

Bees in Winter.

SOME HINTS ABOUT BEES IN CELLARS OR OUT-OF-DOORS.

IF bees are wintered in cellars or underground repositories of any kind it would be much better if some absorbing material were used over the frames, and directly against them, just over the cluster of bees.

There is a great benefit in keeping the bees dry, by absorbing all dampness that arises therefrom; hence, in cellar as well as out-door wintering, this will be found a great benefit. This can readily be accomplished by leaving the cover off and placing a chaff cushion on the hive instead.

It is almost impossible to winter bees successfully in cellars that are used for other purposes, such as those used under dwellings for keeping vegetables and other commodities for family use. The unceasing interruptions by entering and re-entering will prove an annoyance to the bees to such an extent that trouble is likely to follow. This is against the most important point in successfully wintering bees, and that is perfect quietude during winter, both in and out-of-doors, and our advice is to those who do not have cellars or caves especially for bees, and for no other purpose, to winter out-doors. Cellars, properly arranged, are no doubt ahead of any other method of wintering, but every point in connection must be strictly adhered to.

Bees in underground repositories should remain in them the entire winter, in an undisturbed condition, and, if their condition will allow, they should not be removed therefrom much before the first of May. If they are put out before this, cold snaps are very hard on them and may result in their destruction. If they are found in such condition, as their confinement longer is impossible, they may be put out on a fine day to give them a purifying flight and placed back in the cellar thereafter. This is the only safe method of handling them. Thus if bees are in proper condition in the fall when placed into winter quarters, but little work during winter is required, although a few details cannot be dispensed with. They must have an overseer to keep everything in its proper place.

Bees wintered out-doors should have protection from the cold of winter, and as it is now a very uncommon thing to find them in any other way, it is not necessary to say anything on the method of protection. During winter, upon days that they can fly, it is very necessary to have prepared alighting places for them about the entrance, as, on such weather as the bees are able to take a flight, it often occurs that the

weather turns suddenly cold and chilly, and bees coming in fall at the entrance, and if they cannot travel directly into the hive by means of a sloping bank of some prepared material, or a board, they are lost, being unable to take wing a second time to gain an entrance; hence the necessity of an alighting place. This may be made by banking up of earth to the entrance of the hive. A covering of sawdust, sand or gravel is very good to cover the surface.

Snow about the hives will do no harm, even if the hives are totally covered. Many are foolish in removing snow from the entrances of hives during winter, thinking that the bees will suffocate. There is no danger of this. It is more of a protection, and should not be meddled with.

Any warm day when the bees are flying freely, they may be examined by the apiarist, but only on such days. We should not, however, put off until spring to make examinations, but take advantage of the occasion when a warm day comes. If we find that any colony lacks stores during winter, we can furnish them food in the shape of candy, but only in cold weather, when syrup feeding will not answer. Syrup will have a tendency to produce diarrhoea; thus candy only should be used. The candy should be made from granulated sugar, and placed over the frames. A. H. Duff in City and Country.

Golden-rod.

IS THE GOLDEN-ROD A VALUABLE HONEY-PLANT.

I WONDER if golden-rod is not greatly over-estimated by bee-men. So it seems to me. In this locality I consider it of doubtful value to bee-keepers. I have watched many times to catch a bee upon it, but not more than once or twice have I seen a bee touch it; and then it deserted the flower as though it had made a mistake.

The other day I walked a half mile to a rich bottom where was an abundance of golden-rod in bloom, but with the usual disappointment. I was disappointed because I have often wished to see bees working upon it. The name is associated with the poetry of rural life, is rich sentiment to every bee-keeper, and I have often sought for the fulfilment of cherished hopes and life-long desires—but in vain.

I wonder if it can be that in other localities it does really respond to the kiss of *Apis Mellifica*. I hope so. Or is the barrenness only comparative, and on account of the greater