

grain—or rather no grain—and sowed buckwheat. The rains came at last and they reaped thousands and thousands of bushels of the despised and abused buckwheat—all the crop they had in fact. I am a friend of the buckwheat every time. No farmer, who understands his business, need be troubled with that bug-a-boo of “after seeding,” as it is called. I might say here, to those who have not tried it, that the Japanese variety of buckwheat is by far the best of any; and next comes the “Silver Hull.” The former is a much larger grain, more productive, and better in every respect than the common kinds. When I took some of it to mill for cakes the miller complained that it would not go through his buckwheat seives on account of its enormous size and wanted to know where on earth I got it. And the cakes it makes, spread over with honey, instead of being soaked with pork gravy, are fit for gods or men, and angels or women (which perhaps mean about the same thing). But this is a digression—a pertinent one, however, for buckwheat, like the fruit tree and clover plant, yields a double crop—one of honey and one of grain.

In conclusion, I may draw attention to one other fact, from an economic standpoint, in favor of bee-culture, as an important branch of agriculture. Every bushel of grain and pound of meat which we raise and sell off the farm represent and carry away with them a certain amount, more or less, of our agrarian capital, or, in other words, the fertility of our soil. Not so with the sweet nectar of the flowers, which would be mostly wasted in the air were it not ingathered by the bees. When you sell twenty bushels of barley for \$10, (and you can hardly get that unremunerative price for it), along with the barley you part with certain of your soil elements, which means more or less impoverishment of your land; but when I sell 100 lbs of honey for \$10, the transaction involves no corresponding impoverishment—that is, I have saved and gathered what would have been otherwise practically lost. I am, therefore, a more profitable producer of wealth in the body politic, and the body industrial than either the agriculturist proper, the horticulturist or the stock raiser. This economic fact, together with that other fact that pure honey is the most palatable and wholesome sweet made in the whole laboratory of nature or art, ought to place apiculture in equal rank with, if not ahead, of every other branch of agriculture.

ALLEN PRINGLE.

Selby, Ont., Feb'y 1891.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

### Unprotected Colonies.

A WRITER in the CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL appears to wonder if there are really as many unprotected colonies in winter as one would infer from my article in the *American Bee Keeper*. I am inclined to think our good friend lives in the Northern part of Ontario, or at least in a locality a good deal more rigorous than my own if he doubts my assertion. I only wish I had overdrawn the picture, but a trip lately via the M. C. R. to St. Thomas, thence C. P. R. to Guelph, to attend the annual meeting of the Ontario Agricultural and Experimental Union, a meeting by the way which I would heartily advise everyone interested in any branch of agriculture from bee-keeping and gardening up to the breeding of thorough-bred horses, to attend, returning via Harrisburg to Brantford on the Grand Trunk and thence via M. C. R. to St. Thomas and Comber, I noticed more than one instance of hives standing unprotected on their summer stands. We have had our cold spells this winter, but generally it has been mild up to the present, and should I make a prediction, would say the balance of the winter will be no winter, although we may have a cold spring so that those who have not provided for a severe winter will receive additional encouragement and evidence (so it will appear) that packing for bees is superfluous in winter, and there will be the usual number of converts who will follow the example of their successful friends. But wait till we get a severe winter, perhaps that of '91 and '92, what a lot of empty hives will be stacked up. In some instances, at least, it will be a case of the survival of the fittest. As a rule, I venture to assert, the chaff hive is not sufficient for a Canadian winter. They might do in this, the most southerly part of Ontario, but one year with another they are a risky method of wintering with the packing used, and, although bees have been wintered well in them for several mild winters, it does not follow that they are a safe way to winter, and I should like to urge every bee-keeper to steer clear of them unless he is situated in my locality. I learned at St. Thomas that Jacob Alpaugh's bees, wintering on their summer stands, had only had one fly this winter, and that not a very good one. My bees have had three good flies. St. Thomas is warmer than the average of Ontario. I think it would be hard to find a milder locality in Ontario than this, therefore, I am willing to make an exception for Essex and Kent, although, there are other disadvantages in using the chaff