

Annual Convention

Ontario Bee-keepers Association

Hon. Nelson Monteith, Minister of Agriculture for the Province of Ontario:

"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I regret very much that my time has been so occupied that I have been unable to be at your session; however, I am here, and I am glad to meet the men who are forwarding the bee industry so well in this province of Ontario. Our information to some extent may be misleading, but I learn that the past year has not been altogether a banner year in the way of honey production. However, there are certain climatic conditions that sometimes affect results to an extent, and our labor is not always at fault. I am interested in being among you, not only on account of the good-fellowship I have met at the hands of the bee-men, but to gather from you what you believe can be done in the way of legislation to advance the bee industry of Ontario. Last year we attempted some slight modifications of the legislation bearing upon your industry, and I believe the coming session may see some other changes you may see fit to urge upon the government, and can show that your conclusions are satisfactory.

"I shall only be too ready and willing to further your well-thought-out desires in the matter of legislation bearing upon this great industry. I think it is unnecessary for me to speak at any great length as to what in my mind should be done in the honey interests of Ontario. I tried to impress upon you last year that I thought the bee-men of this country were not altogether aggressive enough in the way

of putting their products in the hands of the people. I still believe what I said at that time was well-founded. The value of honey as a food is little appreciated, and I believe there is a good deal of missionary work required on your part to put honey in its proper place in the bill-of-fare of the people of Ontario. Not only that, but in the way of marketing your goods, in presenting your productions in the most attractive way.

"Again, bee-keeping is a business not wholly confined to those who reside in the country, and you recognize the difficulty under which those who attempt it in crowded labor centres. There have been certain happenings in our courts during the last year that add responsibilities that we cannot overlook in taking care of bees.

"The matter of inspection is something that has been changed somewhat. The Department assumed direct control of that, and I am not prepared to say whether it has been an advantage or not. It is largely for you to say. I think, however, that during the past year or two the complaints in this respect have been fairly met. We made every effort, as far as the Department was concerned, to try and meet the demands that were put forward. I think it is only fair to you to recognize that there is one season of the year in which the necessity for the attendance of the Inspector is of the greatest importance, and that season is somewhat limited in its duration, and I believe the work might be furthered by special effort to meet cases that arise during that season of the year. Whether that might best be done through an increased number of inspectors or some other method I am not exactly clear. I think possibly some suggestions you may give from this meeting may strengthen our opinion in that regard. There is a large

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