

## The Handling of Bees.

—ALPINE MCGREGOR.

So much depends on the management bees receive in the spring that I have decided to give the plan, which after trying many others, I have settled on, as it involves but little expense and labor. The former is of extreme importance to all bee-keepers in view of the present prices of honey and meagre honey crops, while the latter is of special importance to the writer, who is not blessed with a very large stock of physical strength and whose enthusiasm has so completely evaporated, that he no longer delights to work, even in the enchanted (?) field of apiculture.

Preparation should begin in the fall by giving the bees full combs of honey, which have been filled in supers, until each colony in the "dovetailed" hive weighs not less than 56 lbs. (Not an ounce of sugar should ever be fed except in a season like 1895.)

In placing bees in the cellar, each tier should rest on a separate stand placed on the cellar bottom, which permits of their removal in spring on the instalment plan. The first lot were taken out on March 29th, and the last on April 15th. Manitoba weather was the cause of the long delay in removing the last lot. They were fed flour as a substitute for pollen, about two weeks before natural pollen appeared.

Of all the blunders that is made in removing bees from cellar, one of the worst is to wait till "natural pollen appears," or till the "soft maples bloom" as the books say and then when this time arrives, which in this locality is sometimes as late as the last week in April rush them all out some fine morning. What is the result? The bees rush out for a fly and in their excitement never think of marking their hive. The bees from two or three go into one, stinging and killing the queen and leaving those adjoining almost empty. There are new apiarists who have not had this experience and many I have reason to believe, practice this plan at the present day.

My hive stands are 8 feet apart and the bees as they are taken from the cellar are placed on every other stand, which leaves them 16 feet apart. I prefer a cool morning and very early, if the day promises well. In this way with the hives from which bees are flying 16 feet apart, there can be no stinging of bees, and each colony has a fly which it were the only one in the yard. In regard to packing, so as to conserve the heat, having tried various methods,

such as clamps, double-walled hives, packing with sawdust, etc. I have discarded them all, as necessitating too much labor and expense. I have not tried the plan recommended by the editor of the "Review" of packing around each hive by using a rough box—it makes me tired even to think of that.

I use the Miller bottom board and it has my unqualified approval. If other conditions are right the colony is wintered perfectly, as it secures a two inch space under the frames and sufficient ventilation with a tightly sealed cover. The last named advantage is apparent in spring when the hive is placed on a summer stand as all that is necessary is to reverse the bottom board and contract the entrance—the cover being hermetically sealed, no heat can escape and it need not be removed till settled warm weather and the hive is crowded with young bees. As a matter of fact, many of my hives were not opened from last September till the middle of May, and they are now in splendid condition. Should it be necessary to loosen and remove the cover for examination, it is better to place a quilt over the frames with two or three thicknesses of paper and a Jones hair cover on top, or what is better, a super half-filled with sawdust held in by a piece of cotton tacked on the bottom. The dovetailed hive cover is a poor affair for preserving the heat, if once loosened.

By following out the simple plan above outlined, my bees came through the winter and spring without the loss of a single colony and there present condition is nearly all that could be desired; although this has been one of the most unfavorable springs I have ever known. A few colonies are somewhat weak, but with a little assistance will be ready for the "honey flow", if said flow should materialize.

Inglewood, May 20th, 1897.

## Jacob Has Returned.

Some one said in the last C. B. J. that Jacob had returned from the west, and I believe he has, I have no doubt but what quite a number expected a few lines from me before this, most of you know our main reason for going out to the coast, Mrs. A. not being in very good health for several years we thought we would try California climate, but not receiving the benefit we expected we decided to return again. I am pleased to say that Mrs. A. has been feeling quite well of late, the trip home seemed to do her lots of good, in leaving Southern California we travelled up the Coast to British Columbia, staying