


GENERAL.

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How to Make Bee-Keeping Pay.

BY ALLAN PRINGLE.

 HAVE received the following query:—"I am a book-keeper, (age 25,) at a moderate salary, and as my health is not very good, and I have a house and an acre of land outside the town limits, I have decided to go into bee-keeping. How shall I make bee-keeping pay?" The way to make bee-keeping pay is to do the business up right. And to do it right you must have an understanding of it. And to the understanding you must add practice and experience. And that is not all. There are other things requisite. You must be adapted to the business—must have an aptness for it, and take pleasure in following it. And as a rule, he or she who has a love for the pursuit, has an aptness for it. You must also have firmness, a steady nerve, and good judgment. You must also have some fertility of resource, so that you need not be running in every little emergency to the book or the teacher for assistance and advice, but be able to work your own way out of little difficulties and perplexities. Some people in any business or circumstances get "all at sea," just as soon as they find themselves in some novel or unexpected position. If some rule or direction they have learned will not apply to it and help them out of the emergency, they cannot get out. Others will promptly devise a plan or course to suit the case.

You also need a good *location*, in order to make bee-keeping pay. Abundant and varied forage is a fruitful factor of pecuniary success in bee-keeping.

With all these conditions present you are bound to succeed, and make bee-culture pay. But wait! I am just a little too fast. One important consideration has been overlooked, and I charge this young man seeking advice not to forget it. He says he is twenty-five. He also says he has a house standing on the acre. Now that house no doubt will hold two people, and possibly more, after a while. And every house in the land ought to be properly filled. And every good citizen who has become of the full age of 25 years ought to do his part in filling them, especially at the present juncture, when we, Canadians, are showing up so discouragingly in the *census* figures. Now this young bachelor may, by this time, no doubt, partly guess what I mean. In order to succeed properly in the bee business, and make it pay handsomely, he

must take a wife into that house with him. Then on the principle that "Providence helps those who help themselves," Providence will surely smile on him. The man who is fortunate enough to have a good woman smile on him will straightway realize in the good wife a good Providence; and with plenty of bees in the yard, and honey in the larder, there can be a perpetual "honey moon," literally as well as sentimentally. So mote it be! There is, however, a prosaic as well as poetic side to this business—I mean the bee business. There is shadow as well as sunshine, and we are, of course, all anxious to increase the latter and minimize the former. How to do this is the question; and to go into particulars and tell the querist in detail how to make bee-keeping pay, would take a volume or two, and hence is impracticable here. I may, however, give him a few general hints. If wholly inexperienced, start with not more than five colonies, that is, if there is other remunerative work in conjunction, if not, say twenty colonies at most. Start with a good movable frame hive, which can be worked for either comb or extracted honey, and produce both kinds, as your local market will require both kinds, and, moreover, you can never be an all round bee-keeper without producing both comb and extracted honey. Use the perforated zinc, or "queen excluder" to confine the queen to her own quarters the brood chamber, and you will thereby save yourself much trouble, and produce a better quality of both comb and extracted honey than you could otherwise do. Keep your colonies strong, and put none but such into winter quarters. Give them plenty of winter stores, or rather leave plenty with them, which is much better than taking it from them, and giving it back again. No matter what anybody may say against *clipping* in the bee journals or out of them, keep your queens clipped, and thereby avoid much work and worry. Keep your yard and hives clean, and free from dead brood, which sometimes leads to, if not causes, foul brood. Do not allow drone comb to accumulate in your brood chambers, so that you may be led into the practice of decapitating the drones, which is a bad practice. To avoid this, use full sheets of foundation in your brood frames, but the less foundation you use in your sections the better. Take good care of your honey from the time you remove it from the hives till you market it, especially the comb honey, which should be kept constantly in a warm, dry place.

Do all this, and be saved, or do it not, and be lost, financially.

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