

WOMAN RUNS A BEE RANCH

"I have owned and managed a bee ranch in California for something like twelve years now," said Miss Inez Cooley, of Los Angeles County, Cal., who is on her way for a three months' holiday in Europe.

"My parents moved from Tennessee to California when I was five years old and began raising honey for market. While I can't claim to have known very much about the work until after I was grown and left school, simply living on such a place one is forced to imbibe a certain amount of knowledge. I knew in a general way how things should be done, but as it had never been my duty to help or see them done, I can't claim to have known much from actual experience.

"While quite young I developed what my parents believed to be a wonderful voice, and they decided that I should be a concert singer. For that reason I was sent to Boston to study music while still in my early teens. I have a good voice, and I fancy had either of my parents lived to see me start out for myself their dreams for me might have been realized.

"A year before I was to have been graduated at the New England Conservatory of Music I was called home by the death of my father. Two hours after I reached home my mother passed away. It was just at the beginning of the season for gathering the spring honey. While there were several skilled men on the place, my father had always acted as his own manager. The question arose who would take his place. I stepped out, and as far as it lay in the power of a young girl I filled it.

"Of course, I now believe that it was the best thing that could have happened. Being alone in Boston, I had made many acquaintances that were not altogether desirable. Had I gone back there with the liberty to do and spend what I pleased, the result might not have been what either of my parents could have wished. As it was, my work steadied me, led my thoughts into different channels,

and when the autumn came around again I was convinced that I would be happier if I remained in California and managed my bee ranch than if I returned to my musical studies and prepared for the concert stage.

"For a California bee ranch of the present day my ranch is rather small, as there are only between five and six hundred hives. It is at the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains and at the head of a beautiful gorge. Their principal flower, or pasture, as we call it, is the Rocky Mountain Sage, the flower of which imparts a delicious flavor to the honey, which rivals the still famous Hymettus and the heather honey of Scotland.

"The old way of preventing new swarms from taking flight was to beat tin pans, blow horns and raise all manner of a racket, the real object of which was to drown the voice of the queen. Now the way is to secure the queen in a little wire cage. There is not the slightest danger of not knowing royalty among bees. Once beheld, the queen can never be mistaken for either of her plebian subjects, the drone or the worker. Not only is she far more elegant in shape and brilliant in coloring, but she has the distinctive habit of crossing the tips of her wings. It always reminds me of the helpless manner which some women have of disposing of their hands.

"By securing the queen the swarm can always be controlled and no end of trouble avoided. I keep a record of the ages and the pedigrees of all my queens, and have only to refer to the number and letter of the hives to learn if they are old enough to be superseded. I always kill an old queen myself, though it is a thing that I still dread to do. They are such pretty little creatures that I invariably shut my eyes when I execute their sentence.

"As to the yield of a hive, it is hard to make any definite statement. I believe for a summer's product a hive may be counted on to produce between 75 and 100 pounds of honey. In such a climate as

we have there are a single Italian thousand pounds season. Although California is increasing, there demand at a good

"As an occupation that has the character labor is light and considers that to or some honey-producer, it seems to women do not talk

I have two school who, on paying a retort to the business now make additional comes by the sale

"They both began thought somewhere I supplied the queen of their hive with mine in California season as long, but pay them for their them are women who have planted pastures such a way that remarkable for the excellence change.

GRANT BEE-KEEPING

A meeting of the held in the Court I and, on Saturday, a fair attendance of Amanson, President after considerable held to hold a v Stanford, and proc a notable bee m dates to deliver add holding a convention, which would

"It was also discussed was decided that place in May next at Cainsville. As get as many farm