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## **The Nebraska bee-keeper. Vol 8, No 2 February, 1897**

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## NOTES FROM KNOX COUNTY.

The clerk of the weather hardly seems to know whether we are to have winter or not, apparently his mind is very unsettled on the subject. During the month of November he went for us with a vengeance and dealt out snow and frost with a liberal hand, then having done all the mischief he could, he tacked about and gave us a fair sample of summer all through December. The New Year brought a three days' blizzard with it and piled the snow up in all manner of fantastic shapes, burying the bees completely, hives and all, and now for a change we have summer again with plenty of slush under foot. But we have often heard that "variety is the spice of life", so we will try not to grumble. Well, the bees are all right which is most important of all. We are wintering them on summer stands, or summering on winter stands either way you are a mind to put it, and every few days they are out for a flight. They have neither chaff nor double wall hives, but we fixed them after a device of our own, which has no expense attached to it, and if they winter in good shape, (which they seem in fair way to do) we will let all the bee folks into the secret.

The last day of Dec. was a hot day so we ventured to take a peep into one of the hives, just a social call you know, to see what the little rascals were doing; found everything ship-shape, and lots of untouched combs of honey, the two outer frames were granulated, but the balance were in a liquid state. We found something else that was a surprise to us, and that was live drones; Yes, we did, sure as you live. Now this may call forth a smile from experts, but Langstroth says all drones are killed as soon as the bees have no further need of their services, especially if there a check to the flow, even though it be midsummer, p. 15.



and clearly states that they are made way with in the fall even if the stores are plentiful. Will the editor tell us how it happens that they are present in the hive Jan. 1st.; does it signify an unusual condition of prosperity? We can not think the colony is queen-less. The drones were small, as nearly all our drones the past season were reared in worker cells.

We are looking forward with a good deal of confidence to a great honey flow next summer, but at the same time try to keep in mind the old saw that isn't best to count your chickens before they are hatched.

Wishing all a happy, prosperous New Year, I will step down and out, thus making room for some one else.

Mrs.L.E.R.L.

Five days later: Winter again for a change, the beautiful snow has been falling slowly and steadily for two days, with no wind.

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MINNESOTA'S COLD

Friends of The Nebraska Bee-Keeper:  
We are having very cold weather now. Sunday M. 30; the warmest at any time during the day was 15 below. Sunday night, at bed time, 28 below. Monday morning, 32 below (which is the coldest of the season). Last night at bedtime, 26 below, and this morning at sunrise, 23 below.

My bees (I have 140 colonies as far as I can tell) are wintering nicely, they have been in cellar two months and 17 days, bees here have to stay in the cellar over 5 months but then if they have wintered well they come out almost perfect. In a little over one month and half swarming commences. After taking out of the cellar, I commenced the season last year with 74 strong colonies and 10 or 15 small Queen rearing hives: got 5,000 pounds or 6,000

pounds of comb honey and 70 colonies of increase; four for neighbors, which leaves me 140 strong ones and 25 or 30 small ones which I am trying to winter single to save the Queen, for this spring. I don't know how I will succeed with my full colonies, and I expect a big honey flow this year. I could have increased a right smart over a hundred but did not have the hives and I like doubling up better any way for you get more surplus honey and one will increase in this country in bees fast enough, the best way he can manage the little theme. I agree with you Mr. Editor in regard to what you say about production of comb honey in single walled hives in this cold north-west. We haven't a hive manufactured that suits our climate, that is, to my knowledge. Our dove tailed chaff hives are too expensive and then they have tight bottoms, which will ever exclude them from use here. We have a champion chaff hive, but it also is too expensive and its furniture doesn't suit me. I wish that some manufacturer would make the single walled, dove tailed hive with a protection cap to go over two supers or else have the right kind of furniture in the standard Langstroth's hives with this protection cap for two supers. We must have some kind of a rig and then we will show them fellows east and south that we are in it too if we do have to keep our pets shut up half of the year, I believe that I had swarms that would have stored and did store twenty pounds raw nectar in empty combs in a day from raspberry bloom. I agree with you also with regard to "Apis Dorsata". We will probably have them before long and that too without a great big expense to the Government.

