

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

How To Transfer a Colony.

MR. D. A. JONES.—Sir,—Would you kindly advise me through your interesting journal as to the management of a hive of bees I bought three years ago. I may say that it is an exceedingly large hive and took two men to carry it and it had an old colony in when I bought it. I managed to get the top off last year; it is about 24 inches square, and was packed full of honey last fall. I put a super on and the bees went freely into the sections but did not build any comb. They were flying out at Christmas and are quite busy now. Spring flowers are booming. I have had a swarm from it every year—and such swarms. It has become a nuisance now, it is too heavy to move and I can't get the comb out. I sometimes think I will build a fire around the whole thing.

The question is:—

How can I get the bees out?

When would be the best time?

Would it be well to leave them till fall,

smother them and take out the honey?

How could I kill them without injuring the honey?

And finally, what causes some honey I took out of another hive to create a tingling sensation in my throat and behind the ears, and after a few minutes the throat swells and I feel like some one partly intoxicated?

I have some of it yet and that beats me.

Kindly enlighten me and oblige

Yours respectfully,

ERNEST L. ETHINDGE.

25 First St., Vic. B. C., Mar. 27, '91.

It is not a bad investment to simply leave it stand from year to year if it gives you a large colony; it will certainly pay you good interest on the money. Your talk of burning it up or building a fire around to get the bees out seems strange in this age of bee journals. It makes me think that we have neglected some of our duties. Why not transfer it which is easily done. You will see full explanations for transferring in back numbers of CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL, Cook's Manual of the Apiary, or Root's A. B. C. in Bee Culture. We think it would pay you to have these works in your library. You might take the hive in spring—about the beginning of fruit bloom—blow a little smoke in the entrance two or three times, then carry it off about fifty feet from the

stand, and in its place put a hive to catch the stray bees. Set another hive on top of the colony and rap on the sides of the old hive for a few minutes which will cause the bees to run up into the hiving box above. They may then be taken and put on the old stand. Now, with a hammer, hatchet, smoker, knives, etc., split the hive, first cutting the combs loose all around the edge on three sides, leaving them attached to one side and top of hive. Have some shingles or boards set up against the comb to keep it from falling, then cut the comb loose at the side and bottom and allow it to tip over on the board, when with a feather you may brush off the adhering bees. Place another board on the top side of the comb and by a quick motion of the hands the combs may be turned over, lifting the board off the top of combs which allows you to brush bees from the opposite side. In this way you may cut out all the combs, selecting those that are straightest and most suitable for transferring. After removing all the drone combs, and especially all that have eggs, brood or larvae, take your frames and lay on these combs; mark around the inside of the frame and cut your combs just to fit the frames tightly. You can spring the bottom bar and side bars slightly to tighten it. Some combs may need no protection to hold them in place, others will require sticks put on each side and wired at end, or wire nails shoved through the side bars to steady them till the bees fasten them. In transferring from box to movable frame hive, it is better in setting combs in to keep the brood nest as near its natural shape as possible and not give the colony any more combs to mend than is necessary. The hive should be kept warm so that they may have the benefit of all the heat they generate to assist them in moulding wax for repairs. If this is done properly in two or three days of warm weather the combs will be all attached nicely and the sticks or nails may be removed and wire put around the frames to hold the combs in place. Light, No. 30 wire answers very well, but string should never be used as the bees keep nibbling at it thinking it is moth webs. We once recollect a party transferring a lot of combs, some three or four colonies,