

Q u e r i e s —AND— A n s w e r s

[Department conducted by Mr. R. H. Smith, St. Thomas, Ontario. Queries may sent direct to Mr. Smith or to the office of the Canadian Bee Journal.]

QUESTION

I expect to move my bees in the spring, as this is not a good location, and would be glad of advice as to preparing hives to move. I hope to get them out between the first and fifteenth of April according to the season, and was thinking I could move them thirty days later. Would it be safe to move them with the bottom boards nailed on, with wire net at the entrance? The entrance is 3-8 x 6 in., and with a wire screen only 3-8 in. deep over the frames, or will they need it deeper and a screen all over the bottom? I have ninety-nine hives (eight frame), and expect to move first three miles by wagon, then load on the cars, then afterward I would have another wagon trip of six or seven miles. The bees will be closed in four or five days at the most or it may be only three days.—C. Blake.

ANSWER

To move bees at any time after the winter is past one of the prime essentials is sufficient ventilation. Some years ago when about April 15th I moved to St. Thomas I brought thirty-five colonies of bees with other goods in a box car. The bees were prepared as follows:—The bottom board was already nailed on, then I fastened the frames by laying a thin strap across the ends with 3-4 in. nail driven into each frame; all the strong colonies had a

two inch run on top covered with thin factory cotton. The weaker ones had no run. The weather happened to turn very warm just when I was ready to move. So, as an extra precaution, I kept the car door open day and night; they were on the train thirty hours. At one stopping place I closed up the car for nearly an hour, and on opening the car I found the temperature very high and the bees roaring in great distress, and honey running from the entrances of two hives; after that I kept the door open and they quieted down. On examination next day I found five or six combs broken down, enough to show what might have happened if the car had been closed for a longer time.

If I had to move your bees I should proceed in the following way. If the bottom boards are nailed on I would leave them so; if not nailed they must be made secure. And if the frames are propolized down and bridged with comb, or the Hoffman style or self spacing frames they will probably need no further fastening. If not they should be fastened down as before mentioned. Then take a rim or empty section super four or five inches deep, cover it with wire cloth, place it on the hive and fasten down with strips of lath nailed on each corner as far as the date weather is cool it may be necessary to put rims only on strong colonies but, "it is better to be sure than sorry," close the entrance with wire screen. Draw on spring wagon frames running across the wagon and get a slatted or cattle car if possible and they can be closed in, if necessary. Load on car with frames running lengthwise of the car, and if the weather is warm and the bees show signs of distress sprinkle them with water occasionally and all should go well.—R. H. Smith.