

THE ORIGIN OF THE "HONEY BOARD."

In speaking of your best means of winter cover in your December issue, you exclaim, "Why it is called a honey board we cannot understand." If you had been a bee-keeper thirty-years ago, as my father was, you would understand perfectly the seemingly inapplicable term. A great change in bee-keeping, as in everything else, has taken place since then; and if a bee of 1870 could have lived until 1907 and have found itself in a modern hive, it would feel about as strange as a man of the seventies transferred suddenly from his log cabin to a city flat.

The great need of the honey board was evident upon the change from the old fashioned one storey box hive, which was destroyed to get the honey, to the moveable frame hive. Now the bees are to reside in the first flat and have their storeroom in the second, but the frames of the home (or brood-nest) are totally unfit to support the weight of the honey-box, which might be any shape. So a board is interposed, being laid on the rim of the broodnest, and supporting the box containing the honey combs. This board was thus raised by the rim so as to allow a bee-space above the frames of the broodnest and another below the box. But how were the inmates

to reach this pantry? Easily answered. Three spaces were left

across the whole width of the "Honey Board" for their convenience. These openings were provided with little trap doors, so that at the keeper's convenience he might shut the bees down below

while he operated (without a smoker) on the honey box, tilting and arranging it so as to induce the bees to build decent straight comb

The rims of a modern hive now sit very properly one above the other, and, as no weight rests on the combs, and one has a smoker to show the bees their place, no old-fashioned "honey board" is necessary. But the name clings to a similar piece of bee furniture which resembles it in everything but the slots or doors, and which is placed over the top rim as a first cover. So the trap door is changed to a roof, but retains its original name "honey board," or board which supports the honey box, and without which no honey could be comfortably taken.

As for your cloth covers, they would serve as excellent air and moisture passages if not propolis-covered. Cushions my father used only over honey boards, as they are easily removed and replaced when one wishes to examine the hive. He uses now only the honey board as you do for winter cover, leaving a tiny air space, and finds it completely satisfactory.

Woodstock, Ont.

H. L. H.

[That is an interesting bit of history. It is the first lucid explanation we have had of the so-called "honey board." "H. L. H." is too modest, and we feel obliged to take the liberty of giving her away. It would be a distinct loss if the "father" referred to was left unknown. The father is none other than our good old friend J. B. Hall, of Woodstock, who has been called the "Comb Honey King of