

President's Address.

The year during which I have had the honor to be President of this Association has rounded out my quarter of a century of bee keeping, and this fact naturally suggests a brief review of that period from an apicultural standpoint. At the outset of such a review, a passing reference to my own personal connection with bee keeping may not be out of order, nor wholly without interest to the members of this Association. During the entire part of the winter of 1863-4, having engaged with the late Hon. George Brown to take editorial charge of the CANADA FARMER which was to be started in January, and bee keeping being almost the only branch of practical agriculture of which I had no knowledge, I betook myself to the study of it. My text books were "Langstroth on the Honey Bee," and Quinby's *Mysteries of Bee-Keeping*. My only idea was to qualify myself for that part of my editorial work. But I became so deeply interested in the wonders of the hive, that I determined to keep bees myself, and the following spring bought my first stock. During the past quarter century, I have kept bees, as I have farmed, chiefly with the pen. A very busy man with many irons in the fire, both sacred and secular, I could never go largely into practical bee keeping, and the most I have ever had at one time was 28 colonies. I have the honor to be one of the oldest if not the very oldest Canadian writer on apiculture. My first article on the subject, appeared in the initial number of the CANADA FARMER in January 1864. It was wholly theoretical, and embodied the impressions of the pursuit I had derived from Langstroth and Quinby. After I began to handle bees, I can truly say that, on no topic of an agricultural nature, did I ever write with more or so much interest and pleasure, than on bee keeping.

The era of modern bee-literature dates from about the time that I took the pen in hand to write about bees. It was in that year, if I mistake not, that the American Bee Journal was started at Washington by the distinguished and lamented Samuel Wagner, from whose son and widow, I, several years after, purchased that journal, and removed it to Chicago, where it still lives and flourishes, the pioneer, and patriarch of all the bee journals.

In every department of rural economy, there are two classes of active workers: those who have the ability to put their ideas on paper, and those, who understand how to "materialize" them, as the modern phrase is. If there had been no apicultural writers, many of us would never have been bee-keepers; and if there had not been skilful manipulators of bees, the honey

industry would never have attained its present proportions. He whom we delight to honor as "Father Langstroth," and who is, without question, the father of modern bee keeping on the American Continent, was never a large honey producer, but by his invention of the movable frame hive, the publication of this book and other emanations from his pen, he has rendered services to this pursuit unequalled by any one else who can be named, and deserves a better fate than that of a dependent old age. There need be and should be no jealousy between the two classes of apicultural workers of whom I have spoken. Each ought to highly appreciate and duly honor the other. "One soweth and another reapeth," and let both him that soweth and him that reapeth rejoice together in the result brought about by their joint co-operation. Bee-keeping is often a source of pleasure when it yields no profit in the strict sense. Among the pleasures it brings those who have sought to advance it with their pens, is that of seeing the progress of modern apiculture to which they have contributed. For bee-keeping is a science as well as an art, and no one, in these days, can excel in the art who has not mastered the science. All rule of thumb methods have long ago been exploded, and those will succeed best in the management of bees who bring the most knowledge and the most brains to the business. It is so in dairying, and in every other department of practical farming.

The time would fail to speak at all fully of the immense progress which have been made in the bee keeping during the twenty-five years that may be said to be represented in my person. Many old ideas have been abandoned, many absurd theories exploded, many fancy fixings consigned to the limbo where sleep in peace the old bee-gum and bee-wax, never more to have a resurrection. In these years we have investigated all known races of bees, except the mammoth and formidable *Apis Dorsata*, whose acquaintance we do not covet. As the result of these investigations, in which a Canadian bee keeper, D. A. Jones, played the most important part, bee keepers in general have settled down on the Italians, either pure or lightly crossed with that prince of white comb builders, the native bee, as the *ne plus ultra*,—the "seek no farther," of honey gatherers. Wonderful advances have been made in queen breeding, and bee keepers now rival the breeders of thoroughbred horses, and Short horn and other races of choice cattle, in the skill and success with which they breed the best types of "the little busy bee." Vast improvement has also been made in the production and marketing of honey. The extractor has come in during the last quarter century. So has the neat little section-box. So have innumerable styles of attractive packages. In that time too, McKnight had come to the front, the Barnum of bee and honey exhibits. Box honey used to be a chaotic conglomeration of nondescript honey in the comb; now it is a case containing a dozen or so of one-pound sections finished to a T by the bees themselves. "Strained honey" used to be an indistinguishable compound of nectar of flowers, larvae juice, pollen and grains of wax; now extracted honey is an amber liquid fit to tempt the gods. What is most of all interesting to the general public, is that in consequence of modern improvements