

"A Sucker Bee-Keeper" (and explain that "Sucker" means an inhabitant of Illinois) on all the copies that cross the ocean, and those that stay over here can be signed merely

C. C. MILLER.

Marango, Ill.

Present Condition of Bees and Their Prospects.

FROM the *British Bee Journal*, for which our friend Pringle has consented to correspond, we clip the subjoined item, dated January 15th 1886 written by him.

In Canada bees are mostly wintered in cellars, except amongst the "old-timers," who still cling to the "old box hive," and leave their bees standing out all winter on summer stands. The English reader may wonder why, in our usually severe Canadian winters, the bees so exposed do not die off. It is a mystery, but my explanation, is this:—In the first place, the extractor cannot reach them, and the consequence is, as the hives are usually large, there is an abundance of bees and of good, well capped honey on hand in the fall with which to face the winter. As the after-swarms and weak colonies are "taken up" in the fall, only the strongest are left for winter. In the next place the tops of the hives and all openings except the entrance are hermetically sealed with propolis, thus preventing the upward escape of the heat. And finally, the stores are properly located in the hive, above and laterally surrounding the cluster, rendering access easy and conserving the heat. The naturally built combs in box-hives where no foundation or artificial guides have been inserted I have frequently noticed in very old colonies which had braved many a hard winter, to converge more or less regularly from the four sides of the hive to the centre, when there would be more or less of an open space left for clustering. These are, in my opinion, the chief reasons why the box-hive bees manage to get through a winter in the open air without special protection when the thermometer is perhaps half of the time for two or three months below zero. The present condition of the bees outside and in is apparently all right so far from inquiries in different directions. But the critical time is yet to come, and I anticipate considerable loss of bees before the first of May from two causes, one of them usual enough, the other special and unusual. The one is deficient stores; the other, granulated honey. Shortage of winter stores usually follows a failure of the honey crop, as the feed-

ing is generally inadequately done. The comb honey of the past season has been granulating both inside the hives and in the storerooms and shops to an extent never before known, at least, in my long experience. I would like to know if this also has occurred in trans-Atlantic countries. Of course the bees cannot live on candied honey, and I fear fatal results in many places. In cases even where the apiarist was cognisant of the evil in the fall, and thought he had made all safe by removing the candied frames and substituting the normal ones, there is still danger, for the granulation has been going on even in warm cellars, while in lower temperatures it has no doubt been worse. Wherever there is any suspicion of the evil, whether in a Canadian or English yard, an examination ought to be made. In warm repositories a supply of water might do much good. This can be readily done by placing a piece of wet sponge in the entrance, when the bees, if in need of water, will soon sip it up.

For the CANADIAN BEE JOURNAL.

BEE-KEEPING.

THE bee-keeping industry has rapidly developed of late years in Ontario. It is a most attractive and lucrative business and the fact that it can be carried on successfully in connection with another calling, when added to its many charms, makes it a highly popular pursuit. There are throughout our Province multitudes of men and women, who, in addition to their ordinary labors, can find plenty of time to care for a few colonies of bees, and gain from this occupation, many of the great blessings of life. Caring for "nature's pets" will give health to the body, pleasure to the senses and food for thought to the mind, at the same time adding materially to the income.

But bee-keeping is not merely a business to be carried on as an offset to some regular employment. It is in itself capable of absorbing all the thought and time of anyone devoted to it. There is in its pursuit, room for the deepest thought and broad fields of research and experiment for the most scientific mind. To the lover of nature there can be nothing more animating and soul-inspiring, than to watch the beautiful labors of these busy, systematic workers.

Let us visit the apiary of our friend Mr. C. McNally who has made a specialty of bee-keeping for several years. Stretching before us, in perfectly straight rows, on a smooth, grassy level are nearly three hundred hives of bees. It is in the month of June and the myriads of bright golden workers are rapidly gathering in