

complaint of great scarcity of pollen at this time. In such localities a substitute, in the form of some kind of flour, should be provided, as described in the chapter on feeding. Fruit-blossoms are a great help in the latter part of the month.

The end of April is a most important period in the development of the hive in most regions, because the bees that will work on the honey-flow will be hatched from eggs that are being laid now. They will become field-workers about June 4th, at which date white clover, snowberry, and rhamnus (cascara plant) are in blossom, the nectar in a favourable season secreting freely about ten days later.

Brood-raising at the end of April must therefore be encouraged. Should nectar fail, feeding may be necessary; on the other hand, it may have come in so freely that the combs become honey-clogged, thus preventing the queen from laying. When this occurs it is a good plan to take from such a hive a frame of honey and exchange it for an empty one from another colony. The full comb should be placed next the side of the hive, but the empty frame right in the centre of the brood-nest, so that the queen can proceed to fill it at once. Drone-brood will probably be started this month.

Scrape accumulations of wax and propolis from the top and end bars of the frames.

MAY.

Colonies that are in good condition boom along this month at a great pace. Any hive that on the 1st of May shows bees occupying six spaces between frames is in fine condition. Early in the month one must attend to weak colonies if possible. If the lack of numbers is due to a failing queen, the bees may endeavour to supersede her during fruit-bloom, or she may disappear from the hive. Queens raised in a weak colony at this time are of very little value, and are almost sure to be supplanted again in June or July, provided they live that long. There is also great risk that they will fail to mate on account of the cool weather. The writer has had queens hatched out in the end of April and do all right, but the instance is rather unusual. Most bee-keepers have little use for a queen that is not raised during the normal swarming season, or in the time of the honey-flow.

As fruit-blossoms cease there is often a dearth of nectar the last week of the month; in fact, up until the honey-flow starts, and unless feeding be resorted to, the colonies will dwindle rather than increase. Where broom grows there is no lack of pollen. The dry belt seems to be fortunate enough to have no break once nectar begins to come in.

By the end of the third week of the month a good queen will have brood in every frame, and is anxiously looking for more room. Many, on seeing the hive full of bees, expect surplus honey right away and put on a super; if it be of the extracting variety it will have a queen-excluder below it. Now, as a matter of fact, the honey-flow is not due for several weeks, so the real aim at this date should be to get more bees. The extracting super should go on, but the queen must not be kept out. When given free range she will occupy the new frames at once. The eggs she lays now will provide a magnificent army of workers that will be ready for field-work right in the middle of the honey-flow.

Swarming often starts at the end of May, but this subject deserves a chapter all by itself.

JUNE.

This is the great swarming month. Very strong colonies may send out a swarm in the early part of the month, but most will start near the commencement of the honey-flow. The new colony has to build a set of combs, raise thousands of bees and provide stores for the winter; hence the best time to start housekeeping in a new locality is when nectar is coming in freely.