

PROFITS IN BEE-KEEPING.

Modern Methods Reduce the Cost of Production.

(From Alexander's Writings.)

Some may take issue with my statement as to the net profit in the work—namely, \$5.00 per colony, spring count, clear of all expenses. Well, as to that, I am sure a very large per cent will question that statement, and I will admit that perhaps not ten per cent of the honey producers of the United States are making that amount per colony. I will also admit that, during the thirty years of my comb-honey experience, I did not make \$2.00 per colony clear of expenses from the many colonies I had then. Neither did I make \$3.00 per colony clear of expenses in producing the extracted honey during the first several years I was engaged in the business. But during the last few years there have been great changes made in producing honey. First, our bees are new bred from much better honey-gathering strains than formerly.

Then some have studied out and perfected certain methods in caring for their weak colonies in early spring, so we now have no more losses in that way, and we have certain ways of making increase whereby not a bit of brood is lost—not even an egg. There has also been great improvement in extracting and curing the honey., which has much to do with selling it readily at a good price; and a few of us have dearly learned the folly of all that out-apiary expense, such as keeping several horses, paying dear rent for a place to set the bees, and losing a large part of the working force from each out-yard in absconding swarms.

It is only a few years since it cost me 4 cents per pound, cash out, to produce extracted honey. How different now, with these improved methods put into practice!

According to our books, during the past three seasons we have produced 181,237 pounds of honey. Now, when all ex-

penses were deducted, such as hired help, including board, barrels for honey, sugar fed in the spring to stimulate early breeding, interest, and taxes on \$5,000 capital invested, our own labor, including delivering on the cars at this station, we find the actual cost to have been a fraction less than one cent per pound.

Now, when honey has been and can be produced at one cent per pound, mostly with hired help, it is not far out of the way to state that bees will pay \$5.00 per colony, clear of all expenses. But in order to do so you must learn how to reduce expenses to their lowest possible minimum, and produce honey in the largest possible quantities that a certain number of colonies can be made to do.

The fact that thousands of bee-keepers are not making \$2.00 per colony is no disparagement to the business. The same can be said of hundreds of farmers in this section, who are not making net \$100 per year from their farms. But there is no reason why each could not be made to pay well if better methods were adopted.

No, my friends, I don't care to modify my statement in the least, that about \$5.00 per colony, spring count, clear of all expenses, is a moderate estimate of the profits from the business. There are those that are doing even better than that, as well as hundreds who are making but little.

Some General Considerations That Conduce to Success.

How that word "success" seems to fire our very souls with ambition! and we again and again think our business over, each time trying to solve some new problem whereby we can add still more to our income and at the same time to reduce our expenses. There are two things that always bring success—that is, good seed sown in fertile soil; and that law of cause and effect which predominates in all things, affects our business all the way through. There is no question that bee-keeping, if rightly done, is fertile soil;

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