

# Salem Is the Center of a Potentially Great Beekeeping Industry, Which Must of Necessity Be Made Great, to Assure the Pollination of Fruit

## GET GOLDEN ITALIAN BEES AND KEEP ON THE JOB; AND PROVIDE BEE PASTURE

The Greatest Industry of All, Beekeeping, Is Being Neglected and Left Unprotected Here, and Mr. Alley, a State Wide Authority on Bees, Says Our Fruit Men Will Have to Wake Up and Stay Awake

One of the outstanding authorities on bee culture in all Oregon is F. M. Alley, who is employed in the Southern Pacific freight office and whose home is at 371 South Church street. Mr. Alley formerly kept about 25 stands of bees in Salem. He sold most of them to the Cottage Farm of the asylum for the insane some years ago; but he now has six stands. Mr. Alley was too busy with his work to write an article for this Salem slogan issue of The Statesman; but he told the reporter more interesting things about bees than could be portrayed in a newspaper page of type.

Mr. Alley said it was estimated that bees go an average of two miles from their hives for nectar; and that there are statements of flights of seven miles. But he said they will not go 700 yards if they don't have to.

When the maples are in bloom in Salem they go to the first tree; and in the height of the maple bloom every maple tree is so full of bees that they sound like a swarm.

The bees are working on the willows now; but they are working more for pollen than for honey. About the first of March, or a little later (somewhat later this year, from present appearances), they will be working on the maples.

The beekeeper harvests only the surplus; nine-tenths of what they gather is turned into brood and bees.

After the maples will come the fruit blossoms, and blooms of shrubs and bushes of various kinds, and berry blossoms.

Maple blossoms last only about three weeks—though some hard maples in Salem last longer.

Then come locusts and white clover and various kinds of berries and flowers, weeds, shrubs, etc.

But by early summer time there is little bee pasture left here.

During the time when the daylight is longest and conditions are the most ideal for the work of the bees, there is little for them to gather.

The spring flow is wonderful here; but the spring weather conditions are seldom right to get the whole benefit of the early flow.

Mr. Alley says the orchardists must see sweet clover, and lots of it. He says it is a great soil renovator and makes good pasture and hay. He knows of a man in Kansas who raises nothing but sweet clover, and he is an extensive stock breeder as well as beekeeper.

Mr. Alley says the Scotch broom, which is getting a great start here, is fine for bees. It should be scattered everywhere, in forest places and along road sides.

The fire weed, sometimes called elk weed, or Indian pink, or rose bay, or willow herb, makes a great bee pasture.

He does not think a great deal of buckwheat, for this part of the country; though it is a great bee pasture in some sections; just as alfalfa east of the Missouri river yields no honey, while it is the greatest bee pasture of all in the west, and more especially in the irrigated districts, where several crops of it are grown.

Mr. Alley thinks the Italian bees are the best; the golden Italians. They throw off the American and European foul brood and other diseases.

Get Italian bees, and keep on the job. That is the recommendation of Mr. Alley.

The time is past when a man can be a successful beekeeper and not keep posted. Fruit growers have got to have bees for pollination purposes; and they have got to provide bee pasture. Then they will have a double profit. Well nourished bees will thrive. They will be strong enough to combat all enemies; diseases as well as others. And there ought to be bee inspection. We have got to come to it. The last legislature enacted a law

under which county courts MAY, on the petition of seven beekeepers, appoint county inspectors. In the eastern Oregon counties where beekeeping is carried on extensively, in the irrigated alfalfa districts, inspectors are being appointed as a matter of course. But beekeeping is more important here in this great fruit district than elsewhere in the whole state, and there must be inspection, and enforcement of proper bee regulations. We protect other industries, says Mr. Alley; but we are leaving the potentially biggest industry of them all unprotected.

## 35 YEARS IN BEE BUSINESS AND NEVER ONE FAILURE

Henry Wohlfart of St. Paul Finds Both Pleasure and Profit in Beekeeping, and He Expects to Remain in the Business as Long as He Is Able to Take Care of His Bees

Editor Statesman: In answer to your letter of Feb. 19th, will say that I would much rather work on bee supplies than write articles on bees for newspapers. I find bee keeping very interesting work, and also profitable if done right. I have been in the bee business about 35 years and have never had a complete failure in all these years. The most important thing to keep in mind in honey production is to have all supplies and beekeeping equipment on hand ready for use before the money flow and swarming season. I have about 65 colonies, which

gave me from three to four thousand pounds of comb honey annually these last few years. They are in fine condition and give promise of another good crop of honey this year. I find both pleasure and profit in beekeeping, and would not be without bees as long as I am able to take care of them. Hoping this will reach you in time, I am, yours truly, —Henry Wohlfart. P. S.—Mr. J. N. Skaife is very kind to say that I know so much about bees, but I think there are a good many people who know more about bees than I.

