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E.A. Earp

The New Zealand
'Beekeepers'
Journal.

Vol. 5.

APRIL 1st, 1921.

No. 4.

Subscription: 6/- per Annum in Advance.



Instructor Earp getting down to business
(Note.—Mr. Clark behind Mr. Earp).

ISSUED MONTHLY

FOR

THE NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS'
ASSOCIATION OF N.Z.

April 1, 1921.]

Spring is Coming.

BE PREPARED !

Prices for Italian Queens and Nuclei, 1920 :

Untested Queens to November 14th,	10/-;	after November 14th,	7/6 Each.
Tested " " "	£1;	" " "	15/- "
Nuclei with Untested Queens to November 14th,	Three-frame 30/-		
" " " " after " " "	Four-frame 30/-		

Safe Arrival Guaranteed. **All Orders Supplied in Rotation.**

TERMS.—CASH WITH ORDER. CHEQUES TO HAVE EXCHANGE ADDED.
Money Orders payable at Rangiora Post Office.

Postal Address: **M. SHEPHERD, Southbrook, Canterbury.**

NICHOLAS' FOUNDATION FACTORY.

BEESWAX WANTED in Large or Small Lots. **Highest Cash Price Paid.**
Foundation Comb at Lowest Cash Price.

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H. BEALE & CO., LTD., PLUMBERS, TINSMITHS
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P.O. Box 129. 'Phone 62.

MASTERTON, WAIRARAPA.

BAY OF PLENTY COMB FOUNDATION FACTORY

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Excell & Hallam,

Comb Foundation Makers,
OPOTIKI

ALEXANDER BAY OF PLENTY.

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OFFICE-BEARERS FOR THE YEAR 1920-21.

President: Mr. W. WATSON, Geraldine.
Vice-President: Mr. E. W. SAGE, Ohaupo.

Executive: Mr. R. McKNIGHT (Domett); Mr. A. H. DAVIES (Pukeroro Rural District, Hamilton); Mr. A. R. BATES (Kaponga); Mr. L. IRWIN (Woodlands, Southland).

Secretary & Treasurer: Mr. FRED C. BAINES, Kati Kati.

Editor of Journal: Mr. FRED C. BAINES, Kati Kati.

DISTRICT ASSOCIATIONS AFFILIATED.

Auckland Provincial Branch.—Sec., Mr. A. H. Davies, Pukeroro Rural District, Hamilton.

Sub-Branches:

Lower Waikato.—Hon. Sec., —

Te Aroha.—Hon. Sec., C. A. Grainger, Waikou.

King Country.—Hon. Sec., Mr. G. Laurie, Rata Street, Te Kuiti.

Rotorua.—Hon. Sec., F. E. Stewart, Rotorua.

Canterbury Beekeepers' Association.—Hon. Sec., Miss MacKay, Middle Lincoln Road, Spreydon, Christchurch.

Southland Beekeepers' Association.—Mr. L. Irwin, Woodlands.

Wairarapa Beekeepers' Association.—Hon. Sec., Mr. Y. H. Benton, Featherston.

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Clutha Valley Beekeepers' Association.—Sec., H. N. Goodman, Greenfield, Otago.

West Coast Beekeepers' Association.—Hon. Sec., D. T. Cochran, Clematis Apiary, Cobden.

Tairāra Beekeepers' Association.—Hon. Sec., Mr. B. H. Howard, Mure Street, Mosgiel.

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Hawke's Bay Beekeepers' Association.—Hon. Sec., Mr. J. P. Boyle, 400 Lyndon Road, Hastings.

Nelson Provincial Branch.—Hon. Sec., Mr. G. H. Sargeant, Motueka.

Auckland Branch.—Hon. Sec., Mr. W. A. Forgie.

Balclutha Branch.—Hon. Sec., Mr. F. Wyndham, Balclutha.

Rangiora Branch.—Hon. Sec., Mr. J. S. Cook, Rangiora.

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stantial progress has been made, and we are convinced that by the loyal co-operation of the beekeepers as good or even better results will be obtainable in the future. It speaks very well indeed for the management of the Association to find "that they have been able to make very satisfactory arrangements both for finance and also for marketing in Great Britain, with the opportunity of directing English sales upon lines which will ensure our obtaining the highest possible market prices; while the New Zealand and other markets will not be neglected," as the report reads; which means that, no sooner had one firm switched on to another without any trouble on the producers' part at all. We know full well that the actual "switching" meant a very great deal of hard work and clear thinking on the part of the management, and we congratulate them heartily. The beekeepers, too, are to be congratulated on reposing the trust they do on the gentlemen who control the Association, and the balance-sheet just issued shows their trust is well placed.

We are advised of a particularly mean theft from a beekeeper in the Nelson Province, from whom five hives, bees and honey were stolen. We sincerely hope the culprit will be discovered and punished severely. This sort of thing is, happily, a very rare occurrence.

Reviews.

We have received from the American Bee Journal a copy of the "Dadant System of Beekeeping," by C. P. Dadant, and "Beekeeping in the South," by Kenneth Hawkins. The book on the Dadant system is interesting, as it goes fully into the merits and demerits of the large hive. The modified Dadant hives have a 40 per cent. larger brood comb area than the 10-frame Langstroth.

Seeing the tendency nowadays is towards a larger hive, which the Dadant family have for years been using, those who want further evidence on this matter are strongly advised to get the book.

"Beekeeping in the South" deals chiefly with the seasons, methods, and honey flora in the Southern States of America. The book is splendidly illustrated, and the information is given in a clear, straight-out manner. Apart from the particular information given, there is a lot of practical matter. Had we been asked what a "drone reservoir" was, we should have had to say with Dr. Miller, "We don't know"; but the little book has "put us wise."

Send for Pamphlet on "BEESWAX."

Gd. POST FREE.

W. B. BRAY,
Barry's Bay.

Market Reports.

The Director of the Horticulture Division has received from the apimary instructors the following reports concerning the honey crop prospects:—

Auckland.—The indications, previously reported, of good crops of honey being secured have been fully realised. The season is now about over, and in many cases extracting is finished. Prices remain unchanged locally; but while there is a good demand for light-coloured honey, the market is not so keen for the darker grades.—G. V. Westbrooke.

Wellington.—With the exception of the Poverty Bay District, the prospects of the honey crop in the Wellington, Taranaki, and Hawke's Bay Districts are good. The failure of the crop in Poverty Bay may be attributable to the very dry weather and high winds in the spring, and to the increasing acreage devoted to sheep pasture. The returns from the other districts are a good average, and of high quality. Prices are slightly on the decline, but are controlled by the co-operation of the bee-farmers throughout the Dominion. Beeswax is quoted at 2/3 per lb.; small lines of extracted honey at 1/- per lb. Section honey is scarce.—F. A. Jacobsen.

Christchurch and Dunedin.—As previously indicated, a fair average crop of honey will be taken in most districts. The dryness of the season seriously affected returns in parts of South Canterbury near the hills. The coastal districts fared better, where the crops are considerably above the average. Excellent weather in Southland set conditions right for a good flow, where payable crops are assured. Extracting is in progress. The quality of the honey this season is excellent, as is usual when the clover pastures are in good heart. In the thistle areas a good flow is being experienced. Prices are firm. Beeswax is in strong demand.—E. A. Earp.

