

BEE-HUNTING

BY ELIAS FOX IN GLEANINGS

In reply to John R. Lockard, page 322 of the March 1st issue, I would say that, unless his beehives are better supplied with honey than most of them are here, his profits (if any) would be greater if he would cut them in the fall, and it would also be much more humane, for swarms could be saved that would otherwise perish long before spring from the want of sufficient stores to carry them through.

I hunt bees for recreation and to save swarms that would starve if left in the tree and take a chance on the possible profit. I have driven into the country in the fall and brought home swarms where others had cut the trees, robbed the bees of their honey, and left them to perish. Two years ago I wintered ten swarms that I took from trees, mostly of my own finding. My method is this:

I have a box made of thin boards, 17 inches long 11 inches wide and 6 inches deep, with 3 very thin boards 5 inches wide, slipped inside between thin cleats tacked inside the ends (wooden combs or dummies), for the bees to cluster on, with half-inch space at bottom and top, so as not to crush the bees and allow them free passage. The cover is thin boards with half-inch cleats on each side to slip down over the top of the box, with four 1½-inch holes, one near each corner, with wire screen tacked on under one side to give plenty of air, cover fastened on with a wire hook and a screw-eye at each end, and a strap firmly nailed across the top for a handle to carry it by. Then I bore a 1½-inch hole in the centre of one side at the bottom, and this

is closed with a little sliding gate that also has a 1½-inch hole in, covered with wire screen. This box, by taking the three division-boards out of the cleats and laying them in one side of the box, makes room for a whisk-broom, smoker and honey-knife; and when thus packed I slip it under my buggy-seat with my ax and hunting-box, and set a lard-can, with the cover on, in front of the seat, and hitch up my team, and away I go to some place favorable for bees; and, after getting permission from the landowner, I usually put my team in his barn and feed them, and away I go with my hunting box to attract the bees so I can trace them; and when I find the tree I return to the buggy and get my outfit and cut the tree by falling it on to some small tree to break the force; blow a little smoke in at the entrance and chop in two cuts and split off one side; then I set my box on the log, close it, and proceed to take out the combs and brush the bees in front of the entrance (always making sure to get the queen in); and in they go. I cut the honey out and put it in the can and put the empty combs and brood on top of it and put on the cover and wait an hour or so for the flying bees to get in the box.

When I get home I fit up a hive with honey, cut out some of the old combs, and insert the brood in the combs, jar the box down on the ground, which loosens the bees from the cover which I remove, and dump the bees in front of the hive and in they go.

I have eight swarms thus taken last fall (the last one, Nov. 28); all are apparently in fine condition and perfectly contented. Out of

the eight honey have had me cut a the honey land.

I enjoy of game; about bees other kind as they call the box; selves, w they describe straight w [The above some fine such swarms Ontario, a it beats square all to piece profitable.

ARTICLE

Prof. H recently brought in points of nature of artificial It is noticeable about the increase in an almost under well-known this sugar way as natural ing for a long easily reduced. Owing to the of artificial vators have question so selves, and it legislation to being to oblige to add some will indicate On the other the addition natural honey