

The Month's Work

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"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." We might almost suppose the inspired writer was a bee-keeper, did we not know that he was a preacher. The success of many of the operations of the apiary depends upon their being done at the right time, and some of them even to a day. Evidently all bee-keepers do not realize this, judging from what I often see. So long as there is other work about the farm or premises in the least pressing to be done, the bees are allowed to go, while others again neglect them from want of knowledge, and yet from these very persons how much we hear about "luck" in bee-keeping. Yes, there is a certain amount of luck or chance in bee-keeping, but the luck of the above classes is the luck of negligence and ignorance. "A thing that is worth doing at all is worth doing well" I was taught when a boy; if this be true with respect to the affairs of life in general, it is doubly true in respect to bee-keeping in particular; bee-keeping cannot be made a success worked upon any other plan than this.

March is the month for placing the bees wintered inside upon their summer stands. I speak from an experience obtained in the Niagara District of this province. This date, therefore, may have to be modified some for those living in the more northern parts of the province, where spring is later in coming than here. An old man once told me that St. Patrick's Day was the right time to put the

bees out, and while his logic was perhaps that of custom and wit, he nevertheless was not far astray. The first warm and favorable day about the middle of March or thereafter on which the bees can fly they should be removed from their winter repository to their summer stands; or should they show signs of uneasiness and bad wintering in the least, they could be put out, weather permitting, as early as the first of March, given a cleansing flight, and, if necessary, returned to the cellar again, being careful when put out the second time that each is made to occupy the same position in the yard as before. Such a flight will relieve the strain upon their vitality, and do much to recuperate their power of endurance.

Colonies wintered outside should have their entrances closed to within $\frac{3}{8}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ inch and all top or other winter ventilation, if any, stopped after their first flight in March. Colonies which were wintered inside should have their entrances similarly arranged on the day they are set out, and, if there are any cracks or openings about their hives, especially on top, they should be carefully closed so that no heat from the clustered bees inside can possibly escape. It will also materially aid them in keeping up their warmth if their hives are setting in the sun, and are some dark color so as to absorb its heat, instead of white, which reflects it, and consequently will help to keep them cold. If practical, it is best also that they should be protected from the wind. In all these matters we seek to conserve the heat of the colonies during March, April and May as far as possible, and to protect them from the attacks of robbers.

If not done so sooner, all supplies for the coming season should be