

as from Maillet's Description of Egypt, published in 1740, it appears that, in the last century, there was a great many colonies of bees kept in the land of the Pharoahs, and that a very lively business was maintained therein, quite unlike what we have in our own country. Dr. Westhau reports, in a description of a travel through Egypt, in 1702, the following: "In many places I found apiculture greatly hindered, notwithstanding the inhabitants manifest much interest in it. In the season of bloom they move with their bees, now here and now there, in order to fill their hives with honey."

In the last century there was found, with all of the ignorance and wildness of the inhabitants, an occasional trace to remind one of the previous luxury of a keen and diligent generation, long past. One of the most noticeable evidences of their activity was the annual sending of their bees to remote districts, that they might secure pasturage, which occasionally failed them at their own stands.

As Upper Egypt is hotter than Lower Egypt, and the land there is freer from the inundations of the Nile, the honey-plants there develop at least six weeks earlier. The inhabitants were fully aware of this fact, and availed themselves of it for the benefit of their bees. In Lower and Middle Egypt they placed a certain number of colonies of bees, which were often kept in jugs and bowls, and often in cylinders or baskets made of burnt clay, or made out of withes braided, and besmeared with Nile slime, made expressly for this purpose—forerunners of the portable bee-hives of Swabia. If the hives were required at the upper end of Egypt, they were transported thither, so the bees could visit the neighboring honey-plants and shrubs. When the crop in Upper Egypt was exhausted, they floated the skiffs a few miles down stream, and waited there as long as honey could be found in paying quantities.

At the beginning of the month of February they arrived at Lower Egypt, where they delivered the hives back to their owners. The latter then sold the entire product at wholesale in Cairo. The bee-keepers from Upper Egypt, after they had disposed of their products in the region of the delta of the Nile, and had secured what honey they could there, returned again up stream to their homes. Unfortunately, hitherto history has furnished us no details in regard to portable apiaries in this land of early antiquity, which are authentic; nevertheless, it is easy to conjecture that that inventive people, as the valley of the Nile bears them witness, will convert it, as they did a century ago, into the business of portable apiculture. One may easily believe that Egypt first suggested the same business to Greece and other lands. The Roman agricultural writer, Columella, writes (*De Re Rustica*), Book IX., chapter 14, in replying to Celsus, that in Achaia the bees from Attica and Eubœa, on all the Cycladian islands to island of Skiros, and from the various Sicilian coasts to Hybla, were cultivated for honey. This custom was, in all probability, introduced from Egypt at the time of Solon, for the civilization of Egypt is unquestionably much older than that of Greece. Before Solon arose as reformer in Athens he travelled through Egypt, and learned

there how to make many improvements which he afterward made useful to his native land.

But how stands bee culture now in Egypt? When even the fellahin and Copts conspire to drive out apiculture, no more will be read in modern history of travels in Egypt in regard to moveable apiaries; and no traveller will see any more the skiffs on the Nile, laden with hives. This is easy to be seen, when one reflects how downtrodden Egypt is under the foot of the Mohammedan.

Daily News.

BEE-KEEPING IN IRELAND.

MAKERS of bee-hives with moveable frames by which portions of the comb can be removed, will find a good advertisement in the recently issued Agricultural Statistics for Ireland. The Registrar-General states that in the whole island there were 28,569 swarms at work, of which 9,135, or nearly one-third, were kept in "hives having moveable frames," and 19,434 in other hives. The quantity of honey produced was 459,386 lbs., or an average of 16 lbs. per hive, an amount which probably exceeds what the uninitiated would consider possible. But of this total yield nearly half was gained from the new-fashioned hives, so that while the average store of a swarm kept in one of them was 23 lbs., that of a swarm living in the less commodious dwelling was only 13 lbs. It is curious to note that in Connaught, where there are less than one-fourth the number of swarms to be found in each of the other three provinces, the yield of honey per hive is considerably greater. Evidently the struggle for bee-existence is less keen, for while an Ulster swarm will collect 22 lbs. a Connaught swarm will amass no less than 29 lbs. But the most productive hives in Ireland are to be found in Kildare, where 218 of the "moveable frame" type produced an average yield of 37 lbs. of honey for each swarm.

QUERIES AND REPLEIS.

UNDER THIS HEAD will appear Questions which have been asked, and replied to by prominent and practical bee-keepers—also by the Editor. Only questions of importance should be asked in this Department, and such questions are requested from everyone. As these questions have to be put into type, sent out for answers, and the replies all awaited for, it will take some time in each case to have the answers appear.

Average Honey Crop for Ten Years.

QUERY 219.—What has been the average honey crop for the last ten years, and is the average getting larger or smaller? Supposing any of those whom you ask for replies have not kept