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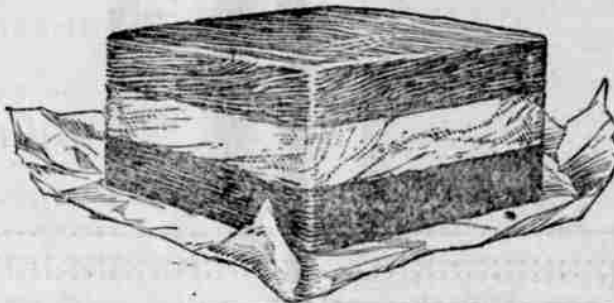
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The Honey Bee Industry in Douglas County

By WM. B. HOAG, Sutherlin, Bee Agriculturist from Missouri University

In Sutherlin Valley and surrounding country, it seems that very little has ever been done or even attempted, in the way of bee culture, therefore this valuable industry has not been developed as it should have been. Of course, as it is with all other industries, there are certain climatic conditions that unite to make one section of the country much more suitable to bee culture than the other section. The apiarist always meets his difficulties as well as the poultryman or the apple-grower.

From my own experience and observation, I am not ready to advise any one in this particular part of Douglas county to launch out heartily in the bee business on a commercial scale. However with watchful management, I do not see any reason why any farmer, fruit grower or back-yard gardener should not produce sufficient honey for his own family use, unless it be his own timidity of the little creatures, and few people there are who do not appreciate a section of nice comb honey on the dining table.

In the native flora of this country I find a large number of honey plants, and while the growth and bloom of such plants is not so profuse as it is in many other sections, yet I believe, it is sufficient to keep busy a great many strong colonies of bees.

Then too, as this country is developed, with greater acreage of alfalfa, sweet clover, and similar crops, the conditions will be much more favorable for bee culture.

I am firmly convinced that every fruit grower should also be a bee keeper, to the extent of having a few strong colonies of bees located in or very near his orchard. There bees will often more than pay for themselves many times over as pollinating agents, even if the owner should never get a pound of honey from them. This I believe to be especially true of the fruit growing sections of Douglas county where we have so much rainy weather during the orchard blooming season.

It has been found that honey bees are much better agents than all other insects put together for pollinating fruit blossoms.

True it is, that in some sections during previous years, bee men have suffered much loss from spray poison. But where orchard owners learn enough about their business, to know that it is better for them to look after the management of their own orchards than to depend upon some disinterested contractor, and learn that there is seldom, if ever, any excuse for damaging their

own crop by spraying while trees are in full bloom, then this difficulty will be practically eliminated. To the beginner in bee keeping, I would first say, learn something about the business. Get a good book of recognized authority on bee culture, and study it. One of the best books on this subject will not cost you over \$3.75. Learn the nature of bees and their life habits. It may take you a little longer to learn this way, but it is safer and generally cheaper than the same knowledge gained from the business end of the bees. Then get acquainted with your bees and give them a chance to get acquainted with you.

The right kind of bees are not half so bad as many people think they are. At first my wife was so afraid of bees that she would only stand off at a distance and look at them like so many desperadoes to be strictly avoided. At one time I had occasion to transfer some bees from old hives into new hives and needed a little help. While working with the first hive I pointed out to her the queen in whom she became very much interested at once.

While taking the combs from the next box and placing them in the new hive, imagine my surprise when I looked around and saw my wife, bare handed, holding in one hand one of those combs literally covered with bees crawling over each other, and with the other bare hand she was sorting those bees around like so many beans in a pan. She was trying to find another queen, and at the time, had actually forgotten that bees ever had stingers—and apparently the bees had forgotten it too.

Bees resent rough handling, or intruding into their private chamber at the wrong time, quicker than any other living creatures of domestic culture. For my own keeping I prefer the pure Italian bees. I can not say that they are always better producers of honey, but they have always done fully as well for me as the black bees, and I have always found them much more easily handled. I find them more quiet and not so easily excited when the hive is opened. Also I find the Italians are what I call better "House Keepers." In keeping their hive free from moth, which is a very important matter. Do not try to keep bees in box "gums" or discarded nail kegs. They will always prove unprofitable and unsatisfactory in every way, unless you are out looking for trouble. Place your bees in clean modern movable frame hives where you can handle them easily and

properly, and give them the attention that they need.

The real secret of success in bee culture is in building up and keeping a few strong colonies rather than a large number of weak ones.

This brings us to the subject of "Spring Dwindling" which seems to be the cause of much loss with many bee keepers.

This trouble may come about in different ways. First let us understand something of the life of the bee. The average life of a worker during a heavy flower season is from 45 to 60 days.