Beekeeping for Beginners.

[As these instructions conform to the seasons in the Auckland Districts, an allowance must be made for difference in latitude North and South. Average bee-seasons in the extreme North are four weeks earlier, and in Southland three weeks later.—Ed.]

The active work for the season is now finished, and we must now see that all our appliances are well cleaned and put away. These cost a lot of money nowadays, and a few hours spent on their attention is well repaid.

To you who are in a small way, and produce only a little surplus—not sufficient to send to the H.P.A.—I would say, do not sell what surplus you have below the current value. There are a great number

of men dependent on bees for their living, and these have gone to a tremendous lot of trouble and expense to get the co-operative system of marketing up to its present standard, by which means the local price of honey has been steadily improved and the price maintained. But you will readily see that in any district where there are a number of beekeepers who take whatever price is offered by the grocer, the chance of selling the Association's goods at the figure fixed by them is impossible. So that if you are not dependent on the price obtained for your honey, just think of the men who are, and don't undersell. I am charging 9d. per lb. at the apiary; containers extra.

F. C. P.

District Reports.

TARANAKI.

There is not much to report this month. The autumn flow has been very light on account of the pastures being so dry.

Owing to the absence of winds, queen-rearing has been most successful.

We were pleased to have Mr. Turbott round to see us, and to know that the H.P.A. is still alive, and intends working the local market for all it is worth. The management seems to have come out of difficult times very creditably. Some beemen hardly realise what the H.P.A. has meant to them; without our Company we would be glad to accept 4d. outright, instead of an advance of 5½d. Of course, I know the management is not perfect; I have a small difference myself to adjust, but I am not silly enough to cut adrift and leave the only lifeboat we have.

We intend holding a meeting of beemen shortly to discuss matters of general interest, and also to select a candidate for the H.P.A. directorate.

H. R. PENNY.

Okaiawa, 14/3/21.

HAWKE'S BAY.

Some twelve months ago, at the A. and P. Society's Autumn Show, about four beekeepers had entries in the honey classes, and of these only one man was a member of the Beekeepers' Association. We were pleased to see this year a number of entries from among our members, and the majority of prizes were placed to their credit.

The Association itself was not without an exhibit. A small exhibition stand drew round it an endless throng, who wished to see the bees "making honey" and the samples of honey the bees had made. A general meeting had decided it would be worth while making a display of the products of the honey industry. The aim

was to be educative to the public, and to gain interest in the Association. To the fore-front was an observatory hive, and behind was a pyramid arrayed with various samples of wax, honey in liquid and granulated forms, capped frames of clover and of cape-weed honey, and sections both filled and in an unfinished stage. An item of particular interest was a collection of samples of various honeys, and the eyes of not a few were opened to the fact that different well-known honey producing plants yielded honey differing greatly in colour and grade. It was a modest display, a first attempt; but the remarks of the passers by left no doubt of its being fully appreciated.

We are pleased to welcome Mr. Gilling to our district. It is too early yet to report progress; but we trust that his coming may prove beneficial to the beekeeper, but calamitous to foul-brood.

J. P. BOYLE.

March 17th, 1921.

BALCLUTHA.

The Balclutha Beekeepers' Association held a field day at Mr. R. Jones' apiary, Rosebank, on February 19th, about 60 beekeepers being present; some of them came a long way, several from Romahapa, Kai-tangata, Beubar and surrounding districts. We were unfortunate to get a very windy day, and the bees got to business on some of the visitors. Mr Earp, Government instructor, was present, and gave very interesting instructions on how to treat foul-brood, also how to handle bees without too much smoke, and advised beekeepers to try and do without the gloves, as they became poison clogged, the smell of which only made the bees bad to handle. The first hive to be opened was black bees, which were bad for clustering, so Mr. Earp opened up a hive of pure Italians, and, considering the day, they were very quiet, and the queen was easily found. He also spoke on the way to form nucleus hives, queen-rearing, and the use of the excluder; also of the advantage of the Beekeepers' Association, and advised beekeepers to join the Association. When the beekeepers were in a body, they would be able to fix a price for their honey, and also would have a better chance of getting foul-brood wiped out; and various other things were spoken of which would be of help to the beekeepers. An abundant supply of refreshments was then handed round, which was most acceptable. Mrs. Jones and family were very attentive, and were worthy of the praise accorded them. Hearty cheers were given at the close, and votes of thanks were passed to Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Mr. Earp, and the visitors.

TAIERI.

You know it is a superhuman task to collect details of the crop returns. One hardly sees the members from one week's end to another; it is impossible to travel round the district—impossible for me, at

anyrate. The members, of course, will not send any information. So what in the world can I do? You ask, why such a bother about crop reports? Answer me this: what else is there to write about? Weather? Oh, hang it!

I think I am not far wrong when I estimate the crop on an average at 70-80 lbs. per hive. This does not include the West Taieri, the honey mine of the district. Maybe this does not do full justice to the place, as it is based on results from my "apiary" (don't laugh!) and that of another. So do not grouch at me!

Yes, the Lincolnshire story in explanation of the infernal din made when a swarm decamps is almost the same as that current in Lancashire (vide Dan Chaucer in "Canterbury Tales" last month). The noise is an indication of the fact that the owner intends to claim the bees. If there is no noise, it is taken that he doesn't want them. Another superstition once common in the shires was apt to superinduce tremors in the hive-owner. If the swarm settled on a dead tree or branch, it was a moral certainty that there would be a death in the family before long. Moral: Do not keep dead trees in the neighbourhood. Here is another such probably known to many:—Colonies of bees were sure to die out if not verbally informed of the death of their owner. This superstition, I find, was almost universal. It is found in England, France, and Lithuania—(never mind the map; it is trying to make a republic of itself at present; excuse the ambiguity). What form the message took in England and Lithuania I cannot say. However, in France one went up to the hive and tapped on the wall, whispering th while, "Petites abeilles, votre maitre est mort." If the bees replied by a gentle buzzing, all was well; if they did not, one had to continue tapping and whispering until the reply was received. Of course, the reply was hardly likely to be long in coming. Bees usually understand messages like that!

The explanation is clear enough. The bees were quite likely to die from lack of attention after the death of their master. If during the trouble and anxiety at the time one forgot to tell the bees, their death even a year later was easily accounted for.

Well, you see, that is one way of filling up "Taieri Talk." The Lord be thankit that I have some more of those tales to help to fill up when occasion demands. For the present—enough!

14/3/21.

BASIL H. HOWARD.

NELSON.

The first meeting of the Nelson Provincial Branch of the National for the year 1921 was held at Motueka on Saturday, 5th March. There was a fair attendance of members, Mr. P. Martin, Vice-President, being in the chair.

At the close of the evening's business, members were asked to give an estimate of their honey crop, and from these estimates and information received from sources outside the Association it is evident that the season's crop is going to be far from satisfactory, generally speaking.

Mr. P. Martin read a paper on "Bee-keeping, or Honey Producing," which was much appreciated.

A proposal was made to establish a lending library for members, but after some discussion it was decided to let the matter stand over till the next meeting.

It is possible that some of our members may send exhibits to the National Dairy Show.

Our Association will hold its next meeting on the 19th March, at Riwaka.

G. H. SARGEANT.

WEST COAST.

