

the weather-conditions are absolutely wintry. The risk in moving bees longer distances is not of course as great, because when they are moved from their old landmarks they will not desert their hives until they have taken an inventory of their new surroundings. However, in this there is another danger to be feared—namely, that by overheating the colonies a condition known as “scalded brood” may be produced, and result in the destruction of thousands of embryo bees. The wise beekeeper will therefore invariably choose the depth of winter for moving his bees either long or short distances.

DRY MATS.

During the winter months it is well to examine the mats at intervals in order to note their condition, more especially after heavy rain. Where mats are damp they should be removed and dry ones substituted. A supply of dry mats should always be kept on hand. In order to leave the colony undisturbed, carefully lift one end of the cover and examine the mat. If it has to be removed, see that the smoker is ready in case the bees are troublesome, but on no account use smoke unless the bees have to be driven down. Remove the wet mat as quickly as possible, replace it with the dry one, and cover the hive at once.

LEAKY COVERS.

If the mats are wet there must be a reason for it, in which case look to the covers. It is surprising how little attention is paid to covers. It is such a simple matter to make roofs waterproof that there is no excuse for any beekeeper exposing his bees to the danger of dampness in winter. More bees are lost through neglect in this direction than from any other cause during the cold weather, with the exception perhaps of actual starvation. Bees must be kept dry. Where the roofs are cracked do not attempt to tinker with them, but cover them entirely with some good waterproof material. Zinc or galvanized iron is the ideal covering, and some up-to-date beekeepers use sheet lead, the latter serving the double purpose of keeping the roofs dry, whilst its additional weight resists the onslaught of winter gales. However, if cost is a consideration, the thinner makes of rubberoid will serve the purpose admirably, and last for years with careful treatment.

PERMANENT SHELTER.

This is the season when it is most evident to the observant beekeeper that bees require plenty of shelter from high winds. The planting of shelter-hedges to protect the apiary should now be taken