

little honey, or else too little of it where the bees have ready access to it; or improper ventilation. I have seen many lost from all these causes, never from any other. In very cold climates, bees remain in a semi-torpid state, and do not consume as much honey as in warmer countries, where many bright, sunny days, tempt the bees from the hives, to which they do not return; and as no young bees are reared at that season to replace them, the numbers are reduced, and they are unable to maintain the requisite heat when severe weather occurs.

Some hives are so arranged that even when there is honey sufficient, it is so located that the heat from the cluster of bees does not reach it, and it is cold and frosty, so that bees perish in attempting to get it in severe weather. Nothing is colder than sealed honey and too much of this in that part of the hive where the bees cluster should be avoided.

In order to secure the safety of bees during winter, a little management in fall is necessary, both as regards the quantity of honey and the size of the cluster. By weighing a number of strong colonies one season, I ascertained that the average consumption was: In October, four pounds; November, four and a half pounds; December, two and a half pounds; January, three pounds; February, three and a half pounds; March, five pounds; and April, seven and a half pounds. This would vary much with season and locality, but affords a guide. Judging from this, no colony is safe that does not contain at least thirty pounds of honey, when the bees cease gathering in the fall. If they have more than this, it will be no loss, for bees are not gluttons, and never consume unnecessarily. It often happens in the fall that we find some hives short of stores, with plenty of bees, while others have an abundance of honey, but too few bees. If left thus, neither are safe, but united they make one excellent colony. All hives should be examined soon after the first severe frost, their state ascertained, and such as are not safe united; two poor colonies being put together, or one that is weak aided from one that is strong. Where movable frames are used, it is a simple matter to put one or more combs of honey from a hive that can spare it into one that is short, or to unite the combs of two poor ones. If a little sweetened water, with some strong essence in it, is sprinkled over the bees before they are united, they will not quarrel, nor will they if the precaution be taken to remove the queen from one of the colonies a few days previous to uniting them. The case with which bees can be examined and aided in movable-comb hives, is one great argument for their general use.

If bees are in "gums" or box-hives, two of the same size may be united, when necessary, by turning one bottom upward, and placing the other upon it. Thus treated, the bees will in a few days unite into one colony, and if it is done early in the fall, the honey from one will all be carried into the combs of the other hive, and they form one good colony.

On the approach of winter, all hives, of whatever form, should be carried to a dry, dark cellar, not too warm if it is possible: or to some out-building, where they can be kept sheltered and dark. The object of thus protecting them is principally to save honey, as bees consume full one-third less when housed in a comfortably warm place. If this is not possible, and it is necessary to leave them on their summer stands, the en-

trance should face north, and a few boards or a shock of corn-fodder or straw, thrown about the hive to protect from the sun rather than cold. If they have sufficient stores and numbers, they will winter well thus, with a greater loss in weight, provided the third essential is regarded—namely, ventilation.

I have seen bees left out of doors frozen into one solid block of ice in the hives. The owners attributed the loss to severe cold; but it was caused entirely by want of ventilation. The hives were air-tight, or nearly so, except the entrance: the breath and moisture having no outlet by which to escape, accumulated; in a warm time, it caused excessive damp in the hive and on the bees—a sudden change of temperature occurred, and the mass of wet bees became ice—the entrance even was filled with ice. If a few small holes had been left open, near or on the top of the hive, the dampness would have escaped and the bees remained dry in warm weather and sufficiently warm when it became cold. I have seen an old gum with the top half warped off come out of winter in fine order, while six or more tight, new hives on the bench beside it were in the state before described. In arranging ventilation, care should be taken to have no draught of air through the hive—the entrance should be nearly closed, and one or more of the holes where the surplus boxes are placed left open. Glass sides, or observation-glasses in hives that are to be wintered out of doors, are very objectionable, unless a piece of carpet or blanket be tacked over the glass on the approach of cold weather. When bees are placed in cellars, more air may safely be given them; box-hives may be turned upside down and so left, and other hives have the entrance nearly closed, and all the honey boards and boxes removed.

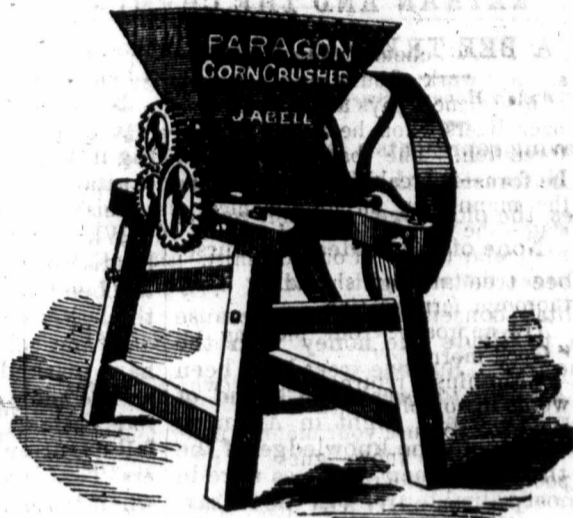
They should not be carried into the cellar or house before the last of November, and be taken out in March or early in April. I recommend this plan from experience, having for twelve successive winters kept from sixty to one hundred and thirty colonies in a cellar with perfect success; the bees coming out in spring with very slight loss in numbers, having consumed but little honey, and the combs being bright and in good order. Even in a Southern climate, many have tried putting them in the dark for two or three months with marked success, as the bees retain their numbers better and consume less honey when not allowed to fly out when there was nothing to gather.

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