A demonstration in handling bees and the treatment of foul-brood was given by Mr. Earp, apiary instructor, under the auspices of the West Coast Branch of the National at Mr. Kitchingham's apiary. The day turned out fine, and the attendance exceeded expectations, well over 100 being present.

Mr. A. Baty, on behalf of the Branch, briefly introduced Mr. Earp, and advised those present to take particular notice of Mr. Earp's remarks, as he was a past-master at the game, and was the right man in the right place.

Mr. Earp, in reply, said he was agreeably surprised at the amount of interest taken in beekeeping on the West Coast. He explained the advantages to be gained by joining the H.P.A., whose efforts in the past, under the capable management of Mr. Ryland, had done so much to alleviate the old troubles which beekeepers had laboured under, and thus assured them a payable return for their labour. Further, Mr. Earp explained the various methods of handling bees, manipulation of frames, &c., and pointed out the ravages and havoc wrought by our old enemy foul-brood.

Refreshments were provided by our worthy host and hostess, Mr. and Mrs. Kitchingham, and full justice was done to the good things provided.

A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Earp and to the West Coast Branch was moved by Mr. Reynolds, and seconded by Mr. E. Wade.

In speaking to the motion, Mr. Reynolds said he thoroughly enjoyed Mr. Earp's address and demonstration, and he felt sure the beekeepers of the Coast were very fortunate in having their industry under the able direction of Mr. Earp.

Mr. Earp, in reply, said he was only too pleased to give whatever instructions he

could in the keeping of bees, and advised all those present who were not members of the National to join up with the local Branch, and those who were members to stick to it, and so help the industry along.

In the evening Mr. Earp delivered a lecture on "Beekeeping" in Schroder's Rooms, which was taxed to overflowing, the principal subject being foul-brood and the treatment thereof. At the conclusion of the lecture numerous questions were asked and answered.

Mr. Earp again reminded his hearers of the necessity of the elimination of foul-brood, and spoke firm on that point, and that he was not on a pleasure trip over this way, but to carry out his duty, and this he would be forced to do if beekeepers do not clean up their apiaries.

A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the speaker for his able lecture.

D. T. COCHRANE.
Hon. Branch Secretary.

Dairy Show.

BRITISH DAIRY FARMERS' ASSOCIATION, LONDON.

I am advised that the above-mentioned Show is to be held in the Royal Agricultural Hall, London, on the 18th to 21st October next, entries for which close on the 8th August.

Copy of schedule of awards, together with entry form, is enclosed herewith.

As it is necessary for entries and exhibits to be forwarded early to enable the High Commissioner, London, to make the necessary arrangements, I shall be glad to know if any interested Association proposes to enter exhibits.

You might wish to mention this matter in the Beekeepers' Journal.

I am also communicating with the manager, New Zealand Co-op. Honey Producers' Association Ltd., Auckland.

Yours faithfully,
T. W. KIRK,

Director of the Horticulture Division.

[Copy of Schedule.]

COLONIAL HONEY.

(Produced in the Overseas Dominions.)

Class E.—Three Vessels of Extracted Honey, as imported.

(Entry Fee, 20s.)

First Prize Silver Medal
Second Prize Bronze Medal

Vessels must all be effectively secured against leakage to the satisfaction of the judges, who will be empowered to submit them to any necessary test at owner's risk. Honey will be received up to 6 p.m. on MONDAY, 17th October.

Waipa Bee Club.

A meeting of the Waipa Bee Club was held at Te Awamutu on 25th February, Mr. H. Bartlett-Miller in the chair. Present: Mesdames Bartlett-Miller, Smedley, H. Jones, Messrs. C. F. Ryland, A. H. Davies, A. L. Pearson, G. L. Jones, P. B. Holmes, R. Whitehead, Hugh C. Jones, and four others. The Press was represented by the Waikato Times and Waipa Post.

Mr. C. Smedley requested the secretary, Mr. Hugh C. Jones, to outline the necessity of a local Branch and its advantages. The Chairman emphasised the need of co-operation.

Mr. G. L. Jones added they were willing to assist those who had registered their hives, but to have the law enforced on those who had refused to register.

Mr. A. H. Davies, secretary of the Auckland Provincial Branch, suggested the Club combine with the parent organisation.

On the proposal of Mr. H. C. Jones, seconded by Mr. C. Smedley, it was unanimously agreed to amalgamate with the National Association.

The election of officers was proceeded with, the following gentlemen being appointed:—President, Mr. H. Bartlett-Miller; Vice-Presidents, Mr. C. Smedley and Mr. T. H. Clark; secretary, Mr. Hugh C. Jones; committee—Messrs. B. Holmes, G. L. Jones, W. and F. Lenihan, with the principal officers ex officio.

On the chairman's advice, backed by Mr. Smedley, the secretary was instructed to write to Mr. T. W. Kirk, of the Department, asking the duplicates of all notices of registration in the Waipa district be forwarded to the Club.

After deciding to meet a fortnight later, the Waipa Bee Club meeting concluded.

Mr. C. F. Ryland, manager of the H.P.A., then addressed those present on the co-operative principle of marketing.

Following up intense interest, Mr. Bartlett-Miller, after remarking that he had learned more that day about the H.P.A. than ever before, complimented Mr. Ryland on the splendid ability which he had so amply shown, and assured him that the Club would support the H.P.A.

Votes of thanks to Messrs. Ryland and Davies were carried with applause.

HUGH C. JONES.

Beekeeping or Honey Producing.

SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES.

(Paper read by Mr. P. Martin at Nelson Provincial Branch Meeting.)

Very few occupations can be made to appear more attractive than beekeeping. We hear of big returns and what somebody else has done, and on the strength of these possibilities many make a start in beekeeping. In most cases hopes are not realised; the glowing picture fades; the bees get neglected, and the beekeeper never becomes a honey producer; for right at the start of our beekeeping experience very few of us realise that beekeeping is a skilled occupation, and will require just as much perseverance, close study, and hard work as do most other occupations. What would you think of a man who bought a hammer, saw, and a few other tools, and then set himself up as a carpenter; or a fellow who obtained a pot or two of paint and a couple of brushes and then started in business as a painter. Painting appears very easy to the onlooker, but what chance would anyone have if starting thus without experience? The competent beekeeper must have a fair knowledge of several trades, be something of a nature student, study botany, so that he will know what flora is nectar producing, and when it may be expected to yield and the duration of that yield; therefore, we see how unreasonable it is for the man without previous experience to expect big returns for the first few seasons' work; and yet any intelligent man who starts on right lines can make his bees pay their way right from his first season, for successful honey producing depends chiefly on three things:—The beekeeper, colony strength at the time of the honey flow, and the location. What concerns us least to-night of these three is location. We probably all know that it is desirable to have a location giving a fair average yield of good quality honey; but where bees are a hobby or a side-line they must necessarily be kept at or near our homes, the location of the latter depending, of course, on our main occupation.

