

## The Month's Work

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December is the month for bee-keepers to put on their thinking cap and sit down and do some real hard thinking, not only during their leisure time, but if necessary take whole long days of valuable time for it. It is not as the ignorant or impractical might imagine, time thrown away.

What are we to think about? Arthur C. Miller, in *The Bee-Keeper's Review* for October, answers it as follows: "What has the past season profited you? Can you tell? Have you advanced in the science of the art? Is your apiary properly equipped and is it in the most convenient location? Will you be able to handle your bees next season more rapidly and with less labor? Can you raise better queens? Have you a good and satisfactory way of introducing them? Can you produce better honey? Can you put it on the market in better condition? Can you sell it in a more profitable way? And this does not mean get a higher price for it, but to get greater net returns. Is your capital sufficient for the business you are trying to do?"

Ask yourself these questions; look over your apiary and its equipment, and study well how you may advance.

As a class, we do not have the appliances we need for our trade. We make some cheap substitute do when the best is none too good. Often we are "penny wise and pound foolish." We do not have enough spare hives, extracting combs, etc. Should feeding suddenly become necessary, how many have suitable and sufficient feeders?"

"If you need new implements do not

begrudge the money good ones cost. Do not be afraid that you will help the supply dealer to get rich rapidly—he has no bonanza."

"Take some of the coming winter evening and think long, deep thoughts."

I most heartily endorse all the above by this writer, and still further would suggest, to ask: Is the amount of honey stored by your colonies somewhat uniform, or does it vary, some colonies storing but twenty or thirty pounds, while others under similar conditions store sixty, eighty or perhaps one hundred pounds? Can not more uniform and better results be obtained by giving better attention to queen rearing? Have you the best strain of bees available? Would it not be profitable to occupy all available waste land with honey plants which bloom when the bees have nothing else to work upon? Did you ever fully understand the merits of the Heddon or case system of bee-keeping, or know that it might be profitable for you to drop the Langstroth or movable frame system, and adopt it? Did you ever think that it is possible to successfully winter bees and yet not be a successful honey producer? Which is the more profitable during the honey flow in June and July, having the bees filling sections for market or their brood combs for winter? Is your bee-keeping giving you as good returns as you would expect any other business to do? If not, would it not be the wise thing to either sell out or else take the necessary time and expense and find out at once how to make it do so?

Thoughtful, intelligent and careful perseverance is the short cut to success.

In studying up these questions, or any others which may suggest themselves, read up first the standard