

STAHLMAN BEEKEEPING NOTES

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Winter has set in and I am looking for things to do. The weather report indicates more cold which could last up into March. Maybe April for some of you reading these notes.

I am fortunate to keep my mind working on these notes. I am also lucky to have a number of very old beekeeping books.

Some of them back to the 1800's. For the most

part they tell the history of beekeeping and offer little for the modern beekeeper.

I have owned a few books from the period 1600-2023. I have digitized over 50 old books I owned from the 1600's, 1700's and 1800's.

The picture above represent books written by H.A. and his brother A.J. King. Most of you most likely have never heard of them. L.L. Langstroth sued them for patent infringement because they were selling a patent bee hive using removable frames. That was a period of time when many patent hives were available to anyone keeping honey bees.

But these books and magazines are filled with articles that apply to bee management.

One major topic right now is about feeding bees. Let me share this from "The Beekeepers Magazine" published in 1882. The article does not carry a by-line but must have been written by Albert J. King" the editor of the magazine.

Remember this was (1882)

"If there is one thing in modern management more important than another to be done, in order to secure to the utmost the profits to be derived from keeping bees, that thing is *judicious feeding*; and yet this is the very thing most neglected by seven-tenths of all persons engaged in the business. Until quite recently men have indulged in the sentiment once so prevalent that bees "work for nothing and board themselves." Indeed we know of some parties who last spring deliberately let their bees starve to death rather than spend a few dollars to tide them over the cold, dry and backward season. The country annually loses several millions of dollars by this gross neglect.

(From this point on when you read this article, my words are in blue. I am passing over some material and picking up the article with the following;)

"We said *Judicious feeding* for it is a fact the bees may be fed when it will prove a positive injury to them, for instance when we desire to stimulate for early breeding - we sometimes feed those which have plenty of sealed honey, and thus fill up with feed all the empty cells in the hive and defeat the very end we had in view, for in such a case the queen has no room to deposit eggs, and such hives soon become worthless.

The right way would have been to uncapped the cells of several of those frames of sealed combs and exchanging for empty combs with other hives, weak in stores and leaving some of the uncapped honey in this hive also. In this case the bees would at once commence to eat and carry this honey from the outer combs, the queen would be fed and stimulated to commence laying and soon a lot of vigorous young workers would emerge from the cells so recently occupied with sealed honey."

This is a rather long article and I will point out a few comments of my own: He spends some time explaining appliances for feeding.

Sugar was .07 cents per pound. Honey was selling for .15 cents per pound.

"A single feeder holds from eight to ten pounds. A fair sized colony will empty one of these feeders in a single night. (He mentions a mix of sugar and water [1 part water to 3 parts sugar heated to 85 deg.]) This will stimulate the bees to the most intense activity". He mentions the value of this feeding for encouraging the bees to build new comb in the spring.

He wraps up the article with this quote:

"Friend Heddon (a beekeeper and known for fishing lures) lately [warned us up] on the foolishness of cutting out the old black-hard-crooked-combs of log gums and boxes and transferring them to movable frames when we could in two days time fill our hives with choice, straight, fresh worker combs by a few cents worth of comb foundation!"

And talking about Hendon – He spoke to the Michigan Bee-men in Council and shared this:

"If putting them in carefully (carrying bees into a cellar): do not let them know it. Carry the bees out and in often in spring if necessary." (Keeping bees in a cellar was a common practice in cold northern states).

There is an idea: Can you find a place to shelter bees from cold weather and carry them inside AND DO NOT LET THEM KNOW IT! From time to time when it gets warmer outside – carry them out and when it gets cold again move them inside. Just remember my past comments about keeping bees warm. They become active when warm and attempt to fly. This is not good if you keep them inside.

It is a lot of work and if you have a small out building or a barn, it can be done. Maybe one could mount hives on wagons to make the work easier.

THE BEE-KEEPERS' MAGAZINE.

APIARIAN SUPPLIES.

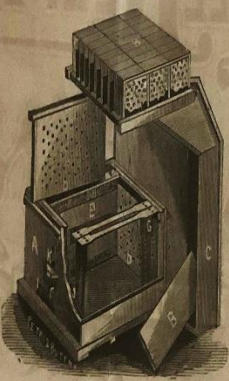
KING, KEITH & CO., 14 Park Place, New York.

