

your article, in fact it is brim full of valuable information, and coming as it does from you—who is known to be a most careful experimenter—makes it all the more so. The question might have been answered in query 75 differently, but the space allotted to each query is so small that it is sometimes impossible to do it justice. In our remark we had reference to a one story hive.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

BEE-KEEPING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

I WRITE to let you know that I have recently returned from a visit to Southern California and as you requested it I will tell you of some of my observations and conclusions arrived at during my short visit there. I visited the great bee and honey king of the Pacific slope, Mr. J. S. Harbison, who told me that he had 3000 colonies of bees, he keeps them in twelve different apiaries, he has grown rich in the business. He works for comb honey only, he takes no *bee papers*, says he used to take them but did not think it was of any real advantage and discontinued them altogether. He uses the Harbison hive only, has his comb honey built in the upper part; the hives are made some four to five feet high, holding from four to six boxes, each holding about sixteen pounds; the hive has a door in the rear hung on hinges, where all boxes are placed and replaced and all examinations are made.

I spent a week in one of his apiaries containing 425 colonies, they were a mixture of Italians and Holy Land. He said that he would like to get rid of the latter if he could, but could not as they were so much more prolific that they would finally run the Italians out entirely. One thing I heard Mr. Harbison tell an assistant that would sound strangely to an eastern bee-keeper in the spring when the bees are building up preparatory to swarming. The man was opening hives for examination in Mr. H's presence and in closing the door he was going rather slow to avoid killing bees when Mr. Harbison, growing impatient at his tardy movements, told him to "shut the door, don't mind killing bees, if a gallon were killed in every hive they would be all the better for it!" Strange logic I thought for many of those hives would be relieved of one-half of its working force if a gallon was destroyed. A large percentage of those hives had cracked and split with the sun, the long cumbersome doors were also sprung so that they had to be corked up with rags and pieces of bunting to prevent robbing. His honey house was quite well stocked with unfinished boxes left over from last season. Many of these were granulated and were placed in the hives for the

bees to rob out so that the empty combs could be used as starters for this year's crop. Those combs are sliced into small strips about two inches wide and stuck into the sections by rubbing thick glue on one edge with a paddle. He uses no foundation, keeps no bellows smokers, but uses a sort of a sheet iron boiler concern with handle and a sort of spout to it. In this he burns bark or sticks, or wood as the case may be.

It is however undoubtedly true that Mr. Harbison has made a great success of bee culture in California in his own peculiar way of running it. He is a very energetic, nervous man, always on the go; but it would seem as if he might have taken many short cuts and made more money (for that matter) if he had patronized the bee journals and exchanged thoughts and theories with other men engaged in the same business.

I did very much regret that my visit was cut short so I had not the opportunity of visiting other apiaries and also witnessing the honey flow from the black and white sages, the black sage was just coming into flower when I left the middle of April. I also had intended to visit Mr. J. P. Israel who I take it is working on all the late improved methods, who evidently does not go on the assumption that he can learn nothing more. I was pleased with much that I saw in California, would enjoy that climate much but if I were there I would give up bee culture, dearly as I love it, for the reason that bees there have to be kept away in the mountains where no fruit is raised and where a civilized man would not wish to live, making it necessary so travel 15 or 20 miles over bad roads to look after them for whether guilty or not of puncturing fruit they have gotten their names up and by common consent they are so far as I could learn kept in remote localities. I suppose when the raisins are being dried which is at a time of scarcity of honey in the flowers that the bees would gather on the fruit in great numbers and be very troublesome.

I should have mentioned in regard to Mr. Harbison's hives, and all others that I saw that they are made of red wood, dressed on the inside only, look old and weather-beaten and present a very untidy appearance. I did not see a painted hive on the coast, but I am spinning this communication quite too long so I stop short right here.

J. W. MARGRAVE.

Hiawatha, Kansas, June 2nd, 1886.

Many thanks for report. It will be quite interesting to many of our readers. We, like you cannot imagine why he should care to crush so many bees with his doors. It seems to us that if he took a bee journal and adapted our more improved system he could never be inclined to go back to his old cumbersome and inconvenient hives again.