

## GENERAL.

FOR THE CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

### Judging and Other Matters.

NOTE what is said in the C. B. J. of the 15th inst., by the editor and a correspondent, on honey exhibit judging at shows. With very much of what both say I agree. With the rest I do not agree. As the disposition of the sweepstakes prizes at the late Toronto Industrial is referred to with disapproval, a few words in vindication of the guiding principle of the course pursued may not be amiss.

The JOURNAL "doubts the wisdom of splitting up prizes as they did it"—that is, the judges. Now, there may not be as much wisdom as justice about the proceeding. I mean the wisdom of policy. And how a just judgment can become a "bad precedent" would be hard to explain. Furthermore, if to do right is "evidence of weakness," a few people ought to be willing to continue in the weak state. And it is possible—indeed I think it probable—that the judges in the Apian Department at the late Industrial, instead of being "desirous of pleasing everybody," were simply desirous of doing justice to everybody. If both could be done at once nobody would be happier to do it. Let us look squarely at this matter of "dividing up prizes"—look at it from the standpoint of justice instead of policy or expediency, sometimes called "wisdom." Three judges find themselves examining say a dozen exhibits with say two prizes at hand for disposal on the best and the second best, or a second prize and third as the case may be. Of the dozen we will suppose they find four of just about equal merit. With justice holding the scales what are they to do? To my mind their course is perfectly clear. In fact there is but one course to pursue which has even the semblance of right. That course is this: If the judges are able to select two of the four similar exhibits and distinguish them at all in merit from the other two, between them the larger prize ought to be divided, and the smaller one between the other two. If the judges are not able so to distinguish, and the four exhibits are about equal in merit, then the sum of the two prizes ought to be equally divided among the four. This may not be worldly "wisdom," but it is homely justice. Whatever you call it I think it was the guiding principle of the honey judges at the late Fair.

Let us look now at the alternative course— at the "letter of the law" recommended as wise to follow. One of the four exhibitors is given

the larger prize; and who will say that is not a flagrant injustice to the other three? One of the remaining three is given the smaller prize; and who will say that is not a flagrant injustice to the other two? Nobody will say so, unless he has a hopeless moral squint. The two exhibitors left out in the cold, though as worthy as the others, get nothing—they are defrauded of both money and merit to which they are justly entitled.

That principle of invidiously selecting two for honor and reward out of four of equal merit is on a par with the old method of dividing the human animal from the lower ones of the Animal Kingdom. That method was that the one on this side the line of demarkation was a human being with superior intelligence, an "immortal soul," and all that; while the one just on the other side of the line, hardly a whit lower, was a "brute beast," with no reason and no soul. Modern science, however, has proved that from the very lowest form of life in the Vegetable Kingdom there is a gradual and almost imperceptible ascent up to the highest of the human family—that there is no break or great chasm between the lower and the higher animals. To fully perceive the utter absurdity of the old method of arbitrary division, let us in imagination suppose the whole Animal Kingdom, from the lowest to the highest, ranged in one line with the lowest form of life at one end and the highest human being at the other. No matter where you divide this line the two beings nearest your line of demarkation on either side of it will be so nearly alike that the difference would be quite imperceptible. True, if you took one out of the line here and another away up then a difference would appear; but any two immediately together anywhere in the line would be about alike. Now, here is where the absurdity of the thing comes in. This line is arbitrarily divided, and the one immediately on this side of the dividing line is credited with the human attributes and is immortal, while the one immediately on the other side of the line is a "lower animal"—a brute beast—devoid of reason, and "dies like a dog;" while the real truth is as between these two there is hardly any difference at all either in physical, mental or moral qualities.

Now, should this fact feel unpleasant to the pride and prejudice of some reader, and should he feel like opening an attack, I would remind him right here that I have simply stated a conclusion of modern science, for which I am myself in no wise responsible, and if he must attack something or somebody let him direct his attack to the right quarter.