

Seasonal Work for Beekeepers

Harvesting

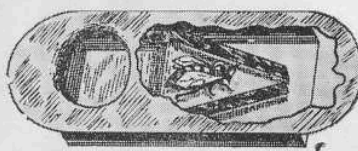
MANY methods are used to remove surplus stores of honey from the hives, including brushing the bees off the combs, the use of any odorous disinfectant (carbolic), and bee escape boards. A bee brush in the hands of a competent beekeeper may be used occasionally to advantage; but, generally speaking, this method is not good, especially where there are combs of honey not fully capped over, or where there are broken burr or brace combs. In either case the brush soon becomes clogged and hard with liquid honey. In these circumstances many bees are injured or killed, and the rest of the colony soon becomes irritated and aggressive. The work is slow and laborious, and in the autumn robbing conditions will quickly develop, making it impossible for the beekeeper to continue without serious consequences.

While the use of strong disinfectants, applied on the top of the hive with the aid of a specially-constructed cloth and metal cover, is the quickest way to drive bees down and out of the supers, this method, in the light of considerable experience of recent years, cannot be recommended for the safe removal of honey at harvesting time. No matter how careful the beekeeper may be, the honey is contaminated little or much according to the method of application, and where carbolic taint is not noticeable as such the natural delicate flavour and aroma of the honey is destroyed.

Bee Escape Boards

The most effective and safe method so far used by modern beekeepers to remove the surplus crop of honey is by means of a Porter bee escape fitted into a flat board, cleated on one side to provide a bee space as illustrated, and made to the top dimensions of the hive in use. The bee escape is a small metal trap or spring through which the bees can pass one way only, and once they leave the super by this means they cannot return.

To place the board in position loosen the top super of honey with a hive tool at the back end to break any propolis connections, tilt the super up with one hand so that it rests on its front edge, and slide in the escape board as far as it will go, then let the super rest down gently on it and straighten both the board and super into alignment with the hive. With practice the operation can be completed in a few seconds without undue disturbance of the bees.



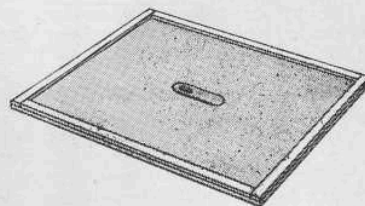
Porter Bee-Escape.

Where bees are shut off from the colony below in this manner they will not rest until they find an exit, which they eventually do by passing down through the flexible outlet in the escape board. Should there be brood in the super, however, the bees will not leave. The usual practice is to place the escape boards on the hives late in the day and remove the honey supers early the following morning when they are usually free of all bees.

Double outlet escapes are an improvement, as they guard against the possibility of a blockage either by an injured bee or by pieces of projecting burr comb. It is also an improvement to place two escapes in each board,

one on each side slightly away from centre.

Hodson Ventilated Board. The Hodson ventilated escape board is a wooden frame covered with wire cloth, which allows the warmth of the colony to rise into the super, and was designed to keep the honey warm above the escape board for easy extraction from the combs. Where used well above the brood nest this appliance is effective; but when placed under the third



Bee Escape Board.

super or close to the main colony cluster, many of the bees above the escape board seem content to remain there, where it is warm and where they also have contact, through the wire mesh, with the colony below.

—T. S. WINTER, Senior Apiary Instructor, Wellington.

"HUME"

CONCRETE PRODUCTS

We wish to advise all customers that we are now actively engaged on essential War Work.

In the meantime we shall be manufacturing only limited supplies of

WATER TROUGHS, WASHTUBS, BOILER FRAMES, SEPTIC TANKS, PAVING SLABS, TERRAZZO SINK BENCHES, Etc.

Send your enquiries early. All orders will be filled in strict rotation.

