

COMMUNICATION FROM MR. R. F. HOLTERMANN, PRESIDENT OF THE ONTARIO BEE-KEEPERS' ASSOCIATION, ORDERED BY THE COMMITTEE TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE REPORT AS EVIDENCE.

To the Chairman and Gentlemen of the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization.

I regret very much that, owing to the change in the weather, it might have caused considerable loss, through my bees, to remain any longer in Ottawa, and I feel grateful to the Agriculture Committee for consenting to my discharge. With your permission I will put on paper a few ideas which may be of use to those thinking of keeping bees.

LOCAL REQUIREMENTS,—PROFITS OF BEE-KEEPING.

Bee-keeping displaces no other crop on the farm and turns to a valuable article of food that which would otherwise be entirely wasted. The constituents in honey, like those in butter, are taken from the atmosphere, the honey-crop therefore takes nothing from the fertility of the soil. Honey is a finished product and one which requires intelligent care, and a climate and flora such as is to be found in many parts of Canada, to produce. Those situated in localities distant from railroads can market \$100 worth of honey more readily than \$100 worth of wheat or other grain. Those clearing a farm can establish an apiary and have a honey crop before any other crop can be harvested; again, if they are situated where rough and broken land abounds, giving a variety of flora, here bee keeping can often be engaged in with profit when the greater portion of the land in the vicinity may be unfit for cultivation.

Districts which have varieties of elevations, high and low land, heavy dews, willow, poplar, hard and soft maple, raspberry, fruit bloom generally, white and alsike clover, willow herb, (or sometimes called fire weed and purple top), golden rod, boneset, aster, prairie flowers and buckwheat are very well suited for bee-keeping, and many are successful in districts where few of these advantages exist.

Any one thinking of beginning bee-keeping, and wishing to succeed, must devote care, study and a reasonable amount of time to the work. The idea that bees will take care of themselves and yield a handsome profit is a mistake, and such a supposition has led to loss and disappointment. On the other hand, in an average locality, properly conducted, bee-keeping, one year with another, for time taken and capital invested, will hold its own with any branch of agriculture.

H. G. Stafford, Ameliasburg, Ontario, one season increased from 24 to 195 colonies, securing 240 pounds honey per colony, spring count, besides leaving the 195 colonies enough honey for winter.

C. W. Post, Trenton, Ontario, a very extensive bee-keeper, having about 300 colonies, has secured an average of over 150 pounds per colony, and during linden or basswood flow, one season, his bees gained from the Friday of one week to the Thursday following, by actual weight, an average of 75 pounds of honey per colony.

Quebec is quite as good.

Manitoba.—Report from Portage la Prairie, page 547, *Canadian Bee Journal*: Have been fairly successful with bees for the last three years,—1894 report,—14 colonies in spring increased to 23, got 1,100 pounds of honey. Have wintered them better here than in Ontario. They gather a lot from golden rod and the wild prairie flowers. Mr. Gilbert Gunn, born in Manitoba, from 12 colonies received 20 swarms and 1,200 pounds of honey. The following year he had an average of 146 pounds per colony extracted. He, too, says in regard to the winter: as far as I know it is not so hard on bees as Ontario; they gather much from the golden rod and wolf-berry.

South of Brandon and Dominion City, N.W.T.—At Edmonton bees are kept. Henderson has secured over 100 pounds per colony and a heavy increase.