

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

Moths in the Hive.

I HAVE a colony of bees about three or four years old in one of Thomas' double boarded hives. The frames are now fastened firmly by the bees, not having been moved in all that time. I think moths have got in, and I wish to move them into another hive. What do you think is the best disposition I could make of them, being all black. Could the bees and honey be transferred to one of your nuclei, or can the combs and all be put into another hive at this season of the year with any satisfactory results? I am only a novice, although I have worked with bees, more or less, for 20 years or more.

Yours truly,

S. McDONALD.

Muirkirk, October 10, 1890.

Your colony may have been in the hive a great number of years, but you have no bees one year old except queens; no worker bee ever lived to see his anniversary. I do not think there is any danger of moths doing you much harm as long as there is a good healthy queen in the hive. Sometimes when bees do not do very well after being a long time in the hive, their owner is apt to imagine it is on account of moths, and accordingly there has been much said in reference to their depredations. It would not be wise to move them this fall. Transferring late in the fall is almost certain destruction. If you wish to transfer them to a more convenient hive, you might do so next spring, during fruit bloom or at the commencement of the white clover bloom. Cutting the combs loose from your frames and putting them in others would be an easy matter, but the cool weather being at hand would not allow the bees to work the wax, therefore they could not fasten them properly. Besides, it would thoroughly discourage them, and before they got properly clustered again and settled down, winter would be on and they would die. See that they have plenty of stores, and if they come out in good condition next spring we shall be pleased to give you full instructions in reference to transferring.

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Removing the Combs Just After the Honey Harvest.

IN the fall of 1889 I had several colonies that were not strong enough to winter. In looking them over I took all but three combs

from one colony, shaking bees in front of hive thinking they would cluster on the three remaining combs which contained some honey, but on entering the hive they clustered on the side left vacant by the removal of the combs. The colony was about the strength of a small third swarm. I fully expected that they would move over to the comb, but they remained clustered for 25 days, or until I sold them to a neighbor to strengthen a colony of his. I could not see that they left the cluster at all or touched the honey in the hive. This fall I left a colony of about the same size on three combs without honey. For the first week they could get honey enough from the asters to sustain life, that is without storing any amount. Unusually early frost cut off this scant supply, and they have been "holding the fort," I should think, at least fourteen days "without any visible means of support." I cannot believe that they steal their living from other colonies, as it is very seldom that a bee can be seen to leave the hive at all, even while other colonies are sending out hundreds of them. I think this now, if you have brought out in regard to the saving of stores is worth investigating. It is certainly a very interesting question. The idea is new, at least to me, and I do not remember of ever seeing it in print.

J. F. DUNN.

Ridgetown, October 23, 1890.

P. S.—I have just been out in a pouring rain with a lantern to examine the colony referred to above, and find them quietly clustered between combs. In jarring the hive they came up in quite a saucy manner. There are no dead bees on the bottom board.

The circumstances which you relate are somewhat similar to those related by us on page 302, and it really seems to us that this is a subject that should be carried further. We make further reference to the colony, which we still have in the hive without combs, in this issue, as you will see by reference to "Our Own Apiary." Since we examined them last we find they have built a little in the combs, and this leads us to enquire whether it would not be a good idea to place empty frames in the hive into which the bees are shaken, or even frames with strips or starters of foundation as comb guides, then the work which they do will not be lost, and the saving of stores which will be effected will amount to about the same thing. The comb thus started can be used the next season.