The Beekeeper.—Of the three points mentioned, this is the one of greatest importance. The right sort of a beekeeper will not wait for other things to come right, but will get to work and put them right. Enthusiastic, energetic, and persevering, the successful beekeeper must be, otherwise the bees will be left to their own devices instead of receiving the requisite attention just when necessary. Then, if the fellow happens to be a mere beekeeper, he will start complaining of his luck. Luck does not enter into beekeeping, and the beekeeper who counts on it

will also have other things to count; plenty of items on the debit side of his ledger, for one thing, so do not neglect that colony that might be preparing to swarm; otherwise the bees will be doing very little towards keeping the beekeeper, while the beekeeper remains, as one friend very aptly put it, a "keeper of bees." Enthusiasm should be directed by a close study of at least one good text-book. I would choose a recent edition of Root's A B C and X Y Z. Baines' book; for beginners is good, while our own little Journal is well nigh indispensable to the New Zealand beekeeper who would be progressive, dealing as it does with beekeeping in our own country, and bringing us in touch with the leading beekeepers. Enthusiasm does not mean opening the hives every fine day of the year, or even every month of the year. Our climate is certainly mild, and days in the winter often warm enough to open a hive if necessary. It never should be necessary, providing all things have received attention—the colony queen right and well provided with stores, the bees are best left alone from March till September. Enthusiasm and energy are being well directed during this period if the beekeeper is devoting his spare time to the next season's preparation, making up supers, frames, painting hives, getting a few spare covers and brood-chambers ready; a few of these are a good asset to any beekeeper, so just remember the rush you had last season making up a hive, running to Buxton's for a set of frames, often to find there had been a few rush orders, and what you required was not in stock; eventually hiving the swarm after much delay, only to find it afterwards de-camped. The fellow who would be a successful honey producer learns from such mistakes what to avoid in future, and profits by the knowledge gained. Poor seasons like the last two we have had bring discouragement; but persevere! Just go to work as though you were sure of next season being an extra good one. Start getting ready now; decide what increase you will make; when and how you will make it, and, if possible, have everything you are likely to require in the way of material ready at the beginning of the season—say, September. One who does this can devote his time to the requirements of the bees, and certainly manage more colonies and gain far more pleasure to profit from them; also fewer disappointments will be met with, and difficulties more easily overcome.

Strong Colony.—The advice found in nearly every text-book—"Keep your colonies strong"—is good, sound, orthodox advice, well worn, perhaps, but necessary, for every real beekeeper must study colony strength, especially in relation to the honey flow; what degree of strength, and when it is most desirable to have the colony at that particular strength; how long the colony will be getting to that strength; does it require help in the way of a comb or two of emerging bees? or can

it spare a comb of two to help up another weaker colony? Successful honey producing depends a great deal upon knowing these things. We are now nearly at the end of one season's work; what we are doing now or leaving undone will to a great extent determine whether next season brings success or failure, for we must consider the wintering of our bees as the foundation for next season's work. A strong colony free from disease, headed by a young vigorous queen and abundantly supplied with good combs of sealed stores, is safe for the next six months, and will give the beekeeper very happy, hopeful feelings when he opens up next September. How often we find someone attempting to carry over the winter stocks that are not strong enough in bees to be even considered a respectable two-framed nuclei or a colony with a failing queen; or yet again a good colony strong in bees but poor in stores. Some beekeepers often think a narrow streak of honey or a small patch in the corners is sufficient. True, the bees often survive on this starvation diet. Is it fair treatment? Can you reasonably expect them to come out strong in spring and build up rapidly? Another common sight is entrances choked with rubbish or dilapidated hives, leaky covers. No real beekeeper will tolerate a leaky cover on his hives during winter or a mat the edges of which are showing outside the hive, for it cannot fail to absorb moisture and keep the inside of the hive damp all the winter; and this cannot be considered conducive to the health and well-being of any colony of bees. Let us look on our bees as co-workers and partners; treat them generously:—it pays with most of your fellow-beings; it pays with bees!

Notes on Tour.

(By FRED C. BAINES.)

There had been for a considerable time a feeling among the members of the Executive that it was highly desirable that one of them should get round to the various Branches to attend the Field Days; but owing to the time required and the fact that they all were commercial beekeepers, it was found impossible to carry out such a tour. However, as my season is usually earlier than other parts, I informed the members I would, if at all possible, get an early extraction, and thus be able to leave the bees in comparative safety. I would make an attempt to get round. This I was able to do by extracting on 3rd January, when I found the bees had done pretty well, and the flow still on.

By getting the Journal matter out a bit earlier than usual, I was able to leave home on 24th January, when I made direct for Dunedin, to attend the Clutha Valley Field Day on 29th January. Unfortu-

nately, the weather turned out very bad indeed for a beekeepers' field day, heavy cold showers, with a keen wind blowing, making it most unpleasant. Personally, I didn't enjoy the twelve-mile trip to the apiary in an open car, which meant a wet jacket and a general chilliness. However, the welcome accorded me by the members of the Clutha Valley Branch made up considerably for the uncongenial atmosphere.

The report of the proceedings has already been given; but I should just like to add my appreciation of Mr. McArthur's kindness in going to such trouble to make the day a success.

Clutha Valley strikes me as being a very fine district for beekeeping, although I did not see it at its best. There is an abundance of clover, Californian and Scotch thistle; therefore, the honey produced is first grade in colour, flavour, and every other particular. The Clutha Valley is in a unique condition as regards beekeeping, as there is no foul-brood known within a radius of twenty miles. This state of affairs has been brought about very largely by the work and enthusiasm of Mr. H. N. Goodman, secretary of the Branch, who has gone to no end of trouble in educating and assisting those who keep bees to run their hives profitably and without danger to their fellows. And I learn they are that anxious to minimise the risk of importing disease that they are approaching the H.P.A. to allow the beekeepers to supply the stores with the honey required, as it is recognised that one of the chief causes of the disease spreading is the throwing out of the more or less empty honey tin, which the bees in the district clean up. My opinion is that the Clutha Valley is splendid for beekeeping, and the Branch is run by men who can only be described as the "salt" of the industry.

Sunday, the 30th January, was spent in Dunedin in the company of a comfortable fire.

On Monday, January 31st, I was shown over the works of Messrs. F. J. Lake and Co., who make the larger quantity of honey tins used in the South Island. Mr. Lake went to a great deal of trouble in showing me the various machines used, all of which are right up to date, with the result that the tins were certainly as good as the best I have seen. I got the impression some years ago that only one firm in New Zealand could make really good export honey tins, and that was in the north; but I know different now.

The next journey, on February 1st, was to Invercargill to attend the Southland Branch Field Day on 2nd February, at Mr. F. Hemmingsen's apiary at Seaward Bush. I was fortunate to get a lift in Mr. E. P. Brogan's car from Edendale, and thus enabled to get a good view of the country. And what a district for commercial beekeeping! I am bound to admit that in all my travels over a good part of both islands, it was in Southland I saw what real clover country was like. The paddocks for the most part were full of

clover, and around the Edendale district they were absolutely white—not green and they were absolutely white! I had been told by white, but white! I had been told by others that the district was better than anything I had seen in the Waikato, Taranaki, Wairarapa, and the Trunk districts; and it was true. Of course, I know that and it was true. Of course, I know that in some seasons the crop suffers owing to bad weather coming on during the period of the honey flow; but that cannot be guaranteed against in any locality. I also know that the climate in the winter is pretty severe, but I also know that the highest daily return of a scale hive ever recorded—viz., 27lbs.—was in Southland. After seeing the district, I can now understand the ten and eleven-ton crops per 100 colonies that have been recorded. I am told that, given the bees in good condition, a fortnight's fine weather will give you a good crop, and I can well believe it.

