

WINTERING BEES

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When the cold north winds have passed and we hear the sweet songs of our feathered friends, and the hum of the busy bee once more, then gladness is seen in the countenance of the bee-keeper that another winter has passed; that is to say, this gladness is seen on the face of the bee-keeper who has successfully wintered his bees either on summer stands or in winter quarters, and finds that his loss is not over two per cent.

But oh, what a long-drawn visage is seen on him who, neglecting proper precautions and leaving his bees to take care of themselves on summer stands, finds them in the spring almost a total loss. And yet this latter class will frequently be heard to say, "I don't see how it is, but I never have luck with my bees." He don't deserve any luck.

If a farmer were to allow his stock to run all winter without proper food or shelter, what appearance would they present in the spring?

Yet this is practically what the bee-keeper does who does not provide for his bees in the fall, and as a natural result he finds himself in the same boat as the improvident farmer.

The question of "How to winter Bees?" is almost synonymous with that of "How to make Bee-keeping pay?" Few rise to eminent success in any business, the majority preferring to plod along in the old rut. This is not as it should be, for it is just as true today as ever, that "It is the man who makes the business, not the business that makes the man."

A glance at the landscape in autumn, with the variegated colors of the foliage, and the general evidence that all nature is preparing to go into winter quarters, should be a sufficient hint to the intelligent bee-keeper, and if the readers of this journal have not already prepared their bees for winter, either on summer stands or in winter quarters, it should be done at once.

I will here describe the method of "Wintering Bees," as successfully followed by me for the past twenty-five years. Pack on the summer stands as soon as the honey harvest

is over, which is about Oct. 1st in this part of Canada. I raise comb honey only. All supers, whether full or not, are removed. Then be sure that the hive has a queen, a young one if possible. Next see that the hive is strong in bees, and contains at least (30) thirty pounds of honey, well sealed. If any hives are found to be weak in bees it is a good plan to unite two together, or if some are lacking in honey and others have a surplus, the honey frames may be exchanged. When all are properly supplied both as to bees and honey, take an empty super and place it on the hive, the same as when sections are in. Then take a piece of canvas such as merchants use to wrap goods in, cut it the proper size and spread it over the bees; the tin rests will keep it up from the bees so that the bees can pass under the canvas. This acts similar to the Hill plan. Next fill the super with dry sawdust, well packed down; then put on the cover as tightly as possible. A rough, cheap outside case is now required, one that will leave about four inches all around the hive, bridging the entrances so that the bees can fly out any time they choose to, when the weather will permit. Now pack sawdust all around the hive. About ten inches over the top put on a good cover to keep out the rain, and leave till warm weather in the spring, or about the time the apple blossoms are out. Be sure and do not take the packing off too soon in the Spring, as there is danger of chilling the brood, which is sure to be well advanced, the queen having commenced to lay early owing to the bees having been properly and comfortably housed during the winter. There is no danger of a chill after the apple blossoms are once out. I have wintered my bees as here described and brought them through ninety-nine out of a hundred, strong in bees and with plenty of brood. I raise comb honey only, and keep only the five-banded golden bees, and find them superior to the three-banded, being better workers and capping the honey very white, thus causing it to command a better market price.

—Read our "Special Premium Offer."—Remember the first name received will get the first queen, and so on in rotation until all are supplied.