

THE CO-OPERATIVE SALE OF HONEY.

Indexed

The bee-keepers of Ontario are about to take steps to solve the problem of the sale of honey, and to bring about a condition of affairs that will approximately standardize the price. The idea at present is a co-operative honey exchange. To do this, a charter under the Stock Companies' Act can be secured from the Ontario Legislature. To make the scheme effective it would be necessary that all bee-keepers become members by subscribing for one or more shares of stock, with a limit of say twenty or forty shares. This would prevent any one or two persons from controlling the company. Shares should be placed at about five dollars each. A preliminary board of directors should be appointed to organize the company and solicit stock.

The company would be controlled by a board of directors who would employ a competent business man as manager. It would be the manager's duty to get in touch with the buyers of honey, wherever honey was in demand, and sell at such a price as would give the producer a fair price for his product, after meeting cost of management.

The great feature of the movement is, however, the keeping to the front of the co-operative idea. All profits or net earnings must not be considered as belonging to the stockholders and payable to them in dividends. The capital invested is only entitled to a fair interest. This is the cardinal feature of the co-operative faith.

Another point in co-operative faith is that each shareholder shall have but one vote, irrespective of the number of shares he may own.

After capital has been given its fair interest—five, six, seven or eight per cent. as may be decided upon—and costs of management all met, the remainder—"profits"—are to be divided among all those who have placed their honey with

the company, in direct proportion to the amount they consigned to it. Thus the man contributing one hundred pounds would receive the same treatment as the man contributing ten thousand pounds. This idea may not meet with the favor of some who are not imbued with the co-operative spirit and faith. There are those who will feel that all profits should go to those who have put up their money and taken the risk. If this plan were followed, the company would be simply a joint stock company to buy honey at the lowest figure and sell at the highest. This condition of affairs we have now. The addition of another company to exploit the honey market would only make matters worse.

The ideal aimed at is an organization that will market the product of all bee-keepers to their mutual benefit—co-operation.

It would be just, however, to show a slight discrimination in the distribution of profits in favor of those who are stockholders. By this means the non-member would be induced to become a member, and subscribe for some stock. There would always be this inducement for the non-member to associate himself with the movement, no matter how slightly, if it were only to the amount of one share.

To illustrate this let us suppose that on the season's business there was a surplus of one thousand dollars after all charges of management and interest on capital had been met. Let us suppose further that fifty per cent. of the honey handled came from stockholders, and fifty per cent. came from bee-keepers who were not stockholders. The thousand dollars could be returned to the stockholders in a slightly larger percentage than to those holding no stock; yet the non-holder of stock would be participating in the advantages of the company, or society, as we would prefer to call it.

Another plan which might be followed is that the net profits (after cost of management and interest on capital had been

covered), be distributed in percentage between members in proportion to the honey they consigned. But in the case of ten per cent. of these profits by the company and as stock; the minimum being placed at five per cent.

By either of these plans a member would be engaged with the company and honey with the company would become a full member.

A study of this plan is the co-operative idea essential to its success.

We trust this matter has been thought over by the Ontario, and bee-keepers that the committee has been entrusted with encouragement in organizational movement. We hear from our readers have it thoroughly understood. We will be information upon this in our power. This must perform ourselves for assistance from the "Help one another," As they cuddled down "One of us here would One of us here would But I'll help you, and And then what a blessing see."

FOREIGN

A firm in London, to get the addresses of honey; also shipping poultry and canned dress, Department merce, Ottawa, Canada Weekly Report, No. 1676.