

as that of good straight combs. It usually happens that if bees are provided with strips of foundation, or put into common boxes, they build a large quantity of drone-comb, which will be subsequently utilized for breeding drones; thus one of the principal objects of the use of foundation is defeated. The presence of a few drones in the hive is imperative, as they are required for impregnating the young queens; but in practice it is usually found that the bees will contrive to breed a sufficient number for that purpose although full use be made of foundation.

Drones, as beekeepers know to their sorrow, are non-producers, and it is generally conceded that they do no work in the hive, but, on the other hand, consume large quantities of food gathered by the workers, and their presence in large numbers will militate against profitable beekeeping. Traps may be used for the purpose of catching the drones, but this method is not in general use, save perhaps by beekeepers who make a practice of rearing queens, and then they are applied for the purpose of trapping drones from undesirable queens. In practice it is by far the best policy to use full sheets of foundation, but in any case the beekeeper who neglects its use altogether will be up against the problem of having to transfer his bees at a later date.

ROBBING.

Keep a strict watch for robbing. This is most likely to occur when feeding has to be undertaken, and once started it is about the hardest matter to cure. Feed only in the evening, so that the excitement created by the supply of warm syrup will have died down before morning. Keep the entrances to all hives contracted, and see that there are no cracks through which a robber could possibly enter. Perhaps the main cause of robbing, however, is the presence in the apiary of queenless or weak colonies. If the bees once discover a queenless hive there will be no peace until the source of trouble is removed. The inmates of such a hive will not defend their stores as bees in a normal condition will, and unless the colony is united with another it will tend to demoralize the rest of the apiary, until none but strong colonies will be safe from the depredations of the robbers.

Where a weak colony is in danger of being attacked, and where the beekeeper is satisfied that it is worth saving—that is, if he considers the queen good enough to build up a strong colony by the time the main honey-flow sets in—his best plan is to pile wet grass on the alighting-board and well up above the entrance, keeping the grass wet for a day or two, and painting any cracks