

Speaking generally, in New Zealand, and especially the North Island, we are fortunate in having a long spring, with the result that bees are enabled to work up to full strength early, and what swarming is done is largely over before the main white-clover flow of nectar begins; whereas in England and large portions of America the bee-keeper is handicapped by swarming cutting into the middle of his main honey-flow.

Most methods of combating the swarming impulse are based on manipulations of the brood-chamber—some including and others without the use of queen-excluders. A method that the writer and others have used with success is to periodically—say, every week or ten days in spring or early summer—cursorily examine all hives for signs of swarming. Those hives very strong in bees and brood, or any that show signs of queen-cells, are treated at once by removing all frames of brood except two from the bottom chamber. Empty combs or sheets of foundation are put in their places, the queen being left with the two combs of brood mentioned. An excluder is now put on top, over which the supers (if any) are placed; then on top of all place the other brood-frames from below, destroying at the same time any queen-cells that may be in existence. In eight days' time again examine these top frames, and remove any queen-cells that may have again been built.

Providing the broad principles previously enumerated have been complied with, these hives are unlikely to require any further treatment for swarm-prevention, except in isolated cases, or, I am inclined to further add, in abnormal swarming seasons. Should, however, later swarming preparations be noticed from a cursory examination of the bottom of the combs in the brood-nest, by tilting the hives back on their stands and the help of a few puffs of smoke, the same process can be gone through again. To my mind, however, a better way to treat such second symptoms of swarming would be to introduce at once a good young queen. Some beekeepers vary the proceedings by raising two combs of brood every eight days above the excluder, and replacing them in the centre of the brood-nest by two frames of foundation, keeping up this process until the main honey-flow is in full swing, when usually the bees (in this district at least) get too busy to trouble about swarming.

Another method—followed by those who object to queen-excluders—is to scatter the brood-frames through the supers. Others, again, adopt the shake-swarm principle, removing all the brood and giving it to weaker hives, who in their turn, if necessary, are treated in the same way later.

I am strongly of opinion, however, that the best and easiest way of controlling swarming is by using the "Hand" floor-board and