## ANOTHER FRUIT GROWER SUCCESSFUL WITH BEES

Mr. Hogg Makes His Bees Pay Him More Than a Double Profit for Their Care—His Golden Workers Have Already Started Their Spring Labors

R. W. Hogg, whose fruit farm is two miles up the Willamette river from the Polk county end of the big bridge at Salem, is a successful beekeeper. He told the reporter of The Statesman over the phone that he was too busy to write anything on bees. But he said that he has 26 colonies now, and has kept bees for 15 or 16 years. Last year he sold about 50 supers of honey, 24 pounds to the super, for \$6 a super, or case of 24. In other words, about 1200 pounds of honey, at 25 cents a pound, or \$300. Mr. Hogg said his bees are now working on the pussy willows, and they soon will be at the vine maple;

then the raspberries, wild blackberries, loganberries, etc.; the latter making very fine honey. Mr. Hogg thinks his bees got the nectar from the red clover last year; though many bee men think bees cannot get the nectar from the red clover. He raises hogs, however, and kept the red clover pastured down pretty well. Mr. Hogg's bees are Italians, and he uses golden queens. He says bees are absolutely necessary in the pollination of the fruit blossoms. He says all fruit growers ought to have bees, even though they never get a pound of surplus honey. Whatever surplus honey they get is more than a double profit for the care of the bees.

## THREE COLONIES OF BEES FOR EACH AND EVERY FARMER

That Is the Minimum Recommendation of Mr. Miller; and a Colony for Every Three Acres of Fruit—And He Practices What He Preaches, and Exceeds the Number He Recommends

Editor Statesman: To the average person successful beekeeping is something akin to the Greek language. It is true in the matter of beekeeping, as with other pursuits, that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. That is, it is not conducive to success in a financial way, and may be positively dangerous to the person handling the bees. It was by accident that I became

a beekeeper. When I was a boy of 16 years, we had three boxes, not hives, of bees. My father gave them what little attention they got. This consisted of shaking a swarm from the limb of a pear or apple tree into an empty box, keg, or any receptacle that was at hand. The following evening they were placed on a bench or platform. This was their permanent home. The thrifty beekeeper would take

## DATES OF SLOGANS IN DAILY STATESMAN (In Twice-a-Week Statesman Following Day)

Loganberries, Oct. 9. Prunes, Oct. 16. Dairying October 23. Flax, October 30. Filberts, Nov. 6. Walnuts, Nov. 13. Strawberries, Nov. 20. Apples, November 27. Raspberries, December 4. Mint, December 11. Great Cows, December 18. Blackberries, December 25. Cherries, January 1, 1920. Pears, January 8, 1920. Gooseberries, January 15, 1920. Corn, January 22, 1920. Celery, January 29. Spinach, February 5, 1920.

Onions, February 12, 1920. Potatoes, February 19, 1920. Beans, February 26, 1920. Mining, March 4, 1920. Dehydration, March 11, 1920. Paper Mill, March 18, 1920. Hogs, March 25, 1920. Land, April 1, 1920. National Advertising, April 8. Sheep, April 15. Angora Goats, April 22. Hops, April 29. Poultry, May 6. (Back copies of Salem Slogan editions of the Daily Oregon Statesman are on hand. They are for sale at 5c each, mailed to any address.)

(It will interest some people to know that these back copies are selling fast—that, nearly every day, orders are received from near and distant points for the whole series. They will be sold out before the fifty-two Slogans are completed, without doubt.—Ed.)

an auger, bore two or three holes in the top of the hive, which was once the bottom of the box, then invert a smaller box over these openings. This was done so that the surplus honey could be taken without damaging the bees. But the usual practice was to kill the bees in the old or parent hive at the close of the honey season. The usual method of getting rid of the bees and taking the honey was to dig a small hole in the ground in which about two table spoonfuls of gunpowder was placed, then placing the hive over the powder and drawing the loose earth around the bottom of the hive, so that the fumes from the burning powder could not escape. The powder was then ignited, and it was all off with that stand of bees. This method did not appeal to me. It did not seem right to rob them of their lives, as well as their stores. But an incident which came near causing my father's death ended beekeeping on our ranch for a number of years. My father, while having a swarm of bees, was so severely stung by them that for a time his life was in danger.

