

"The York County Bee-keeper."

We have much pleasure in presenting our readers with a group picture of our good friend "York County Bee-keeper" and his estimable wife and family. Friend Byer has, during the last two years or more, favored our pages regularly with most interesting and helpful reviews of current bee topics in his "Notes and Comments." On account of his inherent modesty, he has been writing under the nom-de-plume of "A York County Bee-keeper." We are pleased to say, however, that he is gradually overcoming this tendency, and that in future we shall be permitted to use his real name in connection with his valued contributions. We had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Mrs. Byer, at the recent Ontario Bee-keepers' Convention, and the splendid baby boy who appears in the photograph.

Mr. Byer has not given us much information of his system of management, but we know him as one of the most successful of Ontario's bee-keepers, and "a big hive fellow." At our request he has very kindly furnished us with the following brief history of his bee-keeping.

Friend Craig—Replying to your request for a brief outline of my bee-keeping experience, would say that I was brought up on the farm, and with the exception of time spent in learning telegraphy when about nineteen years of age, have followed no other pursuit but bee-keeping. Disliking indoor work, I gave up the notion of telegraphy and returned to work on the farm. While my grandfather and my great uncle, who lived near us, were successful bee-keepers, and I had the benefit of their experience, yet I never

contemplated taking up bee-keeping for a living until about ten years ago, when I came into possession of a swarm of bees. I immediately contracted "bee fever" in its most virulent form, and that fall bought twenty-five colonies, giving my note for twelve months. Visible assets; a No. 1 wife, baby boy of same quality, and 25 swarms of bees (to be paid for from proceeds of the honey they would gather the next season).

As the most of you know I depend solely upon bee-keeping for a living. As to how we have succeeded, I can best illustrate by the following. An Englishman who lived near us for a number of years, in speaking of the advantages of Canada over the old sod, used to say that "he had done remarkably well since coming to Canada. He had nothing when he landed here 40 years ago, and he had held his own; he had the same yet." Yet I believe, on looking at the picture, the most skeptical will agree with me, that in some respects, at least, we have more than "held our own." In fact it is with pardonable pride that I venture to say we have done remarkably well."

We produced extracted honey almost exclusively. I have no space to give methods, and suspect the fraternity are better without them any way. As to hives I use, I rest satisfied about them the better. C. B. J. readers would only laugh at me if I told them, and you know, Mr. Editor, I am awfully sensitive. Just a word more and I must close in order to catch the mail. Would call special attention of our friends of "Canadian Bee-keeping" as well as some others, that in using the pronoun "we" I refer to my "best half" and myself. Mrs. Byer is an adept in the use of the honing knife, and can take the "peelings" of a comb of honey as quickly and neat as anyone who ever came under my notice. "A word to the wise is sufficient."

J. L. BYER.

York Co., Ont., Feb. 2, '06.