

Bees Doing Well.

ALLEN PRINGLE.

My bees are wintering as well as I could wish so far. They are all in the cellar repository with the exception of 10 colonies which are packed in dry saw-dust outside on their summer stands. As I grow older I feel less and less inclined to take two steps where one will do; and my intention now, is this winter and next to test the matter as to whether there is more work in connection with packing them outside, or carrying them in the cellar and out. If I can winter successfully in or out, the only matter to be settled is which plan entails most work. I have a good cellar repository which I have used for many years. It is immediately under the kitchen and dining room portion of the dwelling, and is both dry and frost proof, and is thoroughly ventilated. It holds without crowding about 125 colonies. A few years ago when my stock of bees considerably exceeded that number, I wintered the surplus outside, and the degree of success attained was about the same in both conditions. Of late years, however, as I have been keeping the stock below 100 colonies, I have wintered mostly in the cellar; but now propose to get onto the easiest plan, whichever that may prove to be. Of course the cellar is there ready without further expense, and the skeleton cases—one for each colony—will cost something to get up, but once completed they, too, will be there for a life time. In wintering outside I used to pack them two, three or four together in dry-goods boxes, with but few of them isolated. I do not, however, like that method, or the clamping, and prefer each colony to have its own case and packing. When they are packed separately the proper temperature of the colony can the more readily be secured, as it is much more difficult when a lot

are packed together to get the packing so adjusted in quantity and otherwise as to secure a uniform temperature for all, and about the right degree of temperature for all. When each one is by itself these necessary conditions may be compassed with a reasonable degree of accuracy and certainty. This is an important point in outside wintering—of sufficient importance to warrant the extra expense and trouble of separate cases and packing. The case ought to be large enough to admit of 3 to 4 inches of packing on all sides and in the bottom with room on top for 6 to 8 inches; and should be so constructed as to exclude rain and snow and keep the contents dry. The roof or cover should, of course, slant to shed water, and if it fits snugly it ought not to be painted all over. The middle portion of it, say a space 12 by 18 inches, may be left bare on both sides while the other portions of the cover may be painted. This will facilitate the escape or evaporation of the moisture from within, which will be constantly rising through the dry saw-dust. The entrance of the hive, say one by eight inches, more or less, ought to be left wide open; but the skeleton entrance while of the same size ought to be adjustable. Mine, (Zinth) may be adopted from a single bee space to the full hive entrance. This outside entrance may be adjusted from time to time as may be necessary, while the hive entrance is left alone—wide open. The outside entrance must be kept clear of ice. The snow alone will not smother, as the air passes freely through it, but sometimes ice will form in the entrance completely blocking it. This must be looked after. The ice has, however, given no trouble at all this winter so far with me. They appear to be dry and nice and in good form. Those in the cellar are also doing well. The prospects for the coming season are good. The clover was in good condition in the fall, and the great body of