This caused me to revise my opinion somewhat. My conclusion was that a dead bee was the safest to handle. A few years later I found a colony of bees in a tree. I wanted that honey, but not bad enough to cut the tree and take it.

I finally got a man who agreed to help me cut the tree, he to take the bees and one-half of the honey. At the time set I took an ax and a saw to the place of meeting, as agreed upon, but my man did not show up. After waiting nearly two hours for him to come, I started to chop the tree, thinking he would be there before I got it down. Finally it fell, but not where I had planned, but in the opposite direction and into a swamp. After waiting quite a while, no man came, and I did not hear or see any bees near the tree. I finally got up courage enough to go out on the tree. The mud and water was half way up the sides. The entrance which the bees had used was under me. I was sure the bees were all drowned, so I began chopping them out. I'll never forget the sensation I had when the ax went through into the hollow and the bees came swarming out. I threw the ax and started to run, fell off into the mud and limbs and got tangled up so badly that I expected the bees to finish me then and there. But no; not a sting.

To make a long story shorter, I took that honey and hived those bees and from that time until the present I would rather handle bees than any other livestock.

What was the reason those bees did not offer to sting?

The answer is simple. I had given them time enough to gorge themselves with honey. An amateur beekeeper will do well to remember that a bee with a well-filled stomach is very docile. In fact, with the equipment to be had at the present time, such as the bee smoker and the modern hive, any one, or most any one, can handle bees with very little danger. The main thing is self control. No nervous or hasty movements. Do not try to hurry the bees too much. Use a good bee smoker filled with old burlap or pieces of grain sacks. Light it; get a good smoke going, then open your hive gently. Give them a little smoke. Go slow. Now you are ready to remove the frames or anything you may care to do with your bees.

Continued on page 4)

Every fruit man and farmer must have bees

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## EVERY FRUIT MAN AND FARMER MUST HAVE BEES

J. N. Skaife, Who Has Had Experience With Bees for 40 Years Within 40 Miles of Salem Says a Colony for Every 10 Acres of Fruit and Five Acres of Berries

Editor Statesman: My experience with and observation of the bee business for the last 40 years within 40 miles of Salem has been that it is a failure, only as a pollenizer, which I consider very necessary to every fruit man and farmer. Keep a few and keep them well. Fruit men seem to think if they have 100 acres of fruit they can keep quite a few bees. They don't consider what their bees will gather honey from after the fruit blossoms are all gone. Don't forget to provide your bees by sowing clover, alsike, vetch or buckwheat. A good colony of bees contains about 30,000, so you may judge the amount of pollenizing one colony may do. Don't buy all crooked comb, diseased colonies, but buy your bees by the pound from some reliable apriary use full sheet, wired in foundation. Those banded Italian bees are the best. Look through your colonies now. See that they have plenty of stores to last until the honey flow comes. Moths never kill a strong colony; it is only the weak ones that go. Keep your colonies two feet or more from the ground, good and dry and with an east front, so that they get the early morning sun. I would say one colony of bees to every ten acres of fruit or five acres of berries.

## NO FARMER SHOULD BE WITHOUT BEES; AND MORE ESPECIALLY NO FRUIT GROWER

With Proper Care, the Average Yields of Honey in the Willamette Valley Will Exceed Those of Any Region Except Southern Oregon—The Fruit Grower Secures a Double Profit From Bees

"Beekeeping for the Oregon Farmer" is the title of Extension Bulletin 282 of the Oregon Agricultural college extension service. It is by A. L. Lovett, professor of entomology. It is dated November, 1919. Following are excerpts from this bulletin: Beekeeping for the Oregon Farmer. Commercial beekeeping is a specialized branch of agriculture requiring careful study and attention to detail. In order to succeed financially the beekeeper must be well acquainted with the various manipulations necessary about an apiary and must have access to the periodicals containing specialized information on the subject. The occupation is thus rather for the occasional man with special qualifications than for the average farmer. As a pastime, however, for persons fairly adapted to the work, it offers great possibilities. This bulletin is prepared for beginners in beekeeping, and especially for the farmer or orchardist who desires a few stands of bees for pollinating purposes and for securing sufficient honey for home use.

