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OUR OWN APIARY.

SPREADING THE COMBS, AND PREPARING BEES FOR WINTER.

IN all our bee yards now we are reducing hives that hold twelve combs to eight, and occasionally ten; giving them the surplus space that the twelve would occupy. We select from four to eight combs according to the strength of the colony for them to winter on, placing them in the front of the hive spreading them sufficiently to allow much more honey to be placed in them. The cells are now being lengthened out and capped over. Some hives only contain eight and nine combs. In any case we keep them apart, so that four combs will contain as much honey as six, and five combs will contain as much as seven or eight. Supposing that eight combs occupy twelve inches, which would make one-and-a-half inches from centre to centre, five combs would contain about the same amount of honey as the eight, making as much room for the bees in the four spaces as there would be in the seven narrower ones, making ten inches of space to be kept warm by the bees instead of twelve as in the latter way. The cluster is not broken up in such small layers, economizing heat, and causing them to use less stores, making them less liable to be chilled, or affected with dysentery. Whenever the honey harvest fails, and there is no prospect of a fall honey-flow it would be better to feed granulated sugar syrup at once, if they are likely to require stores, and have them seal it early in the season. As the brood hatches out lower down the combs, feed slightly from time to time to keep up brooding, and still add a little to their winter stores, that they may go into winter quarters with an abundance of food. Those who com-

plete winter preparations immediately the honey flow is over, will reap their reward by having strong colonies next Spring.

BEE TENTS.

The use of bee tents in the apiary after the honey season slackens, is something, the value of which is known only to those who have used them, when the hives could not be opened at all without robbers getting in, and when the queen would be in danger of being "balled." Place one of these over the hive you wish to handle, and you can examine the combs and go on with all the operations required without fear of robbers from other colonies. Work can be done, which, without a tent, it would be useless to attempt, and in any well-regulated bee-yard, one will pay for itself many times every year. As a preventive of robbing it is splendid; place the tent over the colony being robbed, raise it up occasionally, and as other robbers are passing in they are caught also. All the "burglars bold" may by this means be captured and retained in "jurance vile" for as long as is required. If the tent is lifted from over the hive, set on the ground beside it, and the robbers are imprisoned for say twenty-four hours, the disposition to do wrong is taken from them and they seem to decide that it is a poor speculation to have to flutter around in a cage for several hours for the sake of a little stolen honey. We do not advise this method unless in bad cases, when its application dampens their ardor very much. They may be sprayed with water while under the tent, and then shaken on the ground. After they dry themselves and return home they seldom feel like repeating the operation. Without a tent it is impossible to spray them properly.

HEAVY RAIN AND COLD WEATHER.

We have just had a very heavy rain