

Who ever had a colony of bees affected with dry dysentery? Are not the bodies of the bees swollen or distended with a thin watery substance? When the atmosphere is loaded with moisture, even though the temperature be scarcely below freezing point, one rapidly becomes chilled through. We have suffered more from cold in Europe than in America, all owing to the dampness of the atmosphere.

For THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

Bees Out, Bad Weather, Etc.

I COMMENCED to set my bees out of the cellar on 16th April and finished 20th. As near as I can figure it, the winter loss with me is about two and a half per cent. The bees are in excellent condition this spring. I have not seen them so clean and nice for several years. In fast-bottom hives there is usually a debris of dead bees, etc., on the bottom board to be cleaned out in the spring. I have found but little of this. With the exception of a few colonies, the consumption of stores has been moderate—much less than during the winter of '89 and '90, owing to the higher temperature that winter than this. One colony, however, consumed about 25 to 30 lbs. and starved to death. So far as visible its conditions were the same as the others. The young queen probably felt it to be the right thing to keep on laying all winter. But that was a mistake on her part. I have heard people argue that the instinct of the bee was perfect, in fact an unerring guide, all of which means that her royal highness, as well as the others, is, or ought to be, infallible. That is another mistake. I have seen a colony begin to supersede its queen (which was still fairly good) so early in the spring that there was no prospect of a survival. Of course I stopped the business till the proper time came. That was a mistake. They will "swarm themselves to death," sometimes even in a "state of nature," so that the parent colony and last swarms are placed in jeopardy, and probably died in winter. That is another mistake.

The weather was very fine for a few days after the bees were put out and they gathered pollen in abundance and a little honey. But the weather changed without ceremony about the 24th and became very cool and windy, going on from bad to worse until to-day, 28th, which has been so cold that the snow has been flying. Besides, there has been so much high wind since the change that it has been very unfavor-

able for the bees. Those that were not packed suffered no doubt more or less. The fact is, bees that are not in double-walled hives ought, in this climate, to be packed in spring. And whether packed or unpacked, there are occasional days in April, and even May, when they are better shut in. Mine were shut in to-day, 28th, as it has been particularly unfavorable. When the wind is both cold and high, many that venture out can never return, and perish.

SPREADING BROOD.

This is a bad habit which prevails, especially among the novices. More harm than good has resulted from the practice. None but the thoroughly experienced bee-keeper ought ever to attempt to "spread brood" in the spring. Instead of spreading the brood keep it all as closely together as possible. Keep the fuller combs of honey on either side of it. If you must abrade a frame of honey to stir up the queen, abrade but one side of it at a time, and put the abraded side facing the brood nest on one side. The notion that it is necessary to artificially stimulate the queen in the spring is falling into disrepute as it ought; albeit the beginner is almost certain to go into this and other things he has heard about. I do not say that spring stimulation is always wrong and never necessary, for I practice it once in a while on this colony or that, that needs it. If the colony has had abundant stores through the winter, and still has in the spring, with a young queen, artificial stimulation is wholly unnecessary, and this is the condition every colony ought to be in in the spring. But as what is and what ought to be are often very different, we must in all cases adapt ourselves to the circumstances.

Although the clover has not come through in first-rate condition, the prospect for a good crop of honey this season is apparently good.

The winter mortality has, it would seem, been considerable—some I know having lost all, and others heavily, but this was owing to mismanagement.

ALLEN PRINGLE.

Selby, Ont.

REPORT FROM RIDGEWAY.

Mr. J. F. Dunn, March 31st, writes:—

Bees are flying nearly every day now and lose so far about 4 per cent, or a little less. Think we will have pollen from skunk cabbage in 4 or 5 days. Everything looks encouraging so far. Clover seeded well in the fall and looks fine now. I have made arrangements to move half my apiary to 150 acres of alsike clover as soon as the roads are good and will run the home yard for comb honey.