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WHAT IS MR. M'KINNELL'S TROUBLE ?

I am just a beginner in beekeeping and as most beginners am after information. I started with one colony last spring and now have four. Three of them are very strong and one fairly weak. They have lots of stores and everything seems O. K. Two weeks ago I put them in the cellar—the only one I have. Besides the bees there are a few barrels of apples and 200 bushels of potatoes. The cellar is stoned up and has cemented sides and walls. I have a current of fresh air passing through and keep the temperature steady at 42 degrees. Now in one of the strong hives the bees are on the comb and quiet. The other three, the most of the bees are on the top of the frames in large clusters, and are very restless. If I remove the top for an instant several will fly out and the others start moving around. I got the bees from Messrs. Ham & Nott, of your town. I have the openings to the hives about two-thirds of entire width open and all alike. We have no apiarists in the neighborhood with the exception of a few Galicians and they winter theirs differently. If you can give me any suggestions I would be glad, as I am very interested in them and want to make them a success. I have Messrs. Root's A B C-X Y Z Book, but cannot find anything about it, and the three colonies mentioned do not seem right to me. I might mention that I am forty miles north of Winnipeg, in a scrub country. We have tremendous lot of wild flowers and fruits, and clover, both white and red do very well. I took 95 lbs of honey from the one hive I started with and got three swarms besides and nearly every frame is full of honey, with the exception of the weak one mentioned. Our temperature goes down to 40 degrees below zero, but it is very dry. I have enclosed

a dollar for your answer and hope you will benefit me by your experience.

WM. C. M'KINNELL.

[We are glad to hear from you Mr. McKinnell, and will be only too pleased at any time to help you with such suggestions as we are able to give. Thanks for your one dollar. We cannot accept it, however, for any information that we may be able to give you, as we believe it our duty always to help our subscribers as far as we can. We have, therefore advanced your subscription to the end of 1910.

As to the difficulty you are experiencing, it is difficult to state with any certainty. We are of the opinion, however, that your colonies are weak, and have but few bees, and are therefore, clustering in a bunch on top of the frames in order to get close to the cover, where the point of greatest heat would be. You did exceedingly well from your parent colony, but you made a mistake in allowing so many swarms. One or two of these swarms would naturally (in our opinion) be very weak, as we cannot believe that your northern situation would permit one colony to produce such an increase with sufficient strength in bees to go through the winter. One swarm would have been all right; the second could have been tolerated, but the third was inexcusable.

Under present circumstances, however, we would advise that you reduce those weak colonies down to three frames or not more than four at the most, and fill up the side of the hive with a cushion filled with shavings or chaff. The idea of this is to reduce the "house" room so that there will not be so much air space to heat up. The fewer the bees the less will be the natural heat—hence a smaller place must be given them. Keep your cellar about 45 degrees. We would not advise letting it drop lower if possible. The roots in your cellar will do