A. T. McKibben.

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## SPRING DWINDLING

One of the semi-occasional bee-papers not long since claimed there had been no progress in bee-culture or anything new since 1890, or similar declaration. Perhaps the writer of that article was some where near the band wagon of progress seven years ago, perhaps in advance, but whenever any person in these days, claims to know all there is to be known, and not admitting that others may learn something new, is losing ground as a bee-keeper and will soon get so far behind that he will soon get lost.

Whether there is anything new or not, there are some practices that the writer of that article has never, to our knowledge, advocatéd, but in all probability he will claim to have advocatéd the same or similar practices years ago and discarded them as no good.

Mr. Whitcomb has for some years been advocating a certain system of watering his bees which to a great extent, in many instances has stopped spring dwindling. This has been one very serious trouble with many, here in Nebraska. Living on the prairies, without much wind breaks, few streams or ponds, bees have in many cases been obliged to go long distances for water. During cool weather, the winds high, and the water cold, it is little wonder that the bees get chilled and never return to the hive. In this way, large numbers are lost at a season of the year when workers are scarce, and their value great.

Mr. Whitcomb's system is to take a piece of pine board five or six inches square, with his jack knife he cuts an X on one side but not letting the grooves reach the outside edge of the board, he then takes a fruit can or large necked bottle, filling it with water, then putting the board over the can, grooves next the jar, then inverts the whole, setting it in a warm,

snug location in the apiary. The sunshine on the glass jar warms the water very warm, on the same principle as a sun-glass, so that the bees have water very much warmer than the atmosphere so that they seldom get chilled so they cannot reach the hive, carrying warm water instead of ice water.

In numerous cases has this practice stopped, short off, all signs of spring dwindling. There are other devices for supplying water for the bees, but none we think as good. We have at times put a large piece of curved glass outside the can of water, so as to still more concentrate the sun's rays, or even a single pane of window glass, or a hot bed sash over the whole and it has been surprising to see the hustle and bustle of the bees in loading up with the warm water. Try this method this year and unless our non-progressive bee editor comes very quick to dispute the claim, we shall insist that at least one "improved" system has been originated in the past seven years, and that by a Nebraska man without the "aid or consent" of the balance of the United States, Michigan included.

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If you can avoid spring dwindling your bees will swarm early, and to be prepared for them, you should be getting hives and fixtures in readiness in early summer, or better still this spring. Then you will be sure to have them when wanted.

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To avoid spring dwindling this spring, and ever after, sow a plentiful supply of honey producing plants on every waste or barren place around your apiary.

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At this time we hear much about inducing eastern capitalists to come to



Nebraska and start factories. Admitted, that we need factories of different kinds to work up our surplus products, but we do not think the ways advocated are the best for us. In these days of immense wealth in the hands of the few, and gigantic schemes and corporations, nothing of a factory can be thought of without its million dollar capital stock, high salaried officials etc. Of course Nebraska would welcome these large factories, but instead of waiting for one such large factory the people of the state should go to work and organize among themselves and go to work to erect small factories right at home to work up the surplus products of their vicinity. Every rail-road town in the state should be a nucleus for some branch of factory work. The most prosperous canning factory we ever knew was started by a man in his kitchen with not over ten dollars of appliances, and in seven years, at his death, the plant alone sold for \$10,000. The best butter and cheese factories of a few years ago were started by men to work up their own milk, and then as their experience ripened into knowledge of the work, it was very easy to extend their business.

We believe that instead of waiting for something to turn up to help secure factories for Nebraska, we as citizens of the state should go to work and turn something up for ourselves. Lets build our own factories, starting in a small way if need be, but if we wait for outside capital to build our factories it will not be done in your day nor mine.

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The conditions surrounding the laboring class in this as well as other states should lead them to study, not only how to earn a dollar, but how best to spend the dollar as well.

