

CURE OF SWARMING.

The cure of swarming, therefore, will be in the prevention or the reduction of the above causes by the following methods: (1) The selection (as near as possible) of non-swarming breeds and strains; (2) provision for sufficient ventilation; (3) ample space for the needs of brood and stores; (4) the early rearing and introduction of young queens; (5) a judicious use of foundation in the centre of the brood-nest.

Taking these points also seriatim, I need waste little time in discussing breed other than by saying that the great majority of beekeepers favour the Italian as the best bee for the New Zealand climate, and particularly so respecting its moderation with regard to swarming. In the poultry world strain often stands for even more than breed, and the sooner beekeepers breed only from those hives that have proved non-swarmer in the past the sooner we may expect to arrive at non-swarming strains of bees on similar lines to the non-sitting strains of fowls.

Ventilation should be provided in advance of the colony's requirements by increasing the size of the hive-entrance, and even to the raising of the front of the hive above the bottom-board by means of small blocks of wood at the two front corners, or perhaps even by giving, in addition, top entrances to very populous colonies with several supers.

Space for the storage of honey must also be provided well in advance of requirements, otherwise the nectar from the fields will be placed in the brood-cells to the exclusion of eggs and larvæ, which will lead to swarming perhaps more than any other cause.

It is the exception for a queen of the current season's rearing to swarm. Therefore the earlier our stocks can be requeened the less trouble we shall have with swarms. The poultryman pins his faith to pullets rather than to hens, and the sooner the apiarist follows his lead the better, particularly with regard to the question at issue.

Where bees are very numerous two or three frames of comb-foundation occasionally placed in the centre of the brood-nest not only provides an outlet for the bees' comb-building proclivities, but it also gives the bees the impression of plenty of room and occupation for all. The busier the bees the less tendency to swarm, as instance the fact how general it is for swarming to slow down immediately a heavy honey-flow comes on.

METHODS OF CONTROL.

After taking the above broad principles into consideration every beekeeper must adapt his methods to suit himself and his surroundings.