

THE APIARY.

NOTES FOR DECEMBER.

I. HOPKINS.

WHEN the notes for last month were being written the outlook for a decent crop of white-clover blossoms—owing to the continued dry weather—was anything but encouraging. Thanks, however, to the abundant rains we have had since, and which came just in time, the clover has come on splendidly, and present prospects in most parts of the Dominion for a fair crop of clover honey are promising.

QUEEN-REARING.

The sudden changes in the weather and temperature during a great part of October delayed queen-rearing—in fact, we found at the Government queen-rearing apiary our work abortive on two or three occasions. Several batches of queen-cells were destroyed, and one lot of young queens that emerged from cells given to nucleus colonies failed to return after their “wedding flight.” The successful rearing of queens depends entirely upon having fine settled weather. It is impossible to succeed even after a favourable start if the weather and temperature should become unsettled before the young queens are mated. Beginners, as I suggested in the September number, will be well advised to delay making a first start at queen-rearing until well into November.

It may be well to mention to new subscribers that the first part of these notes on queen-rearing appeared in the September number of the *Journal*.

MAKING NUCLEUS COLONIES AND DISPOSING OF QUEEN-CELLS.

I stated last month that I would go into this, the final stage of queen-rearing, in this month's notes. A nucleus colony is, as its name indicates, a small but complete colony of bees capable of building itself up under ordinary circumstances into a colony of full strength. In queen-rearing we usually make several from one strong colony, or by taking a frame or two of bees from each of several colonies. We can make as many as are required in that way. I prefer to break up one or more strong colonies.

I recommend the use of nucleus hives of a size to take three of the ordinary frames used in the apiary. Such hives can readily be made by beekeepers out of $\frac{5}{8}$ in. timber. They should be at least $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wider inside