**HOW CAN WE BE SURE THE HIVE IS QUEENLESS.**

*If we are to introduce a valuable new Queen into a stock that is thought to be Queen-less. We must be certain the stock really is without a Queen of any kind. Determining if a stock of bees has a Queen or not, is not as easy as may be thought. So here is a list of conditions to look for and consider, if we should come across a stock that at first sight would appear to be Queenless.*

1. **No eggs or young uncapped brood**. This could be a swarmed stock with a young un-mated virgin, or newly mated queen not yet laying. Sealed worker brood can be pres- ent for 21 days after the last eggs are laid, and some queens take an extraordinary long timeto start laying after they have mated.

**2. Bad** temper. Especially if they were good previously.

**3. Roaring.** It would be best if you heard this in thepresence of a very experienced beekeeper,but once you have heard it, you will knowwhat it is. If you rap the side of the hive, youwill hear a buzzing that dies away within oneor two seconds if the buzzing persists a lotlonger it may indicate queenlessness.

**4. Lots of nectar in the brood box.** Very much more than is normal, especially ifit is where you would expect to find brood.

**5. Lots of drones.**

Lots more than you would normally see in a similar stock at a similar time.

**6. Only drone brood present**. Drone brood takes a farther three days to mature than worker. But with just drone brood present and no eggs. I think I would use the comb of eggs test (9). If a queen is a drone layer, (unable to lay worker eggs), more often than not drone eggs are laid in worker cells. A careful examination will soon determine if this is the case. Worker cells with a raised cap indicates drone brood in the worker cells.

**7. Many eggs in one cell.** Maybe six or seven all in one cell. This indicates laying workers. Perhaps a comb of eggs(test 9) would work, but not always. Some**t**imes the only way is to take all the combssome distance away from the hive and shakeall the bees on to the ground. The idea beingthat all the bees will fly back home with theexception of the laying workers who will betoo heavy to fly due to their egg production.A comb of eggs must be given during this operation so the bees have proper eggs on which to raise a new queen. Sometimes a newly mated queen will lay more than one egg in one cell but she soon learns how to do it right. In this situation she will only lay two or three eggs in the one cell, probably the queen will be on the comb near the eggs. Look for her diligently.

**8. No pollen coming in.** When other stocks are bringing in lots.

**9. To be certain a stock is queen-less** give it a comb of eggs from some other stock.After four or five days if the stock was queen-less then emergency queencells will have been started. Becareful to look closely these cellsare started right down on theseptum and are not as obvious as swarm cells.However, you should beable to spot them as theyare quite different fromworker cells. Always use a comb of eggs from the best stock of bees you have, or can scrounge, cadge or whatever. So that if cells are built on the comb, you can leave the bees to re-queen themselves and you will end up with a stock of the finest strain, for yourefforts.

With the exception of items 7 & 9 none of these things are a confirmation that the stock is queen-less. However the more of these things you see the more confident you can be.

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS HOMILY**

If you should attempt to introduce a fertile laying queen into a stock that has a virgin queen, or a fertile queen not yet laying, a drone laying queen, or has laying workers, then it is almost certain you will lose her