

UNITED STATES BEE-KEEPERS' UNION MEETING

President's Annual Address, delivered by George W. York at the Buffalo Convention of the United States Bee-Keepers' Union, Aug. 24, 25 and 26, 1897.

FELLOW BEE KEEPERS AND FRIENDS:—

Another year has sped away since last we met in convention. Lovely Lincoln of the "wild and woolly West," a year ago favored us with her large-hearted hospitality and most genuine and unselfish generosity.

Two years ago we were just across Lake Erie, in triumphant Toronto, surrounding which there flourish hosts of our brethren—among the best bee-keepers the golden sun and silvery moon ever shone upon.

But now we meet in beautiful Buffalo, fast becoming known as the "Convention City." We of the West have come all the long way to learn from the multitude of wise bee-men of the east. And it is inspiring to find so many of them here, who are ready to pour into our receptive (as well as capacious) ears, all the most mystical mysteries of the hive, and the success compelling secrets that aid in securing the magnificent crops of Nature's purest sweet through the faithful help of the industrious bees.

The pursuit which the United States Bee-Keepers' Union represents, is one of the oldest known to man. Even in the olden Bible times honey was a familiar and esteemed food. While then they had not the present day innumerable contrivances (more or less helpful), with which to gather in the "honey-showers," nevertheless they had it in great abundance, for did not their goodly land flow with honey—and milk?

While bee-keeping was a deep study on the part of a few of the more thoughtful ones of the passing centuries since honey was extracted from the rock, or the carcass of a lion, it has remained for our Nineteenth Century civilization to place the industry of bee-keeping upon an enduring basis—to give to it a deserved permanency along with the other honored branches of modern, intelligent and progressive agriculture.

Tho' the bee-keepers' faithful servants be exceedingly small, they are wonderfully

numerous, hence the results of their combined efforts aggregate so enormously, and are of such great importance to the world to-day. Thus it is that gatherings such as this are found, where those most interested may compare experiences and strive to so aid each other that knowledge concerning the little busy bee may be increased, and its product become a greater source of profit to those whose business it is to harvest it, and distribute to the world's hungry human toilers.

I cannot hope to add much, if anything to what my audience already knows regarding the practical work connected with bee culture, but I may strive to remind you of some things that you are quite familiar with, and also offer a few suggestions that possibly may cause a discussion that shall result in something of real benefit to each.

INCREASING THE CONSUMPTION OF HONEY

First, I wish to call your attention to the very urgent need of devising some means by which honey—nectar fit for the gods—shall become more generally a dietary article. It should be found upon the plain but neat and wholesome tables of the toiling masses, as well as on the sumptuous banqueting boards of the rich and royal classes. The price of the article can no longer be urged as a barrier to its universal demand.

But how shall honey producers proceed to create a more general use of their delicious and health-giving sweet, and consequently increase the demand? No great height is attained and permanently occupied without much and constant effort. As in other domestic lines, so in this of honey consumption. Education of the public is the great necessity. They must be taught the intrinsic food value of our product ere they can be expected to use it to any appreciable extent. But this cannot be accomplished in one week, or one month. It will require years to attain the desired goal. But it can be done. One beekeeper