The following list contains the leading articles used by bee-keepers, and mostly manufactured by ourselves, are made of first-class materials and in the best manner; our MOTTO is FIRST-CLASS GOODS, QUICK SALES and promptness in filling orders.

TERMS: CASH IN ADVANCE. Shipping points EAST, WEST AND MIDDLE STATES.

REQUIREMENTS: Name, Post Office, Express Office, County, STATE, and all to be written Plainly

THE ECLECTIC BEE-HIVE.



The above represents our Eclectic Bee-Hive, except the walls and division boards are smooth instead of being perforated as represented in the above cut. The sales of this hive have been very large, and are still increasing. The frames are close fitting at the end of top bar and upper ends of side bars, and by a rabbet on the under side of end of top bar, they are made to firmly rest on a thin metal support which extends $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch above top of hive, and enables the operator to get hold of the ends of the frames to lift them out, without putting his hands near the bees. The Separators &c., &c., are shown in the engraving.

PRICES.

Completely finished hives, well painted, including all furniture, each,	\$4.50
5 or more at once, each,	4.00

MATERIALS READY TO NAIL.

For Complete hives, 5 to 15 at once, each,	\$3.00
50 or more at once, each,	2.50

For CHAFF-ECLECTIC HIVE see outside cover page.

THE BEE-KEEPERS' MAGAZINE.



The above is an exact engraving of our latest NEW AMERICAN HIVE, except the cover is not shown, and our artist has shown the movable side in front, when it should be on the side where the lettering appears, and the lettering should be in front.

The two tiers of 2-lb section honey boxes (25 in number) in their two racks are clearly shown with the tin separators, &c., all in place. The nine 12x13 brood frames (inside measurement) in the main body of the hive are also shown.

Where extracted honey is desired, instead of comb honey, we remove the two racks with their honey boxes and place one hive directly on top of the other, and sometimes tier up in this manner three hives high, always placing the cover on the uppermost hive. They are so constructed that each one will exactly fit on the top of the others. For WINTERING AND CONVENIENCE IN SHIPPING. The cover is arranged so as to slip down over the body of the hive, making a double wall for wintering. It also reduces the bulk of the hive so much that the railroad companies charge 1 at one-half the usual freight rates. The double tier of boxes minus the two racks which are locked on the outside, fit exactly, inside the broodframes, and when the cover is slipped down, it is almost as compact as when shipped as material.

PRICES.

1 complete Hive, with all accompaniments, double tier of boxes, separators, two coats of paint, &c., &c.	\$3.50
5 to 50 complete Hives, with all accompaniments.	3.25

Material (except glass) including separators, racks to hold the sections, and also strips of foundation for starters, etc., in separate lots of five or more, each,.....\$2.00



As there are now about 4,000 of our Smokers in use, and giving great satisfaction, it would seem needless to give any extended description of them, but we will enumerate a few points: 1st. The materials used in its construction are of the best quality. 2d. The workmanship is complete. 3d. It is the largest Smoker made, and consequently will burn better and longer than any other. 4th. There is no solder about it, consequently no melting or loosening of the joints. 5th. The ventilator is self-acting, and is so constructed as to prevent all back suction consequently no fire or ashes can possibly get into the bellows. 6th. It is nearly one-third cheaper than any other Smoker, having an equal value in material and workmanship. It is completely adapted to the cold blast improvement, which we attach for 25c. extra, though we do not deem it of any great importance.

PRICES.

Standard size, five barrel, 2 1/4 in. in diameter	\$1.00
3 inch diameter heavy beaded tin guaranteed to give perfect satisfaction each	1.00
If to go by mail, send 25c. extra for stamps.	

Large commissions to agents, and those who buy to sell again, in our large new smoker.

KING, KEITH & CO.,

14 Park Place, N. Y.

This was an ad in "The Bee-Keeper's Magazine from the issue I used for this edition. (1882)

The hive on the left offered for sale was called "The Eclectic Bee-Hive"

Prices for a hive were listed at:
Completely finished hives, well painted, including all furniture each\$4.50
And if one bought 5 or more\$4.00

And the "New American Bee-Hive" shown at the top right..

