matter has been presented, refuses to enter this name unless we pay him a fee of francs 100 or $19.30. In order to save expenses we use the telegraph as little as possible during the year and ~~we~~ perhaps we can get along without this name being registered. At all events I have declined to waste 100 francs in this way to please a Turk with queer notions in his head, till I am directed to do so from Washington.

Respectfully Your obedient Servant
(Signed) Selah Merrill
United States Consul

No 25

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, January 12, 1900

Hon. Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington D. C.

Sir

Please give me definite instructions in the following case:

We need a voucher receipt from the chief of the Telegraphic Bureau for our disbursement account, but this Turkish official positively refuses to sign any receipt.

We have the same difficulty with the Turkish official at Jaffa who furnishes the statistics of Navigation. This is not because of ill-will against us, for we are on good terms, but some Turkish officials fear something terrible will happen to them if they sign any paper for a foreigner.

This are not the only instances where officials have refused to sign receipts, and we have had them signed by proxy. I do not like to do that.

In cases where Turkish officials refuse to sign receipts will the Department accept the statement of the Consul, sworn to or without that, as to amount disbursed?

I have mentioned this matter in a recent letter to the Treasury Department.

Respectfully your obedient servant
(Signed) Selah Merrill
U. S. Consul

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, January 25, 1900

Selah Merrill, Consul,
To Hon. Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington.

Subject
Bee Raising in Palestine

In ancient times Palestine was famous for its honey, and it has always been raised here but, till recently, only in very crude ways. It will be seen in the following account what honey raising as an industry might become in this country were the conditions imposed upon it by the Government somewhat more generous than they are at present.

The credit for developing this industry by introducing the most improved modern appliances and methods is due to a family named Baldensperger. This family consisting of father, mother, and several young children, came from Switzerland in 1849 and settled at Artas a small village about seven miles south of Jerusalem and near the famous Pools of Solomon. The father had always been interested in bee raising and coming here began to keep some in native hives, that is, long terra cotta jars; and this he continued to do after he removed to Jerusalem to take the position of steward in Bishop Gobart's School on Mount Zion. What the father actually accomplished in this line was of little account except to awaken in ~~the~~ his five young sons an interest in this business which, thanks to their enthusiasm and perseverance, has become a success.

The Baldensperger boys needed instruction, but books were dear and communication with Europe infrequent and it was not until the year 1880 that a real start was effected. In that year an English clergyman, an enthusiastic bee raiser in his own country, gave the young men the help they needed in the way of hints as to the methods of bee keeping in Europe. Later in the same year, from Mr. D. A. Jones a Canadian who came to Palestine, they gained more definite instruction in the care of bees and how to handle them, and it was he who transferred their first jar or native hive into a Bar Frame Hive, an American invention which they have ever since used. Their principal teacher, however, was Mr. Frank Benton of the United States. He had just come from Ceylon where he had been in search of the Apis Dorsata, the large wandering bee that lives

in the forests of India. Mr. Jones bought of these young men ten native hives which he took to America, in the original jars, the first bees from the Holy Land ever introduced into that country. Of Mr. Benton the Baldenspergers bought an apiary which he had in Beirut for queen raising. By the year 1882 they were established in the bee raising business and on a fairly large scale. Up to this time, however, they had always kept their bees in one place.

In 1883 they adopted the plan of transporting their bees from one locality to another. From the region of Ramleh they carried them to Jaffa a distance of twelve miles, to give them the benefit of the orange blossoms here. Women carried the hives on their heads all the way, one woman carrying one hive only. They had a rich harvest of orange blossom honey during the month of April, and in other places two other crops from cactus and accacia blossoms respectively. They also started another apiary and secured from other localities crops of honey from lemon blossoms and from wild thyme. The next year 1884, they had also good crops of honey, the fifty hives at Jaffa alone yielding 6,000 pounds in less than one month.

About this time they began to have serious trouble with the owners of the orange gardens at Jaffa. They had been accustomed to put the hives into the gardens which they afterwards learned was not at all necessary. It was charged that the bees sting the men while at work. A demand was made for their immediate removal, but a couple of days were allowed in which to accomplish this, and for every day beyond the limit they must pay a fine of 500 francs per day, nearly one hundred dollars. The bees were removed in all haste, but there was a strong sirocco at the time and the air was intensely hot so that during the process which was in the night, all the bees in the fifty hives were smothered. They were covered with cloth for ventilation, but it proved to be of too fine a texture for the purpose and the poor bees were destroyed.

A new apiary was started at once by purchasing jars or hives of native bees, transferring them to Bar Frame Hives and in a year or two they had at work in different places no less than seven hundred hives of bees.

