

AMATEUR BEE-KEEPING.



I HAVE selected the above topic as the basis of a few remarks on the honey industry of Ontario. If an amateur be one who takes up and prosecutes the study of his subject, because his tastes lead him in that direction, regardless of the substantial profits he may reap from it, then I fear there are but few true amateurs in bee-keeping. Exaggerated notions of the profits derived from bees, and the erroneous opinions entertained by many, that bees "work for nothing and board themselves," lead more men to engage in bee-keeping than does the desire to cultivate a closer acquaintance with the life and habits of the bee. Still, the interior economy of a bee-hive is so wonderful, the instinctive powers and social habits of the insect so remarkable, that ordinary people become enamoured of the calling, and, in a measure, prosecute it for the pleasure and information it affords. Most practical bee-keepers are more or less amateurs, and like their calling for the pleasure it brings with it, which goes far to compensate them for hopes occasionally deferred, or a stinging resentment of their untimely interference with the domestic concerns of their pets.

A dozen years ago bee-keeping was in its infancy here and but few understood the subject. To-day there are hundreds of people throughout the province who have little to learn of the life history of bees, or of the theory and practice of their management. A dozen years ago honey was considered a luxury and could only be bought in drug stores. To-day it finds a place in every well regulated grocery, and is with many people a daily article of food. A dozen years ago a few hundred pounds of honey was considered a large gathering. To-day there are hundreds of men throughout the country, who annually harvest tons of it. A dozen years ago its price precluded its common use. To-day it may be bought for a little more than the cost of good syrup. Such has been the increase in apicultural knowledge, and what that knowledge has produced in the last decade, that we sometimes wonder what it will result in twenty years hence, for people are constantly joining the ranks of those engaged in the honey industry, whose possibilities can only be known when the necessary force to fully develop it is employed.

R. MCKNIGHT,

Owen Sound, Aug. 11th.

THE PRINCE ALBERT is reported from the Geneva Experiment Station as an excellent red currant, with distinct dark green foliage. The fruit stems are extra long, and the fruit is of fair size. The fruit ripens about three weeks later than either Fay's Prolific or Cherry, thus lengthening the season about six weeks, as the berries hang a long time on the bushes before they become unfit for use.