A man may produce a tone of honey, a crib full of corn or a big bin of wheat more than he can use, he has on hand commodities which he must convert into cash with which to pay debts or purchase such articles as he does not produce.

There should be some better system by which the individual farmer may place his surplus product in the hands of the consumer, or whereby he might exchange his surplus for some of the surplus commodities of some other farmer than at present not, long since in connection with another farmer we compared notes. We had corn to exchange for apples, while he had the apples to exchange for corn. At present prices a bushel of my corn here was worth just a bushel of his apples at the orchard. If I sold my corn to a commission house and he his apples to the same it took just two bushels of corn to pay for a bushel of apples, while he had to give two bushels of his apples for a bushel of my corn, then in addition I had to give the price of two bushels of my corn to get it to the commission dealer half way between us and he the same on his apples, then each of us had to pay the freight the other half of the way he on my bushel of corn and I on his bushel of apples.

There is something radically wrong when the commission man can charge as much for simply taking in a sack of corn and setting out a sack of apples as the producer gets for their production. All such transfers should be made by the farmers themselves, without the intervention of middlemen or boards of trade. The boards



of trade in no American city should be allowed to assess toll or tribute on grain or products shipped through their cities.

In all farming communities are to be found some who raise produce used by their neighbors who produce other commodities. Through the interchange of farmers clubs these articles should all of them be exchanged so far as possible without going through the medium of any third parties, then all surplus for the markets should be graded and sold in bulk. Where this is carefully attended to a very great per cent. increase in price is often obtained. Then comes the matter of buying. If the farmers' club will act unitedly in buying goods for its members, another saving can be made, where proper care is used, no bad debts will need be provided for, which is one of the heaviest items of the corner grocer.

If a more general work of co-operation should be undertaken among the farmers they could lessen the cost of production. Let a half dozen progressive farmers join together buying such machinery as needed, then running it constantly in its season, instead of each one having sufficient for his own use and it lying idle half the season. Let them buy good animals for breeding, each sharing the expense and receiving its use in return. Instead of each one making a little second class butter, why not join together and get suitable utensils and make a good deal of first grade butter.

All these things can be done if we will, and Nebraska farmers will never get out of debt until we have more confidence and faith in each other.

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At this writing, (Feb.10) our bees are seemingly all right, having been on the summer stands in chaff packed hives.

So far, there has been at no time over two weeks when they did not have a fly except some covered over by snow. We had a few so situated that the snow drifted them under four feet deep, and as an experiment we left them in that condition for nearly a month. When the snow thawed off, and the bees came out, spry and bright as ever.

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For a few years we saw in a very few of the bee journals something about a "mutual admiration" society: of late, from the tone of their writings these same men would like to belong to some such society, if there was one, as they don't seem to be admired as much as would suit them, and it seems to have soured on their stomach and then struck in.

Come brothers cheer up, keep sweet. Your writings, teachings, and inventions will all be duly criticised in time.

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At this time all are looking to see what the Legislature will do in the way of an appropriation for Trans-Mississippi Exposition.

Some are advocating a large amount, others are asking for either a very small amount or none at all. There should be a happy medium between these two extremes.

A reasonable appropriation judiciously expended in making a display of Nebraska products, and her resources would be of great value to the state and beneficial to every true citizen.

Nebraska is holding her own through these hard times as well as any state in the Union. Let's show to the world that we still have our grit and enterprise left, and put up a good showing.

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Are you making arrangements to set out an orchard this spring? Will you beautify the home by planting flowers,



shrubs and trees. Home is what we make it, will it have bare walls and desolate surroundings, or will it be cozy and hospitable, bright and cheery. Which? It is in your power to have it either way.

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Look out for the fruit tree shark. He is abroad in the land. The printers art has been used so that specimens of some hard, sour fruit are brought out so as to show something finer than was ever seen before, grafted on whole roots too. Prices reasonable to be sure only five to fifteen times what your near by nursery man will supply you the same, or better for. Buy from no one you know not of.

