greatest success attainable, without getting ideas from others. Even our most advanced bee-keepers cannot afford to isolate themselves, but they must fall behind in the race, unless they exchange ideas with their fellow bee-keepers. How many are keeping bees without knowledge, without a bee journal, and without a good standard work to guide them. Some fairly successful, but this success is only an indication of what might be attained, with guidance and thought from other practical men. The spring of the year is one peculiarly important to the bee-keeper. Many complain that they receive no surplus. They often wrongly gauge the honey flow by the amount of surplus they gather, when it is often an indication that the bees have not

been strong enough during the honey flow, to gather more than the requirements of the hive.

This is the month that most of the bees wintered in the cellar are placed upon their summer stands. Those having a large number of colonies require no instructions from me. To some others it will be well to say: Carry your bees out early, in the morning of what promises to be a beautiful day, and one with the temperature high enough to enable the bees to fly freely. As bees are liable to discharge accumulated matter, no washing should be put out that day. After the bees have had a cleansing flight and have settled down quietly, the body of the hive should be raised from the bottom board (all hives should have movable bottoms) and any remaining dead bees scrapped from the bottom board. This is to a bee-keeper a matter of ten seconds. To the bees it often means days of toil and the sacrifice of many other bees.

A colony which has been wintered well and having sufficient stores should, with a cushion on top, build itself up, and the beginner had better leave it alone. It is only upon rare occasions that the experienced man can do any good by spreading combs of brood. Of first importance is that of seeing that the bees have sufficient stores. See that they have plenty or they will curtail brood rearing. Never feed liquid by means of a feeder, it excites the bees and tends to demoralization and robbing. Feed a cake of sugar made from sugar melted with water or honey made into a solid cake. The cake should be made flat as described in a previous article. If the colony is below medium strength, it is well to contract the brood chamber several combs, by means of a division board. Have the entrance of the hive opposite the portion of the hive not containing the combs, this prevents robbing.

I am not in favor of uniting colonies at any other time than just before the honey. Give weak colonies careful nursing by means of packing, contraction and stores, and let them build up or die until the honey flow is reached.

In reply to J. H. L., on page 186, would say that perhaps in British Columbia you are troubled greatly with cold winds. The bright sun inclines the bees to fly, and the wind chills them. Again in this country loss of bees in the way you state would indicate that the bees were weakened. In reply to question two, I am inclined to think the Langstroth hive is the best hive for