

Bee-Keeping in Ontario.

ITS PROSPECTS AND POSSIBILITIES,

ALLEN PRINGLE.

The following paper was read at the recent meeting of Bee-keepers in Brockville:

I notice the subject you have me down for is a large one, viz.: "Bee-keeping in Ontario; Its Prospects, Possibilities, etc." Without time at present for hunting figures or even for reflection I shall merely give you such thoughts on the subject as may occur to me while I write. As to the present status of bee-keeping in Ontario, the achievements of the province at the great Columbian exposition at Chicago last year tell their own tale in a manner so creditable as to inspire the bee-keepers of this province with honest and laudable pride. I had the privilege and honor of representing them on that occasion and know whereof I affirm, when I say that no honey from any quarter of the globe surpassed in excellence the Ontario honey, while very little equalled it. Of all the states and countries exhibiting honey there, Ontario came out away ahead, taking twice as many awards as the best of them, and from five to ten times as many as most of them. While I expected much from my native province, this greatly surpassed my expectations. Ontario may be safely written down as a land "flowing with milk and honey." Our cheese as well as our honey was the best at the World's Fair. Ontario has climate as well as the flora for producing the best. The Linden, the clover, the thistle, the raspberry, the maple, the willow, the sumach, the buckwheat, the golden rod and numerous other plants yield abundantly.

Judging from the area within my own personal knowledge, the output of honey in Ontario must have quadrupled with-

in the past decade, and the consumption has kept corresponding pace, as but little is yet exported. The people generally are beginning to use it as an article of food; and what was in fact a luxury, and is so in reality, is fast becoming a staple on our tables. This is as it should be, as pure honey is not only wholesome and palatable but more easily digested than most other sweets. Its medicinal qualities also in various affections of throat, lungs and bowels, go far in warranting us to follow the poet's advice to "throw physic to the dogs." No argument, however, we can make use of—whether physiological or economic—will be half as persuasive or potent to induce the masses to eat honey, as their own palates, because appetite instead of reason is yet unfortunately king among men and women with the exception of the precious few. The honey is "good to take" and superbly pleasant to the palate, and that is enough for them whenever they can get it! And the price being comparatively low and quite within their reach, the consumption is bound to still further increase, provided we continue in Canada to furnish a good and pure article. This latter consideration is a very important one in these days of food adulteration commercial frauds. Our honey must be kept pure at any cost, and any and every species of adulteration (or rather attempt at adulteration) frowned down and stamped out. At Chicago I was greatly astonished to find the suspicious of adulteration of honey—especially extracted honey—so prevalent and wide spread among consumers. And this suspicion undoubtedly not altogether without without substantial foundation, though it must be stated in justice to the producers, to the bee-keepers of the U. S., that the onus of adulteration rests with the dealers rather than the producers. But the fact of adulteration there, and the want of confidence is there; and the fact, together with superior quality, was the reason why I was able to sell our Ontario exhibit of honey at Chicago, after the exposition, at prices considerably above those commanded by the