

When a swarm issues, if headed by a laying-queen, it will, after circling in the air for a short time, settle probably on some tree or shrub. As soon as the swarm has settled into a cluster shake all the bees into a box. Place the box on its side and cover with a clean sack, leaving a small opening for the bees to fly in and out. The swarm may be left alone until late in the afternoon. If by that time it has formed a compact cluster in the box the beekeeper will know that all is well and that it contains a queen. Have the hive in readiness, placed in position where it is to remain. Place a clean sack in front of the entrance, having propped up the front to allow the bees a good space to enter the hive. Dump the bees on the bag as close to the entrance as possible, and very soon they will make their way into the hive. The bag can then be removed and the hive lowered into position.

In districts where foul-brood is present, or if the beekeeper is suspicious of his own colonies, it is wise to leave the swarm in the box for at least three or four days. At the end of the period place the bees in the hive as described above, always choosing the late afternoon for settling them in their permanent home. The object of this practice is to induce the bees to utilize the honey in their sacs to draw down comb, and thus rid themselves of honey from the parent hive; if it is followed there will be far less trouble from disease, and swarms will invariably start clean.

Unless there is a good honey-flow, or if bad weather sets in, the swarm should be fed inside the hive. This is to give them a good start and to provide them with material for producing wax. Excellent combs can be produced from sugar-syrup. It is advisable in all cases to hive the swarm on full sheets of foundation, and thus take advantage of the natural instinct of the bees to produce wax after swarming. Very little time will be gained if the bees are put on to drawn-out combs. In the course of a few days it is advisable to examine the frames to note if the queen is laying and to see if the foundation is being drawn out.

When the swarm is placed in the hive do not forget to place a mat on top of the frames. It often happens that unless precaution is taken to confine the bees they will commence operations in the roof of the hive, more particularly if gable roofs are used. Good clean sacking, cut to fit the top of the frames, makes excellent mats.

VENTILATION.

No set rule can be laid down as to how much ventilation bees require. In cases where entrances have been contracted to guard against robbing and the ravages of mice they may now be enlarged. It will be time enough when the main honey-flow is on to provide full ventilation. As a rule it is an easy matter