

The Canadian Bee Journal.

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SHIPPING BEES.

HOW TO CARE FOR THEM AFTER YOU GET THEM.

AS a great many customers are asking how to manage their bees after receiving them, we think that a few words on that subject will not be amiss. Those who are up in the business will not require any hints in this direction, and they are not intended for such but for those who are just beginners. We are now shipping large numbers of colonies and may here explain how we prepare them for their journey and the necessary attention they should receive after they reach their destination. The ends of the frames are all nailed with slender wire nails to the sides of the hive; the ends of nails are allowed to project sufficiently so that they may be withdrawn with an ordinary claw hammer or pinchers. In order to remove the wire nails it is necessary to lay a stick across the frames about half inch from nail in end of frame, then taking the hammer in one hand, holding the stick down tightly with the other, with claws of the hammer each nail may be removed without lifting the frames; a smoker may be used to advantage while this operation is being carried on. After the nails are removed the frames should be placed close together only allowing sufficient space for a bee to pass over them; should there be more combs in the hive than bees require they may be placed back of the division board. The entrance blocks should be adjusted to suit size of colony, and weather; in warm weather they require a fairly wide opening, while in cool weather they should be closed up allowing space only for one bee to pass in and out at a time; and on cold nights it

should be closed up entirely, and not opened the following morning until the weather becomes favorable for the bees to fly. Combs may be added as fast as the increase of the colony requires. In handling bees in early spring and in cool weather when no honey is in the flowers it is necessary to exercise great care or they are liable to ball their queen. When necessary, feed in the hive, which may be done by pouring a little on the bottom board, when bottom of hive is water tight, or lift out an empty comb and pour the feed into it, then place it next the brood chamber. Do not pour the feed in at the entrance as it incites robbing. The reason the wire nails are placed through ends of frames when shipping bees by express or freight, especially when shipping long distances, and over several lines of railway, is that we find from experience that when the bottom of the frame is not fastened much less breakage occurs; in fact we have shipped bees to all parts of Canada and the U. S. packed in this way without loss.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

ABOUT WINTERING.

WHAT, that means Mr. Axtell and I, like your plan of asking and answering questions very much, as often we wish to know what we cannot find out in any other way. We have met with a very great loss in our bees this last winter. We went into winter quarters with 244 colonies—125 on summer stands and 118 in cellar. Thirty-three colonies of the cellar-wintered bees are dead and 70 out of the 125 wintered out of doors, and I am sure many more would have died had we not put them down on from one to four combs. The most of the colonies were crowded down on to two and three combs, just as soon as we could work with them in the spring. The honey seemed very watery this spring, and some of the capped honey bulged ready to burst open; pollen very mouldy and green in some hives. Last fall bees were in a very weak condition and but few colonies were really strong, but as Mr. Axtell received a severe kick from a mule and was unable to see to them when fitted for wintering, and I