

keeper generally has himself to blame. The principal object of late setting out in the spring is to avoid the dreaded and often fatal "Spring Dwindling," and to avoid the extra work and nursing which outside entails. The old workers live much longer inside than out—not being exposed to the weather vicissitudes of the spring season. Many a colony that now dwindles and dies outside would, if left inside in proper quarters, live. If the hives are on bottom-boards in the cellar there will of course be more or less of a noxious and offensive accumulation of dead bees, etc., below; and this is one of the main objections to leaving them in late in the Spring. In the case of movable bottoms this difficulty can, however, be readily overcome by quietly lifting each hive off its bottom-board and placing it on another clean one. This, if done carefully, will disturb the bees but little. Fast bottoms can be pretty well cleaned through the entrance by means of a wire with a crook on one end.

With this much as to the *time* and manner of setting out, we will now see what next. After the colony is placed on its own old stand—and this should be done early enough to give time for flight that day—see that the exit is well cleared so that the bees can pass out and in freely. Some authorities recommend setting the bees out in the evening when the prospect is favorable for fine, suitable weather next day. My own experience leads me to totally disagree with such advice. As to the next day being fine, as the Western Squatter said, it "mout" and it "mout not" and it would be more apt to "mout not" than to "mout." At all events, it is not safe to depend upon it even were "Old Prob." at your elbow to guide you, for generally the bees will fly the next day after being set out in the evening whether the weather is suitable or not, and if unsuitable many will be lost. It is, therefore, better to take the morning when you can be quite sure of the weather for at least a few hours and carry out a few at a time. By the time you get all for that day set out the first will be about ready for manipulation. Have your duplicate, empty hive ready—clean and nice—and then proceed to lift the frames out, bees and all; clean them by brushing off adhering dead bees, etc., and put them in the clean hive,—that is, those containing most stores and those containing brood if any—simply giving them the number of frames they can fully cover and removing all the others to a proper place to be kept until wanted. Whenever brood is present be very careful not to chill it. Get on the opposite side of the hive from the sun so that his rays may gently rest upon the frames of bees and brood as you handle them, and if your thermometer (which ought to be at your side) shows a tem-

perature below seventy get through with the job as quickly as possible. If the temperature is above seventy you need not fear chilling the brood. Having transferred the bees to the clean, empty hive and as many frames containing stores and brood as they can well cover, crowd the frames up well together, put in your division-board (two are better, one on each side of the frames) and fill in behind it, or on each side of them as the case may be, with chaff or sawdust cushions, put plenty of quilts on top to keep the heat in, put the cover on, contract the entrance, and leave the colony alone till it again requires your services. The colonies outside short of pollen can be fed substitutes before the natural pollen appears, which in this locality did not appear last year till April 24th. Spread oil-cake meal, rye meal, or wheat meal on sheets near the bees on warm days and they will help themselves. As to Spring stimulative feeding, the utility of which is disputed by some, I do not hesitate to again declare myself in its favor, while at the same time admitting that if not done with judicious care and discrimination it may do more harm than good. If the queen is young and prolific and the colony well supplied with stores, stimulative feeding in Spring is quite unnecessary. But all Spring feeding, for whatever purpose, ought always to be done in the evening and *inside* the hive instead of in the open air, for the double reason that when the feeding is done outside robbing is not only often induced but the colonies that stand least in need of the feed generally get the most of it. How shall we feed inside the hive? In the case of tight bottoms the hive can be tipped back a little and the feed poured in from the top on the bottom board. Where the bottom is not tight the feed must be given on top of the frames either by means of some of the numerous feeders or otherwise. In the case of warm, double-walled hives where the space behind the division board is not occupied with cushions the feed can be put there whence the bees will carry it up where needed.

Most bee-keepers have noticed that no considerable number of colonies, tho' the treatment of all may be apparently the same, will come out of winter quarters in *uniform* condition. Some will be strong, some middling, and some weak. How shall we treat them? Is the orthodox policy of equalizing them a wise one? The "Consensus of the Competent" has hitherto been to build up the weak ones from the strong ones. Is this profitable? I have come to the conclusion that it is not, and have about abandoned it. Of course colonies with good queens, in jeopardy, must be saved by proper assistance; and weak colonies may sometimes be united to advantage,