

GLEAMS OF NEWS

California Honey Crop.—On page 571, Mr. J. F. Brown, of Virginia, said that the Eastern market reports gave the impression that the California honey crop was "very large," and that this was used as a lever to reduce the price of honey generally. We suggested that the honey-producers of California report the true condition of affairs there, and thus aid in sustaining prices, for the benefit of all honey producers. We have received quite a number of reports from that State, and will here present them to our readers. If any one desires to use an extra copy of this Bee Journal by sending it to their retailer or jobber, they can have another copy to keep "file" complete, by sending for it at once—before our stock is exhausted.

Editor of the American Bee Journal:--At your request (page 571) I send you a report of the honey crop in San Diego county, California. From the best information I can get, it will not exceed three hundred thousand pounds, or less than half the crop of 1888. The largest crop ever raised in this county was in 1878, when over three million pounds was produced, and a total of about seven million pounds in Southern California.

I see an estimate of this year's crop of honey published in a San Francisco report, which is three hundred thousand pounds for Southern California. I believe this can be safely cut in two, and the one-half will exceed the actual product for this year.

The rapid settlement and clearing up of the heretofore wild lands in this county, as well as in adjacent counties, has in a great measure destroyed the bee-keeping industry. It is only in the remote districts that any considerable attention is given to the business.

Fruit-growers generally are clamoring for the removal or destruction of all apiaries in reach of their orchards or vineyards. Their requests are generally being complied with, or the incendiary torch does the work if it is not. I have "killed" and "broken up" over 700 hives of bees within one year, and had about 350 hives set on fire (probably on purpose) within the same period.

The price of honey has not been remunerative for some years, and very little attention, as compared with former years, is now given to the business.

The introduction of bee-keeping in this county in a great measure destroyed the sheep and cattle business, and now in turn the fruit and vineyard industries have destroyed bee-keeping, over a large extent of the county. These changes are in accordance with the eternal fitness of things, and the world at large is the gainer, though many there are who have suffered financially thereby.—J. S. Harbison, San Diego, Calif.

In reply to your request for a report of the honey crop of California, I enclose a report just received from the Western Apiarian, of Ventura county. I think it a fair statement. You will see that the average is very small. There is not an average crop in any county in California. Some report almost an entire failure. I extracted 50 tons last year. My largest average was in 1884, viz: 237 pounds per colony. I have figured up the average since 1880, and I find it to be 70 pounds.

The following report will give the desired information for the whole county, and also present the names of most of the apiarists of this county. I have not had any faith in the honey crop since my return from the East last spring. I extracted from one apiary only. I have left the bees in first-class condition, and plenty of honey in the supers. I did expect to extract 6 tons, but decided to leave it with the bees—W. T. Richardson, Simi, Ventura Co., Calif.

The following is a Statistical Report of colonies of bees and tons of honey of apiarists of Ventura county, California, tabulated by L. E. Mercer, of the Western Apiarian:

Name	Address	Tons	Colonies
Encinos, M.	Piru City	2	80
Dunn, Robt.	Piru City	½	280
Mawfet--	Piru City	6	210
Conaway, J. A.	Piru City	4	250
Whitaker, W.	Piru City	3 ½	300
Whitaker, T.	Piru City	3	125
Stocton, G.	Piru City	2 ½	200
Dunton, H. D.	Piru City	2 ½	150
Holser, John	Piru City	2	111
Reasoner, Ben	Piru City	1	100
Reasoner, O. P.	Piru City	3 ½	400
Seakler, W & George	Piru City	2	275
Drake, C. M.	Springville	4	160
Stewart, S.	Springville	12	287
Fox, S.	Springville	5	160
Stewart, J. M.	Springville	2	150
Oliver, P.	Springville	3 ½	170
Savers & Davenport	Springville	1 ½	100
Rapp, J. J.	Nordhoff	10 ½	275
Cooper, J. D.	Nordhoff	¾	67
Syom, Robert	Nordhoff	2	65
Willis, J. G.	Nordhoff	8	280
Sopher, P. M.	Nordhoff	2	90
Sheldon, F.	Nordhoff	4 ½	180
Barrows, T.	Nordhoff	½	75
Steward. G. E.	Nordhoff	3	150
Gridley, S. C.	Nordhoff	5	280
Van Curan, A.	Nordhoff	¼	70

