

of how I have carried out your behests delivered to me a year ago; as we have several papers forth coming at this meeting on important, and some of them, burning questions, which will no doubt be discussed with energy, and I hope profit, and at as great length as time (which waits for no man) may permit.

I shall, therefore, listen through with business proper after first merely congratulating you on a fairly prosperous and successful honey season throughout the province.

As most of you are aware, our principal work as an organization the past year, as of the previous one, has been the continued warfare against the foul brood pest. A year ago we hoped that another year of fighting would about vanquish the enemy in this province. But our anticipations have not been realized; not owing, I think, to lack of energy or ability in prosecuting the work, but owing to the wider prevalence of the disease than we supposed, and also to the failure of some bee-keepers to properly co-operate with the inspectors in their efforts to have the disease cured, whenever possible, instead of destroying the colonies. In addition to those obstacles the government grant, though larger by one third than that of the previous year, was insufficient to keep both inspectors at work the whole season. As it was, the grant was considerably exceeded; and although the Minister of Agriculture protested against this and complained to me that the inspectors should have been allowed to exceed the grant, he nevertheless, paid both their accounts in full. The Minister cannot be blamed for this protest as the grant was increased to the amount we suggested.

On my return from the St. Catharines meeting I called on Mr. Dryden and, in accordance with the sense of the meeting, laid the matter before him asking an increase to \$600. This, the minister assented to, and it was done; but the amount still proved insufficient. On the face of the urgent calls for the services of the inspectors, and the pressing necessities of the case, I did not feel warranted in calling them off in the middle of their work when the end of the grant was reached, especially as the deficit the previous year had been met by the government without protest. I would, however, take the liberty here of suggesting to my successor in office, and to the inspectors the coming year, the inadvisability of exceeding the grant whatever it may be—the protest from the department against such a course being now before us.

I need not go into details of the work done under the Act the past year, as the Inspector's

Report will set that forth. So far as I know the inspectors have performed their duty faithfully and well. Instead of destroying the colonies, they cure the disease, though not *secundum artem*. But whether scientifically done or not the disease seems to yield to their treatment, and the victim who thus gets rid of it will not be likely to bother his head about this theory or that—scientific or otherwise. The questions as to whether the worker bees become constitutionally affected with the disease and transmit it to the larvæ; and whether the queens may be similarly affected and transmit it through the egg; and whether the wax rendered from contaminated combs may in "foundation" become a cause of the disease; and whether the spores of *bacillus alvei* carried by the air from hive to hive may also cause it,—these are questions which are still unsettled and indeed in hot dispute. This is clearly a case (not common) of theory and supposed scientific facts (real or not as the case may be) clashing with the facts of experience—not narrow and isolated experience, but wide and accumulated experience. The real facts on both sides will of course remain, while the untenable hypotheses and speculations must ultimately give way. I can easily conceive how both sides to the controversy may be both right and wrong,—that is, the scientist may be perfectly right when he tells us he sees under his microscope the disease germs in the adult worker and queen; and he may be wrong in his theory or conclusion that such contaminated worker or queen transmits the disease to the larvæ or through the egg. On the other hand "the party of the other part" may be quite right practically in their treatment founded on the assumption that the honey is the chief if not the only medium of spreading the disease; and in claiming that such treatment, in their hands, always cures; and they may be wrong in their denial that the mature worker and queen may be constitutionally diseased with foul brood, and that the disease is never spread in that way. My advice to both sides would be to stick to, and hold on like ticks, to the facts—the real facts—but be careful about the theories not proven, and avoid dogmatism. I would also advise all who have to deal with the disease to stick steadfastly to the plan of treatment that cures, no matter what it is, and no matter what theory butts up against it. Our English apiarian brethren look with the utmost incredulity, if not contempt, on the methods of cure practised so successfully by our inspectors and others on this side the Atlantic; and to a great extent refuse on theoretical grounds to test