The Southland Field Day was one of the best I have ever attended. From the welcome by the genial President (Mr. Carl Larson) right to the end of an extensive programme, arranged and adhered to by Mr. Hemmingsen, ably assisted by Mr. E. A. Earp, the proceedings went with a vim. The ladies attended to the catering splendidly, and the whole function was successfully carried out in glorious weather.

Whilst in Edendale I called on Mr. R. Gibb, of Menzies Ferry, and found him very busy indeed with his queen-rearing. He has had a very heavy job keeping pace with the orders. I was shown some very fine breeding queens, and cells in all stages of development. Mr. Gibb works on conscientious lines, and his stock is very good indeed.

The next morning, 3rd February, I was again fortunate in securing a seat in Mr. Brogan's car, and enabled to go right through by road to Mosgiel, where I was due to address the Taieri Branch. We went rather a round-about way on purpose that I should see the country, through Kahmai, Edendale Plains, Mataura, Gore, Waikaka Valley, Tapanui to Crookston. Here we called on our old friend, Mr. R. Stewart, and I was able to admire his breeding stocks. The next part of the journey was via Rae's Junction, Beaumont, Lawrence, Milton, to Mosgiel. We covered something like 180 miles on this trip, and the greater part of it could be described as good bee country; yet I very much doubt if there were 10 colonies to the square mile. Certain it is that travelling with the inspector, who knew the locations of the different beekeepers, we went through miles and miles of excellent country that was not known to have a hive of bees.

The meeting at Mosgiel was attended by about 25 persons, under the presidency of Mr. W. Clark, of Mosgiel. I was accorded a very attentive hearing, and met a lot of good fellows anxious to do and get the best for the industry.

The next visit was to the Canterbury Field Day, on 5th February, at the Re-

patiation Department's Farm at Avonhead. The apiary here is in temporary quarters, the permanent site being now down and planted with break-winds. The apiary is in being for the purpose of educating returned soldiers in the industry as a means of livelihood, and is in charge of Mr. G. L. Hight, who, I am quite willing to believe, is doing his best; but that he is not the right man for the job is obvious. How can a man teach others commercial beekeeping when the whole sum of the teacher's experience is a term as a cadet at Ruakura? Does the Repatriation Board set an apprentice in engineering to teach others the trade? Then, why beekeeping? Ask any of the cadets who have started commercial beekeeping for their opinion as to conditions ruling at Ruakura to those when they are out "on their own" for a living. I say it is not fair to the industry, and very unfair to those who may be tempted to take up beekeeping for a living, because they have no chance whatever of knowing what commercial beekeeping means. They may argue that if a term at Ruakura is sufficient education to enable a man to take charge of an apiary like this, then there isn't much to learn in beekeeping. Another strange thing is this: The one-year cadets that have been appointed by the Department have been inspectors only; the Department has made it particularly clear that instruction has to be left to the qualified officer. But here is a case where the cadet IS the instructor, and to those who intend to make beekeeping a living.

I do not wish to be accused of "attacking" Mr. Hight; I believe he is doing his best with the most vicious lot of bees it has been my ill-luck to be with; but I do "attack" an arrangement that is absolutely unsound, and one liable to lead returned soldiers to venture on a line that will lead to failure. If you are going to teach commercial beekeeping, then the teacher must have had commercial experience, otherwise he is attempting to teach something he knows nothing about.

The Field Day was attended by a fair number of people, and to Mr. Earp for the demonstration at the hives, and to Miss Mackay and Mrs. Ward must be accorded the merit of success the outing was.

Whilst attending the above, I was asked to try and get along to Rangiora, as there was a possibility of starting a Branch there.

On the Monday, February 7th, I was on my way again down south, as I had been asked to address the beekeepers at Balclutha, with the idea of forming a Branch. I was most hospitably entertained by Mr. R. Jones, of Rosebank, Balclutha, who kindly allowed me to use his rooms for the meeting, which was attended by about 20 people, who listened very attentively to what I had to say, and decided to form a Branch of the National. The beekeepers there are very keen to get the district clear of...

neighbours in Clutha Valley; and why not? The district is an excellent one for beekeeping, and the only real drawback is the prevalence of disease. I learn they are about to attempt to get some of the members appointed local inspectors to assist the Department in getting the district clear.

Mrs. Jones very kindly provided a very excellent supper, and a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Jones terminated the meeting.

Tuesday, February 8th, was spent in travelling back to Christchurch, and on the following day I was off to Rangiora. On the journey to Rangiora I was accompanied by Mr. E. A. Earp, apiary instructor, and I am only sorry I did not have his company the whole South Island trip, because if there is one man more than another who is looked up to and whose presence and remarks are appreciated, it is the self-same Mr. Earp. During the whole of my trip, wherever I went Mr. Earp's name was always mentioned with enthusiasm and genuine regard for the work he was doing for the industry.

The meeting at Rangiora was called by Mr. H. A. Johnstone, who is very keen for the National and the honey industry generally, and was attended by about twenty people, the chair being occupied by the Mayor, Mr. C. I. Jennings. After listening to what Mr. Earp and I had to say, those present decided to form a Branch. The district seemed to me a very suitable one for beekeeping. Of course, it is the same as the whole of the Canterbury Plains—liable to drought; but I know of no district where there is all honey and no stings of any sort.

As it was necessary to catch the first train in the morning for the West Coast, we had to engage a motor to get us back to Christchurch that night, where we arrived at 11.30 p.m., and had you been in Cathedral Square about that time you would have seen a representative of the Government and the National having their supper at a coffee stall!

Next morning at 8.30 a.m. I boarded the train to Arthur's Pass. The country here as far as Springfield looked very good for our industry, and as far as I can learn is not at all overstocked. I enjoyed the scenery about the Pass and the drive through the Otira Gorge to the station at Otira, where I reckoned I was well on the way to the West Coast. There was not much other than the bush to interest a beekeeper, yet the number of rata trees must be enormous; and although I was told this was not a year that the rata bloomed, I could see a great number in bloom, and could only imagine what the bush must be like in a blooming season.

At Greymouth I was met by Messrs. A. Baty and D. T. Cochrane, president and secretary of the West Coast Branch, who

On the Friday I was shown round the district by Messrs. Baty and Cochrane, and saw a little of the beauties of the Coast. I saw something rather unusual here. A road was being made round the edge of some cliffs, and the man who was working there said he was throwing gold-dust into the creek. I naturally was a bit shy of taking that, so to convince me he dug up a shovelful of earth, washed it in a pool, and sure enough there were three specks of fine gold in the shovel. And just above where he was making the road was an outcrop of coal about 6ft. wide. The whole place was covered with timber, and I began to realise that the West Coast is one of great potentialities in the future.

On the Saturday morning I proceeded to Mr. F. Kitchingham's apiary, about three miles out of Greymouth. Here I found everything in splendid order, and the results obtained from the apiary as good as those elsewhere.

The Field Day was held at Mr. O. Butler's, Kahikatea, and I was sorry to find Mr. Butler confined to his bed. This gentleman has his own original idea with regard to frames. He has a wooden slat down the centre, and in the hives I opened the queen had used only the front half of the frame (that nearest the entrance) for breeding; the other half was used by the bees for storage. I confess I could not see any advantage whatever—rather the reverse.