NO FARMER SHOULD BE WITHOUT A FEW STANDS OF BEES; for, with proper care and manipulation, enough honey for home consumption can be secured from one or two colonies. A fruit grower can secure a DOUBLE PROFIT from his bees in the honey and wax obtained and in the added value given his fruit through cross-pollination. The pollination of fruit trees is an important consideration in the northwest; it has many times been shown that insects furnish the most important means of distributing pollen to self-sterile plants, and that of these the honey-bee is probably the most important. Though it is probably the exceptional season when honey-bees are of much service in pollinating red clover, many other field crops are benefited. As the acreage of alsike clover increases there will be a real field for the bees, both for pollination and for the collection of a fair excess of excellent honey. Honey is a product which occurs in nature in the shape of nectar in the flowers of plants, and is made available for our use only through the aid of bees. Wax, a secondary consideration, is a product of the bees themselves and is produced from glands within the body of the worker bee.

When once the initial apprehension of handling bees is overcome and the simple manipulations mastered, beekeeping becomes a fascinating pursuit. It takes one out of doors, affords opportunity to study and know intimately one of nature's most interesting forms, and provides a pleasurable avocation which pays its way or, pursued more diligently, may yield a fair profit.

The beginner, however, should view the other side of the picture as well. Profitable beekeeping requires close study and application to detail; work, and that too at the proper time. Particularly in western Oregon, where climatic conditions are not ideal, and at best are variable in the spring, wisely administered manipulations are essential to the greatest success. Bees have infectious diseases. It is necessary to know something of the nature of these disorders and to be willing to combat them where present if one would succeed in a large way.

Opportunities for Beekeeping in Oregon. There is probably no section of Oregon where a few stands of bees cannot be successfully maintained, and in an average season made to produce a surplus of honey. Since each locality has its own peculiarities and problems as to climatic factors and honey plants, it is advisable for one contemplating commercial beekeeping to study the locality well and adapt to the conditions such special manipulations as the occasion warrants for obtaining the maximum yields of surplus honey. Broadly speaking, the state divides itself into six beekeeping districts, each with its own peculiar problems and plants.

Columbia basin district. Blue Mountain district. Central Oregon district. Southern Oregon district. Willamette valley district. Coast district.

The Columbia basin district has many successful commercial apiaries. Climatic conditions are generally good, the season long, and the honey plants varied and abundant. No definite reports re available of the heaviest yielding honey plants, but they include alfalfa, sweet clover, fireweed, dandelion, etc.

The Blue Mountain and Central Oregon districts include our largest commercial apiaries. The climatic conditions are nearly approach those of the apiary sections of the east. This region is in the heart of the irrigated alfalfa section, and alfalfa and sweet clover are the principal nectar-producing plants.

Southern Oregon has fewer large commercial apiaries, but leads in the average maximum yield obtained from individual colonies. Climatic conditions are good. The honey plants are alfalfa, sweet clover, vetch and white clover.

Until a few years ago commercial beekeeping was considered generally unprofitable in the Willamette valley and coast districts because of excessive spring rains. A few men here and there were succeeding, but many were hardly holding their own.

Due principally to new honey plants, but partly to improved methods in handling the bees, this condition is rapidly changing and, particularly in the Willamette valley, the average yields, considered for a period of years, will exceed those of ANY REGION EXCEPT SOUTHERN OREGON. Improved methods of handling will improve the conditions in the coast region as well. Honey plants are plentiful, including maple, vetch, fireweed, French pink, alsike clover and white clover. The development of special manipulations to get the bees in condition to harvest the maximum yields from the numerous nectar flowers will transform these questionable districts into profitable apiary sections.

(Getting a Start. Methods of Starting.—There are a number of ways by which the amateur may get a start with bees. These are listed in the order of their relative practicability, the most feasible first and the least advisable at the end.

1. Purchase pure bred Italian bees in a modern hive from a reliable bee keeper.
2. Have a neighbor beekeeper give a swarm for you.
3. Anchor decoy hives and capture stray swarms.
4. Buy bees in an old box hive and transfer to a modern hive.
5. Hire them from a bee tree.
6. Buy a nucleus from a reliable dealer.
7. Purchase bees by the pound with a queen.

