

GENERAL.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

The Weather Again--Elementary Bee Culture, Etc.

THIS is the 20th May, and although it is nearing the end of the last spring month, the weather has been hardly worthy of the name spring. For the past month and upwards it has been wind, high and dry, and hardly anything but wind, with every now and then frost at night, and so cold through the day that it was not fit for the bees to fly at all, let alone gather honey or pollen. If fact this has been the worst spring for bees up to date that we have had in this section for many years. But they are standing it well on account of their superior condition when they came out of winter quarters.

And not only has the weather been cold and windy, but dry, amounting now to a drought as there has been no rain of any account for six or seven weeks. Nothing, however, of vegetation is suffering much yet except the meadows and pastures. The hay crop will be light.

Whether the fruit crop has been hurt much by the frosts is doubtful as the blooming is backward. The plum trees are out but the apple bloom is apparently some days off. Of course the cold dry spring has had its effect on the clover, which at present is not very promising, but a good warm rain will change the face of nature.

THE NEW RECRUITS WANT THE RUDIMENTS.

We hear complaints occasionally that there is too much professional disquisition in the journals and too little elementary information for the amateurs and beginners. New recruits are continually joining the ranks and becoming subscribers of the CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL, where they expect to find all they wish to know just in a few numbers. This is an unreasonable expectation. Such ought to get a text-book to acquire the elements, and also read THE JOURNAL where they will get the latest and the best just for the asking. There is the query department which is intended for the amateur as well as professionals, to which they can send their questions and get answers from those who are experienced. The novice must also bear in mind that much of his apicultural knowledge must come through experience and experience alone. There are three ways of acquiring bee lore. The first is through actual practice and experience; the second is oral and ocular instruction under a teacher; and the

third is the study of text-books and journals. Although the first-named method is the most important of all it ought usually to come in after the other two, else the knowledge acquired through that medium may be bought too dearly. The embryo bee-keeper ought not only to read up before undertaking to handle many colonies, but he ought to go to an old hand at the business in the honey season and look how things are done, learn the why and wherefore, and then try his own hand and head.

A few years ago (five I think) a beginner came to me in June to buy a colony of bees, and also to learn all he could. He took away his colony determined to learn and succeed, and he did succeed. Although he was a working mechanic and not able to attend very closely to his bees, they multiplied, and under good management, yielded him excellent returns. His winter losses have been very light, and he now has, I believe, about eighty colonies. This is an example of what the amateur may do who sets about it right and in earnest. The JOURNAL will recognize his name, A. Wagar, Napanee, as a subscriber the past four or five years.

COMB HONEY AND SWARMING.

In running for extracted honey it is comparatively easy to keep the swarming fever down, but not quite so in running for comb honey. The main point is not to allow the fever to get started. To prevent this, put on the supers in good time, and give plenty of room and ventilation. Just before the surplus honey begins to come in remove from the brood chamber any excess of honey which may be present over immediate requirements. In fact, this ought to be done before, provided the honey is in the way of the queen, which ought to have ample room up to the time of the honey flow. The brood chamber in the spring ought to be large enough to hold a good supply of honey in addition to ample space for brooding.

ALLEN PRINGLE.

Selby, Ont.

P. S.—May 21st—The "good warm rain" has come, whether because of the above grumble or not, dependant saith not. The bees are booming.

A. P.

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Report from Strange.

LAST year I commenced the season with about twenty colonies; took 1,000 lbs. extracted, and 100 lbs. comb honey; have 19 stocks mostly in splendid condition; weather dry and windy at present; clover in good condition.

E. MARSHALL.

Strange, May, 1891.