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Windmill irrigation is also one feature of this enterprise not to be overlooked in its far reaching possibilities. Mr. I. A. Fort of North Platte, who has made a special study of this phase of the question, is confident that the time is already here when it is capable of being demonstrated that windmill irrigation for a small tract on any eighty or 160-acre farm in the state is a practible and feasible business undertaking. We have the winds above and the waters below, both constant factors, and suitable and specially devised machinery for this purpose is being brought to light on every hand.

Neb. Farmer.

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### Abolish the Free Seed Distribution

Here is what the Secretary says: Is it not possible to unite the seedsmen and dealers of the United States in a protest against the system of gratuitous distribution of seed through Governmental agencies? Can not they show the injustice of taking money from the National Treasury, which belongs to all the American people, for the purpose of buying seeds to donate to relatively a few of the American people.

Why should not such a protest plainly state the fact that the seed purchased with the public money and distributed at great carrying cost to the Government, comes in competition with people who are ill able to contest for trade with seed thus bought at wholesale and given away and delivered throughout the whole country at retail?

Why not show that the distribution by Government this year amounts to 20,359,264 packets, which at 5 cents a packed (the retail price) would be more than a million of dollars? But in the above number of packets there are many which at retail sell for 10 cents, or more, each. Therefore, it is safe to say that the retail seed trade of the United States is beaten by this eleemosynary dissemination out of something like two millions of dollars of trade in a single year. And the evil is growing. The American people like fair play. Yours Respectfully,

(Signed) J. Sterling Morton,  
Secretary.

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THE FUEL VALUE OF CORN

The present abundance of corn and its low price has occasioned much speculation as to its fuel value. There is such a diversity of opinion and so little actual knowledge regarding the profitableness of buying corn instead of coal, that it seemed desirable to conduct a comparative test that would show the relative heating power of the two materials. Whether it would pay to raise corn for fuel is a question not contemplated in this investigation, but the interests of the large number of people living in the region of cheap corn call for the determination of its most profitable use after it is upon the market.

To make the test, a good grade of yellow dent corn, on the ear, of this year's crop, and not thoroughly dry, was



burned under the boiler used to supply power for the Department of Practical Mechanics, and the amount of water evaporated by the burning of a known quantity of corn was noted. The test lasted nine and one-half hours, and 5,232 pounds of corn and cob were consumed. The next day, the same boiler was heated with screened Rock Springs nut coal for five hours, burning 1,888 pounds of coal, and the amount of water evaporated was recorded.

The data thus obtained shows that one pound of coal evaporated 1.9 times as much water as one pound of corn. In other words, 1.9 times as much heat was liberated in burning one pound of coal as in burning one pound of corn.

Several calorimeter tests were made which agreed very closely with these results.

The coal used cost at Lincoln \$6.65 per ton. With coal selling at this price, and worth 1.9 times as much for fuel as an equal weight of corn, the fuel value of the latter would be \$3.50 per ton or 12.25 cents per bushel.

The following table shows how much coal is worth per ton, when its heating power is the same as that used in the experiment, and when corn is selling at a certain price per bushel:

<u>Corn Per Bu.</u>	<u>Coal Per Ton</u>
9 cents	\$ 4.87
10 "	5.41
11 "	5.95
12 "	6.49
13 "	7.11
14 "	7.57
15 "	8.11

It will thus be seen that if this quality of coal were selling at less than \$6.50, and corn were bringing twelve cents, it would not pay to burn corn, while coal must sell as low as \$5.41 per ton to be as cheap fuel as corn at ten cents per bushel.

A very complete and thorough investigation of this subject is being conducted at the University. It was thought desirable, however, to publish the results already obtained, although they were based upon the performance of but one quality of coal. This coal is well known and largely used in the state.

T. L. Lyon,  
C. R. Richards.

## THE HOME

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### Intensive Farming.

What is a farmer, and what is a farm?

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A farmer is a man and his wife who live on and till a farm making it their home, not merely a stopping place. A farm is a factory, a plat of earth where the farmer takes the inert forces of the soil and converts them into a merchantable product.