During periods of less activity they live two to three months, and during the winter months they may survive 6 months. Now some one says: "At that rate the whole swarm would soon be dead and gone," but wait, a strong healthy queen at the same time during the honey flow is laying from 1500 to 3000 eggs every twenty-four hours. Have any of you poultry folks got a hen that will beat that? But this same queen also has a resting period. Her heaviest laying is done when there is a large supply of food coming in, and when the food supply becomes scarce she slackens up in her laying or may cease altogether.

That means that if the queen is not laying in late summer or fall, there will be no young bees to go into winter quarters and the old bees that constitute the colony, being naturally short lived any way, dwindle away during the winter and by spring there are none left to start spring work. Even if a few should pull through, the colony is so weak that the queen will not begin early laying as she should because there are not enough bees to bring in sufficient food for her young brood. To avoid this trouble then it is necessary to see that the colony has a plentiful supply of food (honey) in the brood chamber to keep the queen laying through the fall season.

Also an old queen will not lay so well nor so late in the fall as a young one, therefore it is best to always have young queens. The life of a queen is much longer than that of a worker, and may reach to 4 or 5 years, but it is best to replace the colony at least every 2 years, and some apiarists think best to replace their colonies every year. We should examine our hives then in early fall and if the food supply is low and very little honey coming in, it then becomes necessary to supply this shortage by extra feeding. For this purpose always use pure granulated sugar the same as

for table use. Never use corn syrup, molasses, or inferior grades of sugar for during the winter when the bees are shut in and can not take their regular flights, such inferior grades of food will give them "Bee Dementia" and the whole colony may be lost in a short time. There is a Bee Candy in the market that may sometimes be used. There are various styles of bee feeders that one can buy, but a clean kind and one that I have found very satisfactory is made from an ordinary one quart friction top syrup can that you can get at the grocery store. Perforate the lid with a shingle nail making three dozen or more holes.

Fill the can with sugar syrup made by adding one part of warm water to one part of sugar, for winter feeding, one part warm water to two parts sugar. Press the lid on tightly and turn the can up side down, setting it on top of the racks.

Place an empty can on, and then the hive lid over the sugar. This keeps all other bees and insects away from the syrup, and the bees in the hive will take the syrup as fast as it drips down and store it in their combs. They will empty the can in less than twenty-four hours and as they empty it each time, refill it for them until they have filled up their combs sufficiently. A colony should have at least 25 to 30 lb. of honey or syrup for their winter store. Then other conditions being favorable, they will go through the winter in good shape and the queen will begin laying in early spring and hatch out a strong colony of young workers that will be ready to rush out and gather the season's harvest.

One serious pest that I find here is the common bee moth. In most bee countries the bee moth is considered a sort of joke on the bee keeper, the same as chicken lice to the poultry man; an indication of carelessness. It is generally thought that if all other conditions are kept favorable and the colonies are kept strong that the bees will take care of the moth themselves. Of course it is true that the weak colonies are always the first ones attacked by the moth. But I have frequently found moth in my strongest hives when the brood chamber was full of brood and the honey and the hive actually crowded with busy active bees.

Of course these moths do not stay very long for I generally make an inspection of the hives once every week during warm weather and correct anything that I find wrong. In the three years that I have been here I have found no indication of "Foul Brood," and do not know of any in our vicinity always be placed in a location well protected from cold winds, as such wind is often very detrimental and sometimes fatal to the entire colony. This has been proven by experiment even in large apiaries. Many bee keepers leave their hives sitting open all winter with no extra covering or

packing. This I believe to be wrong even in as mild a climate as we have in Douglas County.

Many people have the idea that bees hibernate in their hives when the weather becomes cold, like flies, ants, or spiders, and so the cold does not injure them.

This however is a mistake, as bees do not hibernate as we commonly speak of other insects hibernating. When the temperature is about 60 degrees F.H., the bees go into a quiescent state or what might be called sleep. In this condition, the bees naturally consume the least amount of food. But when the temperature falls below 57 the bees begin to become restless and active and in a short time raise the temperature of their cluster to even a higher temperature than 60. Then of course they begin feeding on their winter stores and may in a short time exhaust those stores and then face starvation and cold which soon kills them. I think that it is best to keep the hives under a bee shed in winter with a wind break; and before cold weather, I set the hives close together and then pack them with six or eight inches of dry saw-dust shavings, or chaff. Of course the entrance must be kept open, but should be closed partly to keep the wind out.

