

WHERE TO KEEP COMB HONEY.

Multitudes of the toilers of the world who labor faithfully to secure a harvest, in their vocation in life, fail to receive the just reward of their labors, on account of not properly caring for their crop when it is within their own hands. Thus we find butter selling at half price after it is made, through carelessness and neglect between that and the marketing, eggs becoming stale after they have been produced, vegetables rotting in the cellar after they have been gathered, and honey depreciating in value after it is taken from the hive; and so on throughout the varied lines of production. Would it not be better to spend more thought on how to care for the crop we have, than to ransack the earth and rack our brains with the one object in view to produce the greatest possible amount? These thoughts have been brought up by receiving the following from a correspondent: "Why does honey ooze out of the comb after it is taken from the hive and stored away?" This is a question which is often asked, and one which has confronted every comb honey raiser, sooner or later. Some seem to suppose that the cause of this state of affairs is that the bees do not thoroughly ripen the honey before capping it. A little thought must show the fallacy of this, for whether ripened or not, the honey can only ooze from the cells after being capped, on account of a larger bulk of liquid being in the cell afterward than there was at the time the bees sealed the cell. This can come only from one source, which is always brought about by either cool, damp weather, or a non-circulation of air, or both. Honey only swells as it becomes damp, and the first that will be seen of that dampness will be in the unsealed cells where the honey will have become so thin that it will stand out beyond the cells, or, in other words, the cells will be heaping full. If the dampness remains, the sealed honey will soon become transparent, while the honey from the unsealed cells will commence to run out, daubing everything below it, and eventually, if the cause is not removed, the cappings of the cells will burst, and the whole will become a sickening, sour mass. While in New York City I once saw several thousand pounds of such stuff, which was once as nice comb honey as could be procured, but it had become unsightly and spoiled by being stored in a damp, cool cellar. The cappings to the

white combs were ruptured, with the honey oozing out of the cells, to such a degree that the nice white cases were all soaked with it, and which, with large puddles on the floor, gave off a sickening smell which, with the unsightly appearance caused one to think of honey as only something to be loathed. The commission merchant asked me what was the matter with the honey. I told him that the damp, cool cellar was what was the matter, but he could not believe it until I caused him to confess that the honey was all right before it was placed in that cellar six or eight weeks previous. When I first commenced keeping bees, I stored my honey in a tight room on the north side of the house, where it usually remained from four to six weeks before crating for market, and some of the first sections remained much longer than this. In crating this honey, I always found the centre and back side of the pile watery and transparent in appearance. As that which was stored first was always the worst, I thought that it must be owing to that being the poorest and least ripened honey, until one year I chanced to place this honey by itself in a warm, airy room, when to my surprise, I found upon crating it, that this first honey was kept perfectly, while the later, stored in the old room, was as watery as ever. This gave me the clue to the whole matter, so when I built my shop, I located my honey room in the southwest corner of the building, and painted the south and west sides a dark color, to absorb the heat from the midday and afternoon sun. On two sides of this room I fixed a platform one foot from the floor, so arranged that the sections rested on the edges of strips $1\frac{1}{2} \times 3$ inches, which were long enough to hold 28 sections. The sections were often piled on these strips until they are fifteen or twenty feet high and thirty wide, making a cube, as it were, containing from three to six thousand pounds of honey on either side yet the whole was so piled that the air could circulate between each and every section. During the afternoons of August and September days, the temperature of this room would be raised to 100 and above, which would warm the honey to nearly that degree of heat, and as this large body of honey, once heated, retained the same for a great length of time, the temperature in this room would be from 85 to 90 at six o'clock next morning, when it was as low as 40 to 60 on the side. By this means the honey was being ripened each day, and that in the unsealed cells growing thicker and thicker. When September 10th, or after being in the room from four to six weeks, the sections could be tipped over, or handled as carelessly as