The intensive farmer must be some thing of a "general utility man."

Intensive farming supposes that the brains are used as well as the hands, and where all the forces of the nature are brought into requisition to produce the most bountiful crops. Soil, location, heat, moisture, and culture must all be studied and understood as to be handled to the best advantage, then when the crop is produced, finished into marketable shape, so as to sell at a profit.

How to do these things, taxes the best of us and the man who succeeds best is he who studies hardest and then practices what he learns.

For years here in Nebraska, we have been raising corn, hogs, cattle, wheat, and weeds, taking little thought



of keeping up the fertility of the rich soil so as to leave our farms better for our having farmed them. We have been running over these broad acres, hip-skip, too much. To make a success, we must stop this work and farm better.

The successful manufacturer always knows what it has cost him to produce a certain machine. He knows what the crude material was worth. He knew what the labor was worth to make that machine. Then he added a certain percentage for use of plant, another percentage for his own time in looking after the affairs of the factory. In this way he can tell what he must sell his products for in order to save himself from ruin. Now why should not the farmer know just as definitely what his produce has cost. I have when attending Farmers' Institutes frequently asked every farmer present who could tell me how much it had cost to raise a crop per bushel, to hold up their hands. Very few indeed are ever seen. Not one in five hundred. Sometimes in a discussion men will figure up the cost of raising a crop on the guess work rule. They will suppose a man can do so much work for so much money. That is like book farming, "nothing practical there". They forget many little items in regard to cost when figuring from recollection a year afterwards. They don't know at the time. Some may say "it can't be done" to keep an account with every crop. It can be done and the farmer will never know what crops are the real money makers until he gets down to just this kind of business.

Isn't it time you shut up those pigs that have been subsoiling the front yard for the past year. Turn over a new leaf and have a place for every thing and everything in its place. A pig is a good thing but his place is not in the front yard nor in the garden, nor

around the back door. Straighten up now and be a man. Take better care of the little things: make your home surroundings a little more pleasant. There will soon be uniform divorce laws and then incompatibility pass because the wife threw the boot-jack at that runty pig. Better shut it up now, send us a year's subscription to the Bee-Keeper and get some Strawberry plants or flowers to put in the front yard.

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### STRAWBERRIES!

Do you want some strawberry plants? To every person who has, or will pay up their subscription to the Bee-Keeper to April 1st, 1898 we will send by mail, postpaid, one dozen strawberry plants, or if preferred, will send a collection of flower seeds or plants, our own selection. To those who have remitted subscriptions to Jan. 1898 we will give the same for ten cents extra to pay for packing and postage. There is no bee-keeper but who has room to set a few strawberry plants, and this amount will give enough to start a good bed. of sufficient size for a small family. Send in your subscriptions at once so that we may know how many to provide for.

Old subscribers will you pay up and take advantage of this offer for  
STRAWBERRIES!

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We think we get pretty near all there is in our cows' milk, using a cream separator, good churn and good methods of handling and find that our rate of profit per cow is very much above our neighbors; still a good colony of bees gives as good net returns as our best



cows, and with less capital invested. Less work in the care. The two however work together very well and each helps fill the larder with wholesome food.

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HOW HE SOLD HIS CORN

Last November an Otoe county farmer held an invoice of his situation and found that all he had with which to provide winter supplies, clothing, food, etc., for his large family and to show for his summer's work was 4,000 bushels of corn. Ten to twelve cents per bushel would not do for him, nor let him out. He went up to the South Omaha stock yards and presented his case so plainly that he was permitted to drive to his home 101 head of steers. These he cared for until the last of January when his 4,000 bushels of corn was gone. The steers looking fat and sleek were shipped to Chicago and a good price paid for them. After paying first cost at Omaha, interest, and all other expenses, this man found that he had realized on his 4,000 bushels of corn 52 1/8 cents net per bushel besides having on hand a carload of fat hogs and a lot of the richest kind of fertilizers to distribute over his farm--Neb. Farmer.

