

Winter Work for the Domestic Beekeeper

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ONCE all outside work in the apiary is finished the domestic beekeeper should repair and renovate equipment in preparation for the next honey season. To ensure long service from supers they should be well painted and properly stored to protect them from wind and rain. Equipment left lying round the apiary not only looks untidy but deteriorates very rapidly. With the increasing use of exotic timbers for beekeeping woodware beekeepers should be aware of the need to use a suitable timber preservative, and for this they are advised to use only good lead and oil paint.

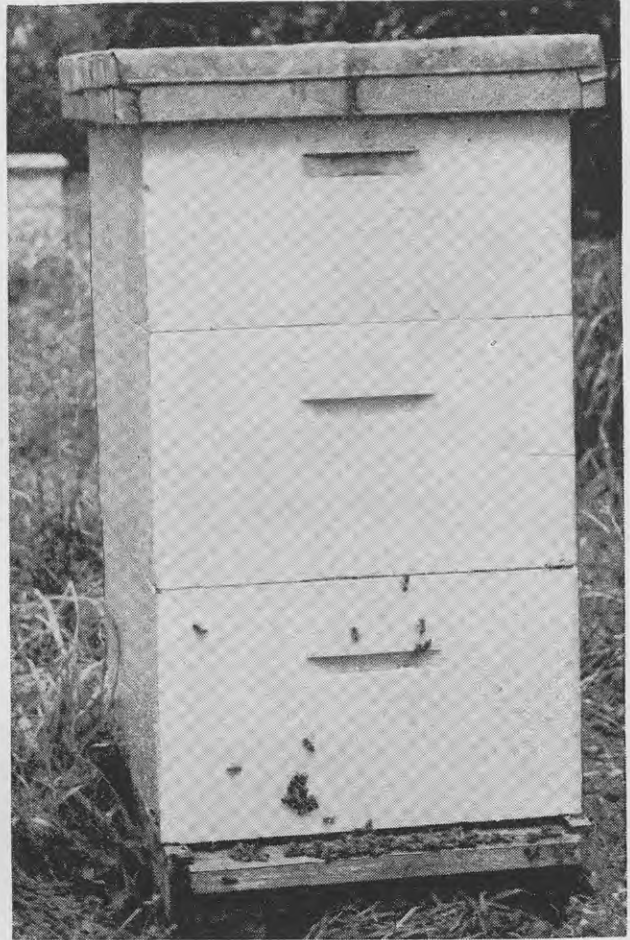
QUITE often domestic beekeepers use creosote or other similar tar derivatives to preserve supers and hive parts. This practice is not recommended because fumes from creosote during hot weather can be absorbed by the honey within the hives. When this occurs the honey becomes tainted and objectionable for human consumption. Fumes from creosote can also distress the bees and in some instances will drive them from the hive.

Checking of Bee Combs

All bee combs should be checked, and damaged ones or combs containing a lot of drone cells should be rendered down and the beeswax salvaged. This is done by breaking the combs into fairly small pieces and dropping them into a tin or bucket of water kept simmering over a small fire or stove. Care should be taken that the material does not boil too vigorously, as it tends to boil over very easily. This material should be kept well agitated while it is boiling. After being allowed to boil for some time it can be left to cool, or if desired, the wax can be poured into a small mould while it is still hot.

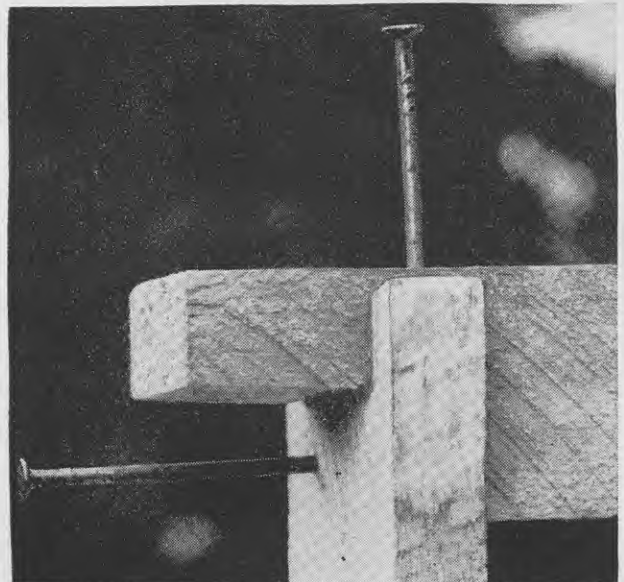
Examination of Extracting Equipment

It is also advisable during winter to examine all extracting equipment. Honey extractors can deteriorate very quickly if they are not thoroughly cleaned and dried after use. Once rust starts, especially in the baskets of the machine, it is difficult to arrest and this sometimes can prove very costly. Honey tanks should be cleaned, dried, and then left turned upside down while not in use to prevent them accumulating dust and dampness. The honey knife and strainers should also be examined and put away carefully.



[Rendells]
A well constructed, tight-fitting hive of standard specifications.

▼ Correct method of check nailing a frame.



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