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Hints for Beginners

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The night frosts and autumn tints remind us that the harvest has come, the summer is ended and the season of fruit-bearing and growth has passed. How many bee-keepers there are who are prepared for the winter, and alas! how many there are who are not prepared for the winter. Bees standing out with supers still on them, and still worse, very many with insufficient honey for winter, and what there is, especially for outside wintering, not in the proper place. In bee-keeping there is ever going on the great battle of the survival of the fittest. There is perhaps in no other branch of agriculture, to the same extent, the dropping out of some and fresh members being drawn in, as there is in bee-keeping. There is still too common the impression that bees look after themselves, and too little is being done to check that impression. Until this is done there must be the constant change of bee-keepers and great loss to individuals and the community at large, and we are also bound to have inferior hives put upon the market to the injury of that market. Let me, how-

ever, say that the excellence of product is not gauged by the number of colonies a bee-keeper keeps. This autumn I have met many too busy to give their bees the attention they need, the fact that the bee-keeper knows what to do and does it will not save the bees this coming winter. Every bee-keeper is interested in the safe wintering of bees for to-day we do not know where foul brood exists and there is a particularly dangerous time in the spring. Colonies may have perished which unnoticed by their owner or anyone else re-robbled out by strong colonies in the neighborhood. These hives may contain foul brood and the honey robbed will be sure to be fed to the larvae in the robbing colony and the disease spread. We are then interested in our neighbor and that neighbor may be a long distance from us. Again those selling honey at a very low figure are generally those who for a few years (favorable season) produce a small quantity without it costing them much. That kind of management cannot last for a series of years, but unfortunately when one person is knocked out of the race another soon steps in. I am not opposed to more bee-keepers, but I want them to realize before they enter into this branch of agriculture that it is a business and wants to be pursued in businesslike ways. It would in my estimation also be better to direct our attention more to reaching out to secure better markets, to educating the