In regard to the matter of planting crops for honey, I believe it is always profitable where such crops will grow successfully to grow alfalfa, sweet clover, buck wheat, etc. They furnish a large amount of nectar for the bees and the crop always pays for the cultivation when harvested, aside from the honey. But plants that are grown exclusively for the bees do not produce a commercial crop themselves are not generally considered profitable.

To any one who is interested in the study of natural history and especially the insects, I believe that the honey bee furnishes the most interesting subject for study of all the insects known to entomologists. Any one can spend many pleasant hours studying the life of these different stages of the bee, watching and studying these busy little creatures as they go and come with the one object in view, to permeate their colonies. They know nothing but work, or fight in defense if an enemy appears. They have a perfect system of division of labor, yet never take time to observe a national "labor day."

There are sentinels who guard the entrance, field workers who gather and bring in the nectar and pollen helpers who stay in the hive and help unload the nectar from the field workers and fill the cells, brooders who care for and feed the young bees, the bee house, and the "Royal Serpent" who eats for and feeds the queen. And it is with their marvelous food for the bees, the mother of millions. She is the only fully developed female in the hive. The workers are undeveloped fe-

males who never hesitate to give their own life by stinging an enemy in defense of their queen or her brood. The drones are the male bees, and after the breeding season they are stung to death by their own sisters and carried and dumped out of the hive. Hard hearted you say? Well this is not the worst they do. Bees have no hospital nor medical dispensaries. When a working bee has worn its life out gathering food for the colony, and becomes weak, sick, or crippled in any way, the well ones rudely push her out of the hive to die outside, regardless of weather conditions. Well I haven't any ways near exhausted the subject, but I'm tired.

So Good-bye,
WM. B. HOAG, B. Agr.
from Missouri University

The Love of the Soil

(Continued from page 15.)

the farmers with anything but homelike. The farming class must help itself, by working together, not standing apart. Profit is what every dealer is after, and it is always very noticeable how they fight price down at buying time.

All the co-operative enterprises that have been launched have attained one end at least. They have created real competition for the dealers. Thus, this spring Douglas wool raisers outside of the wool association received much above the market price for their wool, because dealers were trying to discredit the association. In some cases dealers paid more for coarse wool than the huge fine wool clips of eastern Oregon brought.

Why any farmer should argue against co-operative association is beyond comprehension, for the man who is out of the association often reaps as much benefit as the man who is in. However, the mohair clip in the association this year brought much more than private buyers gave in the spring. So the rule may soon be different.

One thing is very plain from Oregon experience, the overhead expense must be kept down in both private and co-operative enterprise if farmers returns are going to be more profitable.

Why business cannot be handled more cheaply, on smaller margins, is hard to discern. It now costs as much, many times more, to sell a thing, including transportation, than it does to make it or produce it. But yet there are commission houses which do big business, honest business too, on five per cent gross margins. A reliable commission house in Portland charges but one-half a cent a dozen for selling eggs, no matter if the price is 50 cents or 15 cents a dozen. The volume must be increased and expense reduced.

That is the problem in economic the near future for both consumer and producer.

Fair Prices Needed

Now, in conclusion, permit me suggest that farmers of the country do not need loans. We see the insurance companies, individuals, farm loan banks, and all kinds of agencies catering to the farmer and farm owner favor by lent money. But that is not what farming class needs. What it must have, now or later, is somewhat better and fairer prices or less and lower expense. Prices are extremely high, and it is clear out of reason, compared to the price the labor produces in the grain.

But to the man who has the "of the land" in his blood, if article has not dissolved the enthusiasm, let me say that he can be a success of agricultural life. doubt the same energy and combined with the appropriate amount of aptitude, will make greater success in any profession, but, nevertheless, on Douglas farms success may be attained.

Nineteen Twenty-Three

(By 1923, Western Newspaper Union)

THEY friends are all important. That this year may be fortunate. They weave a special wish. About this year to guard it. Let any harm should come to. Because old time says "Twenty-Three" Grace and good cheer attend this. And out all shapes of doubt and

But it will be well not to put too faith in resolutions. Resolutions often the vapors of auto-intoxication. They are the rainbows that sue the last storm, before the tears are dried up. They are the halos that place upon our heads too soon. They are the thin ice that glitters but us through.

There is more power in resolution. If a man can overcome himself he conquered his worst enemy. He have to use both fists to knock him out and both feet to kick himself. He will have to get himself down sit upon himself before he can himself.

This is worth while, but it is pleasant and difficult. Resolutions apt to fail before it or be entirely gotten, but resolution can do it. Have force to spare. As a poet said:

So high is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, "Thou must,"
The youth replies, "I can."