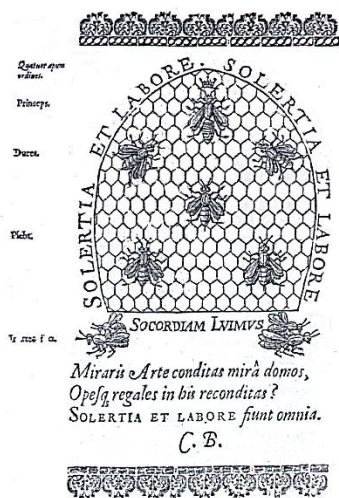
Complete hive, with all accompaniments, double tier of boxes, separators, two coats of paint.....\$3.50
Or 5 to 20 at.....\$3.25

Also shown in the ad is a smoker.

This is a short issue but I hope you find some time to read and plan for this coming warm weather.

I am including a pdf book with this issue:

One can print a copy of it or save it in a document file on a computer or Flash Drive.

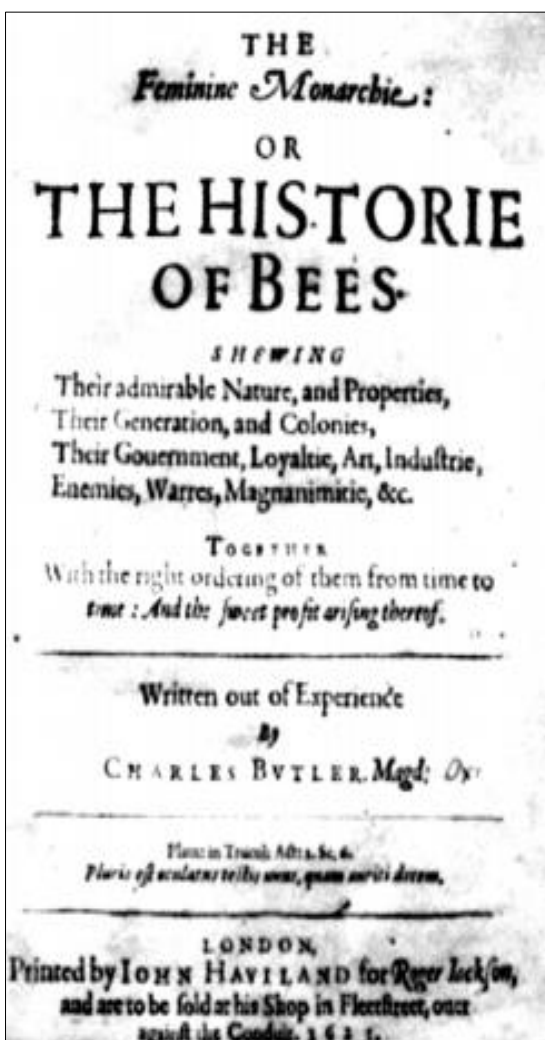


Many years ago I bought a copy of this classic bee book printed in 1623. It is written in Olde English which would challenge a reader of Modern English. I translated it into readable English and published a limited edition. Not many people were willing to pay the \$65.00 I was selling it for. I sold my 1623 book for \$1300.00 sometime around 1996 at an EAS Meeting and I have kicked myself ever since.

It still remains one of the best books on how to manage honey bees in skeps.

But what sets it apart from all other books about bees in its time was the fact that Charles Butler refers to the Queen as the mother bee in the hive. She ruled. Many bee books and literature of that time referred to the Drone as King -- the ruler.

The words in this book are all Charles Butler's except the introduction and appendix which explain the background to the writing of the original first edition published in 1607. The meaning of some words have been lost and I have tried to modernize those so the reader can understand what the text means.



Of all bee books ever written, this is considered the "Golden Goose." Yet, many beekeepers have never read this book. The original language is a bit difficult to follow although it is English.

Butler knew several languages and used German and Latin on occasion. He wrote books on English Grammar, Music, Marriage and bees

Read the introduction to get just an under-standing of his life and time. He graduated from Oxford University.

Sometimes progress takes small steps This book was one giant step for those wanting to understand honey bees.

I will add more books during this winter season as the notes are published.

Dana