

can shave the solid paper almost as easily as wood. But remember that I said, a *sharp* draw-knife.

A good paste is gum tragacanth, softened in pure water, with a few drops of spirits of camphor or carbolic acid added, to keep it from moulding. It should have only enough water to thoroughly soften it.

SELECTIONS.

Mice or Robbers.

SOME little time ago I gave a report of my summer's work through the columns of THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL, but since then I have sustained a loss for which I cannot account. As reported, I visited my bees about the 1st of October and found my five colonies well supplied for winter, and as there had been little or no frost up to that date, I decided to leave them on the summer stands until I had made up my mind whether or not I should winter outside. At first I decided to winter in the cellar, but thought it too damp for them on account of steam arising from potatoes being boiled for pigs. Finally I decided to winter part in a clamp outside and the remainder in a vacant dwelling house on the farm where nothing would disturb them.

The month of October continued very fine throughout, although the bees seemed to be doing little or no work; consequently as November opened favorably, I considered it very opportune and timely to pack them on the shelf for winter. I constructed a clamp under a thorn hedge with a capacity of three hives, on the bottom of which I put about six inches of dry chaff, placed two hives into it, but as I was about to place the third into position I thought it felt very light, or, in other words, that their supplies had decreased very much since my last visit. I placed my ear to the entrance of the hive, but no sound of busy life was heard, (of course, before moving I had closed the doorways with fine wire gauze). I next proceeded to remove the cover and some frames, that I might see what had happened, when to my surprise the colony was *non est*. At first sight it seemed as if they had died of starvation, as not a capped cell of honey remained in any of the nine frames of combs, the loss of which I attributed to robbing, as I had frequently seen lively skirmishing going on near the entrance of this hive some time before, between them (the Carniolans) and a hive of Italians near by. I felt a little uneasy at the time, but being a young hand at the business I took no further notice of it. Upon closer examination I found all the bees piled in one corner of the hive very much disfigured, apparently as if ground up in a grist mill, while the combs showed signs of foul play as if eaten away in places by some insect. Another thought suggested itself, that mice had made their way in; but I believe that very improbable, as I don't think mice could obtain an entrance through the narrow doorway. But here's what puzzles me, what became of all their honey? Will some experienced bee-man kindly give me his opinion on the matter through the columns of THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

Charlottetown, Feb. 5, '91.

You should easily be able to tell

whether the mice had done the damage or the honey had been removed by robbers. Where robbers have removed the honey, the cappings would be gnawed off very irregularly, whereas the mice would not remove the honey unless it were in a granulated state. They would be apt too to cut roads up between the combs.

A PROFITABLE SEASON.

I began the season of 1890 with 35 colonies in fair condition, with the exception of two of three colonies. Increased to 54, and took 2,700 pounds of honey, 1,200 of which was comb honey in one pound sections. The spring was rather unfavorable for bees until fruit bloom, when they gathered considerable honey from that source. The main flow, in fact the only flow of any account, was from white clover and thistle. Basswood, as usual in this locality, yielded very little, and fall flowers were a total failure on account of the early frosts. On the whole, I consider the past season a very good one for bees, and had I been running them exclusively for extracted honey and kept down increase, I think I could have shown a pretty fair yield. As I was not able to be with the bees all the time during the honey harvest, having to attend to other farm work as well, they did not get the attention I would like to have given them; consequently swarming was excessive, and much valuable time wasted.

I would like to say a word about queen excluder honey-boards. Last season was my first to use the perforated metal, and I must say that should I continue to keep bees it will not be the last. For comb honey I do not need it, as I am not troubled with queens going into the sections, but for the production of extracted honey I think it is the right thing in the right place. I do not think it increases the amount of honey stored, but by its use we can obtain honey of a better quality, as we can tier up and leave it on the hives till the close of the honey harvest. The labor of extracting is greatly lessened, as we have only to handle about half as many combs to extract the same amount of honey. We can also prevent the raising of a host of bees at the close of the honey season when they are not wanted.

Next season I intend to try using starters in the brood chambers when hiving swarms. Hitherto I have used full sheets of foundation in wired frames.

My bees are out doors packed in clamps. They went into winter quarters in good condition and with plenty of stores. We are having rather cold weather, and the ground is almost bare of snow. I consider lots of snow to be an important adjunct to successful out-door wintering, and were my bees covered with two or three feet of it to remain till April, I would have no fear for their safety.

H. F. GARVEY.

Ingersoll, Jan. 5, '91.

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