The gathering was attended by about 60 people, which was very good indeed, considering the annual picnic of the miners was held the same day.

I had the experience of taking the demonstration myself, but as it was my initial attempt at the job, I am afraid I did not do very well; but they all appeared interested, which was kind!

In the evening I addressed another gathering of interested people, who also listened very patiently to what I had to say relative to the National and H.P.A.

Now, as regards Greymouth and district for beekeeping, I feel that it is quite a payable proposition now, because there is such a tremendous amount of honey-bearing flora in the bush. And the blackberry! Well, I have never seen anything like it in my life: miles and miles of them, and good honey-yielders, too! I tasted some pure blackberry honey at Mr. G. R. Dixon's, Brunner. Dead white in colour, fine in grain, very sweet to the palate, with an after-taste of bitterness. But in the rata blooming season, which I understand comes every third year, the yield must be enormous, and the results obtained in these years are really wonderful. I can quite imagine the honey must simply pour in. Therefore, I feel that the West Coast offers quite a good proposition for beekeeping, and the results obtained this year are quite good, although this is considered an "off year."

I cannot leave the West Coast without recording my appreciation of Messrs. Baly, Cochran, and Dixon of the West Coast Branch. These gentlemen have run a fortnightly meeting ever since they started the Branch, and have managed to maintain interest the whole time—absolutely keen on the industry; keen on the National; and loyal to a man to the H.P.A. I came away from the West Coast with more enthusiasm than I went; the "West Coasters" are all "white" men, and a pleasure to meet.

On the Sunday I had to motor to Reefton on purpose to catch the car on Monday to Glenhope en route to Nelson.

I enjoyed the trip through the Buller Gorge, although it was dreadfully dusty. There was not a great deal to interest a beekeeper en route save just at Murchison. The valley offers a field for beekeeping, although not to a very large extent. I was not very favourably impressed with the districts passed through in the train from Glenhope to Nelson, the latter place being, to my mind, quite unsuitable.

I had arranged by wire with the secretary of the Nelson Provincial Branch to address a meeting, but unfortunately he was on holiday at the time, consequently my wire was awaiting his return, and I had arrived by then. However, I was able to spend a very interesting evening with Mr. C. B. Morris, of Riwaka, the president of the Branch, who, besides being a beekeeper, is an analytical chemist and microscopist. I saw the actual foul-brood bacilli by the aid of his powerful microscope.

The following day I called on Mr. P. Martin, of Umukuri, who was busy with his bees; he was very much annoyed that our meeting had been unfortunately abandoned.

I was not very much impressed with Nelson and the districts I travelled there; an absence of pasture land for one thing, and everything looking very dry and parched.

From Nelson I motored through to Blenheim, and until we got fairly well into Marlborough, I did not think very much of the country for beekeeping.

At Blenheim I was met by our old friend Mr. J. A. Moreland, who was waiting my arrival. He immediately placed himself and car at my disposal, and I was thus able to have a good look round the district. I understand that they have had this season considerably more rain than usual, which had so altered the general appearance of the country that one was inclined to get over-enthusiastic. Certainly the acres and acres of lucerne in flower was a very fine sight, with an enormous showing of Californian thistle and the ordinary Scotch variety. Then the river-beds are an absolute mass of the weed known as the blue flower (Vipers bugloss), which is a great yielder of honey and the same is spreading pretty well over the paddocks and roads.

They have had one of the best seasons experienced, so that I saw the district at its best. However, I do not want to paint too rosy a picture; therefore, I obtained some particulars as to general conditions, and found that one of the chief difficulties is drought; another is floods, which although not frequent, are pretty severe when they do come along.

Mr. Moreland took me out to Renwicktown, where I was able to see Mr. J. H. Todd's apiary and queen-rearing stock. Mr. Todd has got together a beautiful strain, and has a very complete system of checking every queen, and I can easily understand the very favourable reports of his stock I had heard whilst on tour.

The meeting was called for the Friday night, but unfortunately there was a strong counter-attraction, and the attendance was very small. But it was considered advisable to form the nucleus of a Branch, and to that end three paid their subscriptions.

On the Saturday I left for Pieton, where I was met by Mr. G. M. Blizzard, but unfortunately the Wellington boat left too early for me to have a look round the district. There certainly doesn't look to be much for bees about there, and I was very much surprised to learn the average of Mr. Blizzard's apiary.

I arrived in Wellington on Saturday evening, and left for Auckland on the following Monday evening.

In Auckland I had a look round the H.P.A. depot, and found everything in readiness for coping with the new season's crop. The following day (24th February) I was able to get home, after an absence of 31 days.

I desire to place on record my sincere thanks to all those who did so much to make my stay pleasant in their respective districts. My chief difficulty was to get away, as I was wanted to "see the district," "stay and see so-and-so," particularly on the West Coast.

Although I only had a passing glimpse of the country, and saw only a tittle of what there is to be seen, I am more than ever convinced that the question of the control of apiary boundaries is absolutely unnecessary. There are hundreds of thousands of acres without a known colony to the mile, and that in good country, too.

The senior magistrate for Christchurch (Mr. S. E. McCarthy) has been, according to the Lyttelton Times, giving some solid and badly needed advice to a batch of budding J.P.s. Mr. McCarthy gravely told them that no English gentleman considered his education complete until he had served as a J.P. (English gentlemen and papers, please copy!) Two or three of these gentlemen who want to complete their educations (and not buds this time either, but full-blown blossoms), have shown that they have not much time to bother about the statutes of the country. In fact, one

such, hailing from Dunsandel, hold that he didn't come under the law just like the common herd, so he hadn't bothered to register his apiary this time, thank you. However, the dear old lady on the bench pointed out that even J.P.s. came within the meaning, and promptly fined him one shilling, and wouldn't even allow him his travelling costs, or words to that effect. Rumour has it that this particular Justice of the Peace has been asked to become patron of the "Society for the protection of persecuted apiarists." Several members of the society have already been fined several sheikels for simply happening to have a few odd boxes about which bees had carelessly roosted in, and wouldn't come out either when asked to quite nicely. It is proposed that the society's badge, or, rather, coat-of-arms, contains a representation, life-size, of a J.P. (from the old English, Jolly Phellow!) rampant on an inverted petrol case, and the motto "Nil Desperandum" gives the whole movement the required "ginger!"—Contributed.

Virgins and Royal Jelly.