From time to time accidents occured to prejudice the natives and arouse their ~~ent~~ enmity, as for example, at one place a thorough bred Arab steed was stung to death by the bees, and some other animals, both donkeys and camels were killed by them.

It was not long before this industry began to attract the attention of the Government and at first a tax of a little less than ten cents a hive was imposed, but this was very soon greatly increased by ingenious device, most thoroughly Oriental, whereby the officials not only counted the actual hives, but every door, window however small, and hole in which they could see any bees moving

was reckoned as a "hive", with the result that of 150 hives they made 2000 on which taxes must be paid. The matter had to be carried to the court and was not settled till after two years of litigation when the Baldenspergers were found in debt to the Government to the amount of about $500.- This decision ~~as~~ affected one large apiary only.

It was in 1889 that this decision was rendered and as the Baldenspergers refused to pay, this apiary was sold at auction in Jerusalem for about $1.25 each hive. The easy part of the work was done; the difficult part was to deliver the goods to the purchaser which the officials were bound to do. The purchaser, the officials, a large number of camels and camel drivers, went to the place where the apiary stood expecting to take it away, but as the bottom boards happened to be unhooked, the bees when the hives were touched swarmed out and everybody had to retreat. The result was that the officials, the purchaser, and the rest, went back to Jerusalem as they came, without the bees, but with many stings.

A little later the Baldenspergers were called to Jerusalem to see if they would settle the matter amicably as the French Consul and the Governor had agreed that a compromise could be effected if one half the amount demanded was paid; this was accordingly done and the bees remained in the hands of their original and proper owners.

At one time after this occurence the officials positively ordered that the bees should not be taken any more to Jaffa; and the reason given was the prevalence of a certain disease affecting the orange trees which they insisted was caused by poison imparted to them by the bees. The name of the insect causing this mischief is Coccus hesperidum

There was a long dispute and struggle over this question. Several experts came from Europe who testified that the bees did not cause this disease and that they were, on the contrary, perfectly harmless. The officials still held out till one day an Effendi rose in the court and declared before the Governor of Jaffa that "it was said in the Koran that God created bees for the good of man and that therefore it was wicked of those who had signed a paper stating that they could cause any injury to the orange trees". This argument had great weight with the court, for the Baldenspergers won their case and were thereafter allowed to take their bees to Jaffa as they wished.

Very soon after the Baldenspergers began to raise bees they found that they had to contend with a variety of enemies who at times nearly ruined their industry. The first was the large yellow hornet which came in such numbers that they prevented the bees from working and destroyed multitudes of them. Sparrows, Swallows, and Bee-eaters (Merops Apiaster) also did a great deal of mischief. Badgers are also great enemies and during one

winter fifteen hives were destroyed by them. Rats are very troublesome. They do not eat the honey but destroy the bees. They have been watched and seen to come to the hives, give a scratch or knock on the hive evidently knowing that the bees would come out to see what was the matter, when they would get for themselves a fine dinner. There are also two kinds of lizards which do much harm, the "pardun" and the "sahliyeh". They once destroyed for the Baldenspergers thirty hives of bees. The Sultan of the lizards has his imperial seat in "Wady Hanein" is a common Arabic saying in the region of this place where bees are kept by the Jews as mentioned below, a locality formerly occupied for this purpose by the Baldenspergers. There is also a destructive moth called "Death-head Moth". These appear in Autumn and enter the hives to eat honey, but do not harm the bees. One of these moths will take a teaspoonful of honey at a time. A strong colony of bees will sting the intruders to death. The greatest enemy is man. Wherever an apiary is set down the Sheikhs of the nearest villages have to receive a certain amount of honey, otherwise the bees will be stolen. When a hive is stolen fire, and sometimes water, is used to destroy the bees. About one tenth of all the honey produced must be given away to prevent people from stealing the hives.

Furthermore when the bees are being carried from one place to another on camels the Bedowin or wild Arabs occassionaly steal the camels. They cannot do anything with the bees or honey, and care only for the camels, so they cut the ropes by which the hives are bound on the animals and then run the camels off. Up to this list we add the difficulties arising from taxation we find that the industry of raising bees in Palestine is beset with many and serious obstacles. To carry on this industry and make it at all successful has required great patience, tact, and no end of perseverance. The watchmen required constantly add greatly to the expense, for they must be on duty all the time and during the months called "working months," that is April to July inclusive, extra men are needed and the same is true when the hives are moved from one place to another. The moving is always done on camels, eight hives on each animal, as camels can take the hives about on mountains and plains where there are not even trails but where "bee-pasture" is good. The camels are not stung because the hives are closed.

