

## THE APIARY.

### NOTES FOR MARCH.

F. A. JACOBSEN.

The words "live and learn" apply more forcibly to bee-culture than to perhaps anything else. Lessons can always be learnt each successive season by the observant man, and thus may be avoided those little mistakes which are a drain upon profits, while an efficient system of bee-management will be thereby evolved. Not the least important lesson to be taken from this season's experience is the necessity of providing stores in view of a possible unfavourable season. Many beekeepers will be now convinced that it is a wise and assuredly a safe policy to make ample provision against possible starvation. Losses have been suffered in this way not once but many times, thus condemning the weak system of leaving but a minimum amount of stores in the hives instead of the maximum. Half-starved colonies will never winter well, but will exhibit weakness in the spring, and will then demand special feeding to stimulate brood-rearing. On the other hand, by leaving a few extra pounds of honey in a hive the strength of the colony is assured at the critical period, providing, of course, it went into winter quarters with a good population of bees. Weak stocks for honey-producing are practically useless. From 20 lb. to 30 lb. of sealed stores is necessary to be left in the hive for winter consumption by the bees, certainly not less than the former amount.

#### WEAK STOCKS.

At the close of the honey season, and when extracting is finished, all weak stocks should be united, and if any be found very weak three should be put together, or the weakest united with a fairly strong colony. This may be done by putting one hive on top of the other with a sheet of newspaper between, when in the course of a few days the bees will have eaten through this and mingled with one another without any fighting. It is preferable to kill the worst queen before uniting, otherwise there would ensue a battle royal, and the most useful queen may be killed or injured.

#### SMALL ENTRANCES.

The latest bottom boards to a hive have both a large and a small entrance. The large one is for summer use and is  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. in height, and