

placed on top of the brood-chamber and the supers tiered above the mats. Unless the apiary is well sheltered, however, they must be weighted, as the winter gales may easily upset them when only empty combs are stored inside. It is far better to remove the combs if it can possibly be done, and thereby obviate the labour of lifting the supers if it becomes necessary to examine the brood-chamber. But in this case the combs must be properly housed to secure them from destruction by mice and wax-moths. It is not uncommon to find tiers of extracting-combs destroyed as the result of carelessness. Mice are especially destructive, and the damage they will do in a short period is such as to render the greatest trouble worth while in preventing them from gaining access to the combs.

During extracting many combs may become damaged, but the damage can be repaired by the bees when the combs are returned to the hives. As a rule, however, mice destroy the combs beyond repair, and no effort on the part of the bees can restore them to their original form. It is during the working season that the beekeeper realizes the value of combs in securing a crop. A shortage of combs during the flow will often prevent the bees being kept in working trim, and the production of honey will be greatly restricted. Mice destroy the combs to gain access to the pollen, and render them foul and offensive to the bees. In the absence of a mouse-proof room the combs can be stacked in supers tiered one above another. Be sure that there are no holes or cracks in the supers through which mice can obtain an entrance. Place a queen-excluder at the bottom of the tier and another on the top. Queen-excluders, if used as described, are a complete success in preventing mice from destroying combs during the off-season.

Should the wax-moth be detected the combs must be fumigated. Bisulphide of carbon is generally used for destroying insect-life, but it should be used with great caution, as it is highly inflammable. It is far better when storing the combs at the end of the season to place a few moth-balls among them. This will usually be sufficient to prevent the attack of the moths.

CARE OF UTENSILS.

As soon as the honey has been disposed of all utensils used in handling the crop should be thoroughly cleaned. Remove all traces of honey from the extractor, tanks, uncapping-knives, &c. Wash carefully with boiling water and dry thoroughly to prevent rusting. The high cost of working equipment should impel the beekeeper to take great care in storing his plant during the off-season. It is advantageous to use loose washing covers of close texture to cover the tanks and extractor. The covers will help to keep the utensils free from dust that is likely to accumulate during the winter. See that all metal parts likely to rust are given a good coating of oil. In season or out of season the watchword of the beekeeper in the extracting-house should be cleanliness.

BOTTOM-BOARDS.

Before finally closing down the hives for winter the bottom-boards will require attention, and may be cleaned by scraping. Usually there is an accumulation of pollen, wax-particles, and dead bees, and,