There is always one queen in each hive, never more except in cases where the "old mother" has become too old and the bees clip her wings; in that case she and her daughter remain in one hive. It is said that she does not live long under those circumstances and is soon killed by jealousy. A queen is good for about three years when she is replaced by a young queen which is raised in a small box specially prepared for the purpose. When shipping queens the Baldenspergers always use Benton's Cages, and Good's Food, a mixture of honey and sugar which makes water unnecessary. A queen lays about 3000 eggs in twenty four hours and the very large proportion

of young bees are "workers". A "strong colony" has from 30,000 to 50,000 bees. There are about 3,000 useless drones in each hive. In distributing the bees about the country care has to be taken not to overstock any given locality with hives, otherwise the bees cannot do so well.

In 1884 a man named Howard, from America, who was in this country, bought 200 queens of the Baldenspergers, which he took with him to the United States. He arrived at his home with only twelve queens alive which he sold for $15 each. Nearly all the queens were drowned in the sugar which he fed to them.

When the trouble arose between the Baldenspergers and the officials, the Baldenspergers we have said were Swiss, but French subjects, the French Consul thought he could prevent their property in bees from being taxed. But they claimed that as honey was a product of the soil it must pay one tenth just like every other crop. The Consul, it seemed, had no control over bees any more than over land, both coming directly under Turkish and not under Consular jurisdiction.

When it seemed probable that this industry, so far as the Baldenspergers were concerned, would be ruined by excessive taxation, they sold a large number of hives, some to natives who had been their servants and had learned the business from them, and some to a small colony of Jews in Wady Hanein (on the Plain of Sharon south of Ramleh), so that there are now about 700 hives at work besides those belonging to the Baldenspergers. The system used by all is the Benton-Baldenspergers system; the bees are moved about the country in the same manner; and the Jews have similar troubles.

Both the Baldenspergers and the Jews find a good market for all the honey they can raise. It is sent to Germany, Switzerland, England, and a very little to France. This year (1899) the market has been unusually good because the yellow hornet has been so destructive to the native bees.

The export duty is one per cent.

Natives all over the country raise honey after their rude methods, as they always have done, but their neither produce nor sell much, and since they cannot remove the honey without destroying the bees the business is not profitable. The extractors which the Baldenspergers use contribute largely to their success.

The average yield per hive is about 100 pounds of honey. The working months are April, May, June, and July. After October nothing is taken from the bees, they are allowed at that time all the honey they have, 25 or 30 pounds per hive to live upon. In January the keepers begin to feed them some stimulating food.

Matters with the Government are more easily arranged than formerly and a tax is paid every year.

As was said at the outset there is no doubt that this industry

might be greatly increased. Besides these matters of general interest there is and has been from the beginning an American element which should attract at least a moments notice from the people of the United States.

The Baldensperger have regularly the paper called "Gleanings in Bee Culture" by A. I. Root of Medina, Ohio. From Mr. Root are purchased all the extractors, veils, uncapping knives, and other implements employed. Mr. Frank Benton of the United States Department of Agriculture, was the instructor and helper of the Baldensperger at the beginning of their career.

Of the five Baldensperger boys who began this industry one is dead, two have removed to Europe, so that now two only remain and it is from Charles Henry Baldensperger who still resides here that I have obtained the principal fact given in this report.

U. S. Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, Febr. 3, 1900

Hon. Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington

Sir

In compliance with instructions in circular of January 8, 1900 relating to the States Code I have to report that the volume in question has been burned.

Respectfully Your obedient Servant
(Signed) Selah Merrill
U. S. Consul

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, February 9th 1900

Hon. Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington, D. C.

Sir,

Yours of January 22nd is at hand inclosing Sureties' Certificate which I have forwarded to Mr. Knox the representative in Congress from my district and also of the district where my Sureties reside, who will sign it and forward to the Department of State.

Respectfully
Your obedient Servant
Signed Selah Merrill
United States Consul

No. 26

United States Consulate
Jerusalem, Syria, February 24, 1900.

Hon. Thomas W. Cridler
Assistant Secretary of State
Washington

Sir

Yours of December 21st 1899 granted Vice Consul Herbert E. Clark leave of absence for ninety days, commencing on the 26th of October. Mr. Clark returned to his post on the 2nd of January and duly reported the fact to this consulate. He states in his letter that he should be obliged to be absent on account of his business affairs two or three times during January, February, March, and April, and he would like a new leave of absence to cover the entire period between the 20th of January and the 23d of April say for 100 days "although", he adds, "I shall during that time be in Jerusalem as many as forty days probably". Paragraph 472 of Consular Regulations seems to give me authority to