

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS....

of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention
of the

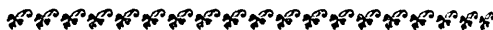
North American Bee-Keepers' Association

Held at

Lincoln, Nebraska, October, 7th, and 8th, 1896.

By Dr. A. B. Mason, Secretary.

(Continued)



Following this discussion Mr. L. D. Stillson read a paper on

SOME OF THE CONDITIONS OF NEBRASKA.

To some of you it may seem strange that we should have conditions here which are not found elsewhere; surroundings make new conditions. As you will readily observe by looking at the map, we occupy a central location in the United States. This, of itself, would not create conditions different from other localities. But look further and see our beautiful State lying just at the foot of the mighty Rockies, and only a little ways from our western border is the line of eternal snow. Then look to the north, the east, the south, and find us in the midst of the greatest garden-spot in the world, and you begin to realize some of the possibilities the future has in store for us. Here seems to be a central meeting-place for widely-varied conditions.

The pioneer bee-keeper, like the pioneer farmer, on these broad, fertile prairies had to begin his experimental work all over again; he was met by conditions which were untried and of which he knew nothing. The honey-flow was new to him, thousands of acres, rich in flowers, but not a tree or bush in sight an inviting field for the apiarist. Wild bees were to be found along our eastern border. As the settler moved westward he took with him the few hives of bees. These increased equally well, whether located along some stream or whether placed along the high tablelands in the central part of the State. A little study on the part of the master, soon taught him that the flora of the State was a rich field for the honey-gleaners; and that the wind and waters had brought down from the peaks of the western mountains, plants of such hardy nature that ere the frosts of winter had left the ground at their roots, the tops were furnishing honey and pollen for the honey-bee, while species of the same families brought to us from the

South or East would be 10 or 20 days later, thus extending the honey-harvest. In this way we find the red cedar, wild plums, wild grapes and wild cherries; these, with many of the small plants, are, valuable in furnishing food for building up early in the spring.

When the missionaries first went to a certain race of heathen they found each man had, or was making for himself, an idol. Among the articles carried by the missionaries were some cocoanuts; these the natives soon seized upon as gods ready-made. When we, as pioneers, first came to Nebraska, we did not have to hew our farms from the timber, as in the Eastern States, but we found farms ready-made. But ready-made as they were, like the idolator, we knew not how to grow crops to the best advantage, and to some of us, at least, it is a study yet. We plowed too much land, we sowed too much grain, we planted too much corn, and as a consequence, weeds infested the land, and for several years past the great bulk of our honey has been produced from "heart's-ease"—a plant something like the smartweed of the East. It grows in every waste place, it springs up in every stubble field, and no matter whether it is dwarfed by drouth to a tiny plant of a few inches, whether watered by copious showers and grows to the height of a man, it always blossoms full and is always laden with honey.

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention. Necessity is only putting a man where he is obliged to think and act for himself. Necessity is only putting a man upon his own individual manhood.

Here in Nebraska necessity has put to good many of us where we were obliged to do some good, hard thinking for ourselves, and as bee-keepers it has done us good. Instead of moving our apiaries, as some of our Eastern friends advise us to do, to near the virgin forests, we continue to plant