I notice there is a bit of a controversy as to whether newly hatched queens require royal jelly or not. After thirty years careful observation of hatching queens, under all sorts of conditions, my opinion is that they do not require it, and will not touch it under natural conditions. In a hive where no swarming is contemplated, a young queen on hatching is not taken the slightest notice of by the bees. She crawls round, and about the first thing helps herself to a feed of honey from an open cell. She will then slowly crawl round for half an hour or so, and while doing so have two or three more helpings from open cells of honey. By this time she is beginning to feel her legs, so to speak, and begins to search for possible rivals, and any other cells encountered are at once bitten into and the inmate despatched if the bees do not guard them and drive her off. If she does not encounter any other cells, the one she emerged from is often bitten into, and not finding any inmate she bites down into any royal jelly remaining in the cell. This jelly, which is often partly dried, she does not eat, as some seem to suppose; it is simply bitten to small pieces and dropped; if it is still partly liquid, she will on rare occasions almost bury herself in it. But as a rule she is satisfied after biting through the cell. Some queens are much more jealous than others, and I am certain this is the motive of their chewing down into the cell they emerged from. As a matter of fact, I have many a time put fresh royal jelly in the way of a newly emerged queen, and they will as a general rule if hungry touch it with their tongue and then turn away and take honey every time instead. The food a newly hatched queen prefers and will look for every time

is the honey thinned down for immediate use that is to be found in every normal brood nest where young bees are hatching. She will turn away from a drop of the thick ripened honey and search for the thinned down article; and newly hatched queens in nursery cages always seem to me to do better if given access to a little of this thin honey when they first emerge than on candy alone; and one thing I have often noticed those that have had honey on emerging are always, other things being equal, ready to take their mating flight two or three days ahead of those that had access to candy only. After a queen is from 24 to 36 hours old, and in possession of the colony, there seems no set rule as to her feeding; some seem to always help themselves till they start laying, others when hungry simply so to speak shove their nose in a bee's face; if the bee has honey it will crouch down slightly and give up what is demanded; if it has none it turns away, and she tries another. I have often watched this performance, and it is honey that seems to be passed over, as the tiny drop given up by the bee can easily be seen.

B. STEWART.

Crookston, 14th Feb., 1921.

On the Recent Appearance of Mason Bees in South Canterbury.

(A paper read at the Canterbury Branch Field Day by Mr. W. E. Barker.)

THE MIRACLE OF LIFE.

(By Grace Allen.)

Within a beehive in the spring
There lies a very wondrous thing—
So frail an egg it almost seems
A mote to float through fairy dreams,

In dews at night when silver light
Comes dancing down in streams,
Yet life is in this tiny thing,
And growth, and future eye, and wing,
Sure instinct, and the love of light,
And treasured heritage of flight,
(O wing of bees! And eye that sees
With such a different sight!)

Wee egg, what miracle befell
To couch you in this fragile cell?
What miracle shall yet befall
When winged life through waxen wall
Shall break its way some summer day
To follow life's far call?

How vain my questions, egg in cell!
You cannot understand nor tell,
I cannot understand nor know
How life can come, and life can grow,
All wonder seems to end in dreams;
Perhaps we worship so.

"The more we live, more brief appear our life's succeeding stages."

Have you ever seen a Mason bee? Any North Island friend that may be with us to-day no doubt will say "Yes, and I wish I never had"; for there they fill every key-hole and convenient and inconvenient cranny with their clay cradles, and are anathema to the tidy housewife. One insists in building in my daughter's bedroom curtains, much to her distress, for they certainly, like our honey bee, fulfil the divine ordinance, "keep your cradles full." Three weeks ago one foolishly decided that the folds of my oilskin hanging on the verandah was a suitable place to set up housekeeping in, and in a few days had three long clay tubes built, each divided into from seven to twelve chambers, each stored with from ten to twelve unfortunate spiders of gay, gorgeous hues in cool storage; for this bee, by paralysing a nerve centre, or injecting a subtle poison—a point not settled yet—thus preserves its victims for the future sustenance of its progeny; as it finishes each cell, it deposits its egg on one of the spiders, and in a few hours the grub hatches therefrom and feeds upon the juices of the spider; and when one is finished moves on to the next, till all in the cell are exhausted, and it sinks to rest, satiated, as a pupæ, and awaits the resurrection of the just.

The larvæ has more inherent sense than I gave it credit for. The one I have under observation at present started as a wee spee, just visible to the naked eye, and is now a bloated aristocrat from feasting on its victims, which I have prepared for it in an agate saucer. It seizes on one, first puncturing the abdomen and extracting its juices; it then coils round the remains and goes over the limbs seriatim, passing each between its mandibles from end to end with as much skill as the most experienced gourmet amongst us treats a lobster's claw. I hope to watch it spin its cocoon; but the last two I watched disappointed me, giving up their ghosts just at the critical moment. I fancy, however, its shroud is more of the nature of an exudation which hardens. It is interesting to note that when he wakes up he has not the instincts of the spiders he has consumed, but that of his forebears, for the spirit of the latter has returned to God who gave it. I feel tempted here to introduce a good story and let it point its own moral:—In the very early days we used to have to cross the Rangitata in a punt, and a friend of mine was crossing with his wife; but in stepping out he inadvertently kicked the punt into the stream, down which it rapidly went, carrying his wife and child with it. My friend lost his nerve, and ran along the bank crying, "Good-bye, Emma, good-bye; I will meet you in heaven"; to which his wife, who remained placidly knitting, replied, "Don't be stupid, Charles," for she realised that it would soon get stranded. The sequel is amusing. Many years after, the son, grown to be a man, was being

shown round the South Canterbury Freezing Works. As he was passing a butcher who was despatching an unfortunate ewe, he was surprised to hear him say, "Good-bye, Emma; I will meet you in heaven!"

These chambers are not built with the beautiful mathematical accuracy of our honey bee, but vary, apparently, with the day's catch of spiders. In three weeks she completed three such homes, and it was most interesting to gently pull the creases apart and watch her at work, humming the while with contentment, as she kneaded the mortar required for her domicile with her saliva. Now, one interesting fact to observe is that she does not spend the night with her offspring, but retires to the stony pathway adjoining when the sun sinks to rest. Why? It is hard to find a reason why. Perhaps she is afraid that the spooks, or gnomes, or fairies of the departed spiders might tease her in her slumbers for despoiling them of their bodies; and one can well understand that after such herculean labours she needs a good night's rest, for in three weeks she has filled 27 chambers with from 10 to 12 spiders in each, and must have travelled some. What a wonderful thing this instinct is in us, urging us to reproduce our species, and how far-reaching are its effects. Where would our honey industry be if the bees adopted the Malthusian theory and argued: We will limit our family; why should we flood the world with our species for others to reap the benefit of our industry; we will go slow. I think this late war has taught many a Malthusian very sadly the folly of such reasoning.

It is just about seven years since I first observed the Mason bees, and that was a much smaller species, amidst the hot rocks up the Orari Gorge. It is about three years since I first heard of this larger species appearing in the district, and if they go on multiplying at their present rate, the spiders in the district will soon think life is not worth living. Amongst all these hundreds of victims, I found only one of a sombre and inconspicuous colour, and that was a female. But let not my lady friends here present too heartily take credit to their sex for superior wisdom, for if Mr. Darwin is right, the conspicuous colouring of the male is owing to, through countless generations, the female's love of the beautiful, inducing them to select the gayest and most conspicuous males as their companions; in fact, the life of the male spider is not a happy one, for if his efforts to please the fair sex are not accepted she eats him, and if he succeeds in escaping her clutches, he may be permanently preserved by some passing Mason bee.

Some idea of the enormous industry of the Mason bee may be gathered from the fact that every few years in France the tiles from the houses have to be removed and scraped, or they are brought to the ground by the tons of clay they gradually

pile into them. Everything seems to work together for good in this world, to work for an equilibrium; and we must be careful how we, with our purely utilitarian ideas, interfere with it, as sooner or later we will have cause to regret it. Along these lines we seem to be erring in our social laws and usages, to have run off the lines and lost touch with the Unseen Universe. All through Nature we find that it is love—love of the species that saves the species from extinction; and it is only love—love of humanity per se—that will save us from Bolshevism. The man who raises up a big family in the knowledge of what is right and wrong as he sees it, is doing a much greater work for God and humanity than he who limits his family to two in order that he may have money enough to go to the pictures.

