

First Prize Essay.
An Essay on Apiculture, by George H. Bailey, Mill Creek.

Written for the Deseret Agricultural and Manufacturing Society, 1878.

Bees, from the earliest ages of the world, have been invested with peculiar interest and have claimed the attention not only of the unlearned and ignorant, but of the student and the naturalist.

The mystery which so long enveloped them, and the habits, and the life of the insect, with which their history was invested. The ancients called the honey bee Delorah, or she that speaketh. The word honey is derived from the Hebrew gloomy, which means delight. We read in Scripture about the bee. Deuteronomy 1, 4, "They shall chase you as do the bee." The history of the bee is a story of a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of that nation found. When speaking of a goodly land, it was called a land flowing with milk and honey.

History informs us that as early as 1765 a premium of two hundred pounds was offered in England to bee-keepers for any one that would produce from his own stock ten pounds of clear wax and at the same time preserve the bees and leave enough honey to winter them. At the announcement of the present century Mr. Francis Huber and others made some very important discoveries on the habits of the bee, in regard to the mode of building cells, how the bees produce wax, and with which it is built, also the habits of the queen bee, examining and trying experiments with them in a glass hive. These persons were rewarded for their valuable information.

Apiculture made but little progress from the year 1800 to 1850, and then it appeared to take a new start. In the last twenty years many valuable improvements have been made, so that to-day the apiarian can examine every bee and every comb in the hive by adopting the movable frame hive. This hive was first patented by Mr. L. L. Langstroth, and since that time it has had a great many patent hives, almost all claiming some new feature and improvement over the other hives, which pretensions would, if needed, make shipwreck of all our young and inexperienced bee-keepers.

A majority of the bee keepers of Salt Lake and Davis counties, through the recommendation of Seth Putnam, a practical apiarian, have adopted the K. P. Kidder patent bee hive, and I consider it a very convenient sized hive, easy to work with, and a good wintering hive.

The management of bees cannot be successful when it is conducted with a perfect understanding of their habits and instincts, and the natural laws that govern them, for that law which governs them differs from those of the human race, everything else. The queen or female bee governs the colony of male and worker bees. The male bees are called drones. The worker bees are all undeveloped females. The queen bee on an average is much larger and longer than the other bees, and has one other peculiar habit—the immense number of eggs she deposits by her majesty in one season, also the length of her life compared with that of her offspring, the queens living from three to four years, while the worker bees live from three to four months. They have many laws which are fixed and immutable, and which we deviate from in this our mountain home.

In this essay I will not attempt to explain all these laws, but will aim to give the reader such directions and advice as will be suited to the practical management of bees in this our mountain home, the infant state of Deseret, which signifies the Honey Bee, emblematic of the state of the young nation, and its strength; no Excellency without Labor.

I shall not recommend any thing that I have not tried myself, although I have had but few years experience with bees in Utah. Utah abounds with honey-producing plants from spring time until autumn, and the honey which is produced in the flowers is of a very superior quality and flavor, which cannot be surpassed by the honey-producing fields of California, which are considered by some to be the best in the known world, for we have in spring the broad-leaf willow, dog elder, cotton wood, currant, plum, apricot, peach, gooseberry, cherry, apple, pear, dandelion, dogwood, oak, cherry, service berry, lumbago plant, &c. In summer we have the red clover, white clover, sweet clover, Alsike clover, milkweed, catnip, raspberry, hollyhock, nigella, nasturtium, cucumber, squash, melon, corn, buckwheat and many wild flowers. Then we have for fall pasturage sweet clover, sorghum or sugar cane, millet bush, sunflowers, chrysanthemum, golden rod, and some seasons considerable honey dew; also we have many plants and trees producing pollen or bee bread, which is necessary to feed the young brood upon. Therefore I can safely say, that in the Territory of Utah can be produced honey sufficient for her consumption without any importation and at less cost, being a superior article, if the present crop of bees are properly managed and cared for. If I am rightly informed Mr. W. D. Roberts did import bees from California and the States, and Mr. J. S. Harrison from Mr. M. Thurston and others this last spring.

There are in this country three kinds of bees—the common European or black bee, the hybrid or mixed bee, and the Italian bee. The Italian bees are favorites with me. They work earlier in the morning, and are more docile, and they gather more honey and are more prolific. The queen can be easier found, owing to her bright color and her quiet and peaceful disposition.

THE MOVABLE COMB HIVE
Is no longer a question of doubt or uncertainty. To do without it I would give up bee keeping, but now that we have a good movable comb hive in possession and in use, we can ascertain to be a certainty the exact condition of our bees at any time and if it is the case have entered the hive or comb they have entered, found and destroyed, which cannot be done in the common box hive. Bees will gather honey just as much upon a fallow log or square run, if all is right, as they will in any patent hive. But how do you know all is right inside the box? You may surmise it is right or not right, by observing the movements of the bees at the entrance of the box, but it is a game of chance, and the bees or boxes in the movable frame hive it is a certainty, and we have it in our power to become conversant and acquainted with the habits of the busy little insects, and it is our own fault if we let them perish or get them destroyed through neglect. If the hive is queenless you can supply the loss by introducing a new queen, or by giving them eggs and brood from some other hive, which will enable them to raise a queen for themselves to fill the place of the lost one. All queens should be kept at least three years old, for at that age they cease to be prolific, and a young queen should be given them if you wish your bees to prosper and do well.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Z. C. M. I.

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