The first method is the advisable one in the majority of cases. Spring is the best time to buy, as errors made during the honey flow need not result so seriously as later. After one has mastered the more simple manipulations, additions to the apiary may be made by one of the other methods more cheaply than by direct purchase of the first-class hive and colony. It is to the pure-bred standard, however, that we should endeavor finally to bring all the colonies in the apiary. Pure-bred bees are more docile to handle, more resistant to disease and to wax moths, and generally do not swarm so badly as hybrids. By purchasing from a bee man it is generally possible to obtain his advice and assistance in the beginning steps and manipulations, which, though seemingly complicated, are easily mastered.

Methods 2 and 3 are simple. Usually the swarm obtained is composed of hybrid or black bees. They may prove difficult to handle and must be re-queened.

The fourth practice is a very common method of getting a start. Transferring is not a pleasant task for even the experienced beekeeper and may be a discouraging experi-

ence for the beginner. Practice 5 has the same disadvantages as the fourth and in larger degree. Practices 6 and 7 are methods frequently employed by experienced beekeepers for rapid increase. A fair knowledge of bees and their care is essential to success by these methods.

Races of Bees.—There are a number of strains or varieties of the honey bee. The two most common forms in the west are the black or German bees, and the Italian. Various crosses of the two occur, known as hybrids, these generally being less desirable than either of the pure strains.

The Italian bees have many points in their favor and are the general choice of American beekeepers. They are not easily excited, do not swarm excessively, keep their hives clean of wax moths, are resistant to diseases, and are excellent honey gatherers. There are two strains, the banded or leather-colored Italian and the golden Italian. Either, if from good stock, will be found satisfactory.

Choosing the Locality. When attempting to decide upon a location for an apiary, there are two points especially important to consider: the honey plants and the site for the apiary.

Honey Plants.—For a number of reasons it has been impossible to make a careful survey of the honey plants of Oregon, their time of blossoming, etc. All of these matters are important where one is especially interested in honey production.

Beekeepers in the locality can be of invaluable assistance in pointing out the heavy nectar-producing plants. Wild bees are usually present in sufficient numbers so that a careful survey of the flora of a district will reveal the plants on which the bees are working. A note book should be carried and seasonal notes on honey plants jotted down. The more common, valuable honey plants of Oregon, with their approximate time of blooming, are listed below. These do not occur in all sections of course, and many of value are undoubtedly not included. Two miles is the average range of a bee's flight from the colony for nectar.

February, April: Willow, dandelion. May, June: Maple, snowberry, and vetch. June, July: Vetch, French pink, alfalfa, the clovers, snowberry, fireweed, sweet clover, raspberry, currant. July, August: The clovers, alfalfa, fireweed, sweet clover, golden rod, lobelia, flax, thistle. August, September: Golden rod, buckwheat, forget-me-not, fireweed, aster.

The Site.—There are a number of points to consider when selecting a site for the apiary. Limited space makes it advisable to list some of the more important factors to consider, leaving it to the individual to make the adjustments to his particular conditions.

1. Have bees where you can observe them regularly.
2. Good drainage and fresh water to drink.
3. Protection from the prevailing cold winds. Bees eat more stores and are liable to dysentery where cold winds strike wet hives. Wind-breaks on north and west are especially good. Do not have live face prevailing wind.
4. Plenty of sunlight in early morning and late afternoon. (Avoid west side of building.)
5. Where hives are to be on sloping ground, arrange so as to carry heavy supers of surplus honey down hill, empty frames up hill.
6. If apiary is in hills, locate in valley, since bees fly up hill for nectar and down when laden.
7. Avoid locating apiary near tall trees. They invite swarms and from them recovery of the bees is difficult.
8. Bees adjacent to highway or to watering troughs for stock may frenzy animals and prove a nuisance. Where necessary to locate near the street, build fence high enough to compel bees to rise above passers-by when starting out.
9. Bees within one-half mile of a large river or often loaf during heavy honey flow. Returning laden with honey they become tired and drop into water.
10. Placing the Hives.—The hives should not rest directly on the ground. Pieces of 2x4 lumber, bricks, or a special stand may be used for supporting the hives. A level stand 8 inches high is ideal. This permits one to get the feet underneath the hive when lifting, eliminates much stooping, and keeps out loads. Two hives facing the same way may rest on one stand. A sloping board should be placed from the ground to the entrance. This permits laden bees to drop near the hive and ascend by means of the board to the entrance. The hive should be perfectly level, otherwise straight combs are not possible. During the rainy season raise the back of the hive one inch so it may drain freely. It is desirable to place the

Continued on page 4)

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