Bay, George	Nordhoff	4 ½	160
Ireland, J. D.	Nordhoff	3 ½	240
Denison, J. W.	Nordhoff	2	80
Jepson, T.	Fillmore	2	75
McIntyre, J. F.	Fillmore	10 ½	580
Kinney, Cyrus	Fillmore	5 ½	150
Arundell, T.	Fillmore	14	665
Keene, Josiah	Fillmore	2	60
Strathern, R.	Fillmore	7 ½	500
Wilkin, R.	Ventura	2 ½	355
Mendleson, M. H.	Ventura	5	315
Reynolds, Geo.	Ventura	3	200
Walker, Lew	Ventura	6 ½	400
McFarland, J.	Ventura	1	55
Fox, John	Ventura	4	400
Mercer, L. E.	Ventura	16	1400
Brooks, J. M.	Ventura	4 ½	104
Quesnel,--	Ventura	10	300
Healey, C.	Ventura	3	200
Twining, --	Ventura	½	100
Bassett, --	Santa Paula	1	75
Alexander, W. D.	Santa Paula	7 ¾	325
Sufers, J.	Santa Paula	1	100
Hoar, C. E.	Ventura	3	130
Easley, Woods	Ventura	6	500
Richardson, W. T.	Ventura	2	1300
Carmichael	Ventura	1	450
Lowrey, E. S.	Santa Barbara	4 ½	175
Mayham, S.	Springville	2	150

In answer to the request on page 571, I will say that from every source that I can gain reliable news, the honey crop in Southern California will not average over one-third of a crop, and in some localities it is a total failure; and when you take the honey crop of Southern California out of the California honey crop, there is very little left.

The crop in this locality was for the following prices: Extracted, from 5 to 6 cents; comb, from 9 to 11 cents; the latter in one-pound sections.—A. J. Foss, Fallbrook, San Diego Co., Calif.

In response to the request for honey-producers of California to give an estimate of this year's crop with former years, I would say that it is about equivalent to last year's crop in the counties of Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Diego, and San Bernardino, which includes the great honey fields of Southern California. Most of the crop has been sold at 6 cents per pound. The crop is about one-half of what it should be in an average season. The hot weather since July 1, precludes the idea of a fall flow of honey in this region, unless the early rains help out.—C. N. Wilson, Los Angeles, Calif.

By request, I will state the exact amount of honey in this locality. I have extracted about 13,500 pounds of honey this season from 175 colonies, fall count, while I had 16,000 pounds last year from 152 colonies, fall count. Neighbor B., who keeps a good many black bees, has 12,000 pounds of extracted honey against 25,000 last year. M. has 10,000 pounds this year, against 18,000 pounds last year. F. has 18,000 pounds against 48,000 pounds last year. He lost over 100 colonies last winter. And so it is all over San Bernardino county. Only a few bee-men in the best locality (foot-hills) report about equal to last year. If there is a big honey crop in California, it is not known here. For the last two days a strong north wind has set in, and bush fires are raging all around here, destroying all the sage; so our prospects for next year are not excellent.—Wm. Richter, San Bernardino, Calif.

The Rural Californian for September gives this estimate for this year's crop of honey in California:

This year's crop of California honey is in good demand, two-thirds of it has already changed hands at fair prices to the producer. The yield for the season will not exceed half what was counted on by the bee-keeper in April last, and for the interests of those permanently engaged in the business, it is perhaps best just as it is. A large crop of honey requires a large outlay for help in the handling of bees in the early part of the season, and of late years it is very difficult to get efficient, reliable help for the apiary in Southern California. A big yield of honey requires a large stock of packages in which honey is marketed, and whether one has comb or extracted honey it will cost one cent a pound to pack it for market. Then with a large crop comes low prices, and the honey producer finds large outlay; an immense amount of labor, and small pay. The high price this year grows out of the fact that we have had three years in succession short or half crops, and the market bare in August.

The honey crop has been almost a failure here—only about 150 tons of honey in the county. That much, 150 tons, or 15 carloads, is a good deal of honey, but we often have in this county 600 tons. Our crop is 32,000 pounds. Honey is selling here in Ventura at 6 ¼ cents in 60-pound tins.—L. E. Mercer, Ventura, Calif.

The honey crop this year is about 3,000 pounds, while last year, with a less number of colonies of bees, we secured nearly 7,000 pounds of honey. The crop this year has averaged about 30 pounds to the colony of bees.—J. Sanders, Box Springs, Calif.

The honey season here is very poor. A frost in the beginning of May injured the Alfalfa, I think, so that it did not bloom as well as usual, and has yielded honey very sparingly. My scale hive gains on an average one pound per day. Many colonies have stored nothing in sections. I did not have a single natural swarm. It is the poorest honey season I have known in the county for nine years.—Wm. Muth-rasmussen, Independence, Inyo Co., Calif.

Collected by Carol Morrison.
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