

CELLAR WINTERING

Two or three conditions are essential to the successful wintering of bees in the cellar, and named in the order of their importance they would stand about as follows:— Good quality of stores, quiet, even temperature, and ventilation.

It is about the second condition, keeping the bees quiet, that I wish more particularly to speak. Too often the work of fitting up the colonies for winter is left until the cool fall weather, when the bees are clustered in a semi-dormant condition, and any disturbance at this time is bitterly resented. Not only is the work uncomfortable for the apiarist, but it is positively harmful for the bees. The cluster that has formed at the first approach of cool weather is rudely broken and the clouds of smoke poured into the hives to subdue the thoroughly aroused and angry bees, cannot but have a most harmful effect upon their subsequent wintering in the cellar.

The evil effects of smoking the bees are not felt to the same extent if the work is done while they are flying freely, but if left until too late in the Fall it will be a serious handicap to successful wintering. The smoke causes the bees to load themselves with honey, and with no way of working it off, their intestines become clogged, and it is only a matter of time before the evil effects of this overloading is manifested by their restless behavior, and in many cases by dysentery, before the winter is over.

The only safe way to overcome this difficulty is to prepare for winter before the cool weather sets in, and our most successful apiar-

ists recognize this fact by commencing their winter preparations at the close of the honey harvest. It is true that at this time the hives usually contain a lot of brood, but it is surprising what a quantity of syrup can be forced into the brood nests by heavy feeding.

The next disturbance occurs when setting them into the cellar, but if proper precautions are taken there need be but little harm done at this time. Any cool cloudy day after the middle of November may be chosen for this work. The bottom boards should be pried loose from the hive bodies the evening before, so that there will be no jarring the hives when putting in wedges for ventilation. The Hives should be handled gently and no smoke used at this time. If colonies cannot be handled without the use of smoke then leave them alone until some more suitable day for the work. Disturbances in the cellar, either by jarring the hives, noise, or light, are all harmful and should be avoided.

There are other conditions necessary to successful wintering as stated before, but I wish to emphasize the necessity of perfect quiet not only during the time the bees are in the cellar, but also when they are clustered in the hives during the cool days of October and November. It is always bad practice to disturb a hive of bees that has clustered on the combs, and the thoughtful apiarist will see that hives are well filled with stores and all necessary winter preparations made just as early in the season as possible.

F. P. ADAMS.

We are glad to have the above article from Mr. Adams. The pro-

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