This is one of the lessons I think we can gather from the Mason bee, and this is where I disagree with the Eugenics, and is another of the ways in which instinct proves itself nearer to God than reason. In our anxiety to squeeze the money from our bees, I think it does us well to pause at times and think with what wonderful intelligence it, too, works out its life's history, at the same time indirectly filling our fields with blossoms, and returning to the farmer his hay, whilst at the same time it replenishes the earth with its species. And there is so much yet to learn of the why and the wherefore of the way in which they carry out these problems that I see that, with a little guidance from us in the future, we can as surely bend them towards our interests as the farmer can improve the strain of his own stock. The great problem of gaining complete control of the male element in our queen-rearing instead of the at present haphazard "off-with-her-head" plan, is, I am pleased to say, much nearer the solving than it was a few years ago; therefore, think it not waste of time and money this institution of State apiaries or any individual attention you may give to them. When as a member of the National I look back through the twenty odd years I have been a beekeeper, I am well satisfied with the progress we have made. I think it augurs well for the future of *Apis mellifica*, especially when the Government so readily assists us in our investigations.

Is it not wonderful that so small an insect can materially affect the balance of Nature in working out its destiny. Personally, I am a believer in sentient matter—i.e., when matter attains a certain complexity, the spirit of God is able to enter in, and it becomes a living soul. Generations of inherited instincts account for the rest. We all feel the divine within us, and stretch out blind hands to seize it. The Universal Mind is able to impress itself upon the sentient matter of the cells of each of us, of each individual entity, and work through it. It ends according to our attainments, and so we can account for the wonderful wisdom shown in such in-

sects as the Mason bee, the honey bee, and even man. Be that as it may, insects can upset the balance of Nature, and also man, and so indirectly affect our industry. Let us not forget Darwin's great generalisation, his one and only joke:—

"Old maids keep cats; cats eat mice; mice destroy bees; bees fertilise clover; clover produces honey; therefore"—
But I had better end my paper here, and leave you to decide which is sweetest. I must leave it to the younger generation to decide whether there shall be less old maids or more honey in the future. Nature is one, and undivided; it differs only in degree.

In visiting the different apiaries where I found colonies with plenty of stores, I frequently found strong colonies, but not always. Where I found colonies with young queens, I frequently found strong colonies, but not always. But where I found colonies with both young queens and abundant stores, I always found strong colonies; yes, every pop!—Jay Smith, "Western Honey Bee."

Subscriptions Received.

[NOTE.—Should there be found any discrepancy, please write the Editor.]

- E. A. Hall, Kaponga, to Feb. 22
 J. Poff, senr., Methven, to Feb. 22
 A. C. Read, Darfield, to Feb. 22
 H. J. Ellis, Patutahi, to April 22
 C. M. Birkett, Stratford, to Jan. 22
 J. Anderson, Carterton, to Feb. 22
 Jas. Todd, Miranda, to Feb. 22
 W. L. Dodd, Sawyer's Bay, to Jan. 22
 A. S. Gresham, Te Kuiti, to Jan. 22
 G. Duncan, Willowbridge, to Feb. 22
 A. C. Ward, Edendale, to Feb. 22
 Miss Grieve, Wainiwa, to Jan. 22
 H. L. Johnson, Auckland, to Feb. 22
 R. McKibbin, Otekaieke, to Feb. 22
 Miss Quin, Tapanui, to Feb. 22
 H. Wall, Rotorua, to Feb. 22
 W. Koford, Outram, to March 22
 C. A. Jacobsen, Little River, to June 22
 O. T. Kaye, Mosgiel, to Feb. 22
 H. A. Ward, Fordell, to March 22
 S. C. Smith, Patea, to Feb. 22
 J. R. White, Little River, to Nov. 21
 G. Kilminster, Kihī Kihī, to March 22
 R. McCulloch, Matata, to Feb. 22
 J. B. Forbes, Gisborne, to March 22

C. L. Clifton, Auckland, to Feb. 22
 J. H. White, Tapanui, March 22
 T. Wyndham, Balclutha, to Feb. 22
 W. A. Walsh, Los Angeles, to Dec. 22
 J. B. Drake, Timaru, to March 22
 W. Harrison, Waipahi, to March 22
 J. Cottance, Urarua, to Feb. 22
 L. Irwin, Woodlands, to March 22
 G. H. Irving, Roslyn Bush, to Feb. 22
 J. Halliday, Kamahi, to Feb. 22
 Jas. Lyon, Invercargill, to Feb. 22
 Theo. Murray, Edendale, to Feb. 22
 Miss E. Stirling, Waikina, to March 22
 Chas. Neave, Haywards, to Feb. 22
 S. Darcy, Masterton, to Feb. 22
 T. P. Epps, Ruatiti, to Jan. 22
 A. E. Logan, Otahuhu, to March 22

Mistakes Persisted in Constitute Failure.

(By GEO. W. WILLIAMS, in The Western
Honey Bee.)

The most far-reaching of these errors have been made in planning the policies of the associations. Beekeeping is unfortunate in one respect; it can hardly be termed a vocation yet, although we have many specialists, and the number is increasing. We must recognise the fact that the vast majority of "beekeepers" follow it as an avocation in connection with other things. This is a source of strength to our business, so long as the allied occupation is horticulture, chicken farming, or something similar.

But in recent years a peculiar condition has arisen. It has become necessary, for the good of the industry, to create official and educational positions to check the ravages of disease and for other necessary purposes. Some of these positions pay such high salaries that they attract the ambitious "beekeeper" who produces honey principally by proxy, and who has been allowed to use our associations to advance his political aspirations.

It was mistake No. 1 when we allowed this to occur. Mistake No. 2, and supplementary to No. 1, was a failure to take care of the vital business interests of the men who are in the business for a living now, or intend to be in the future.

It is these men whose interests are paramount. The inspectors, schools of instruction, bureaux of entomology, and all the other "red tape and brass buttons," exist only that these men may become better fitted to conduct their business so as to make money from it.

The amateur and the "farmer" beekeeper are incidental. Many of them are looking forward to larger production, and are broad-minded in their views. It is from this class that our specialists will come. The large number of these amateur beekeepers make them conspicuous, and their opinions and pet "kinks" have been given undue prominence in conventions and even in the journals, and obscured to some extent the real needs of the specialists.

Eliminating old bees from queen-mating colonies is more important than may be suspected. The continual removing of mated queens before they have a chance to re-stock the colony allows the bees to reach an age not conducive to successful queen work. These old workers have cared for brood once, and have become rather averse to any condition that will force them into the business again. And a young step-mother does not seem to appeal to them very strongly either.—Gleanings.

A correspondent says: "High noon on a hot day is the best time to examine a cross colony of bees." The best time for me to examine them is when I get good and ready. With a smoke, gloves, and veil I defy any colony to put me off until high noon. If a man does not protect himself from unnecessary stings, he ought to be stung.—Gleanings.

Comb honey, like other frail commodities, should be looked at with eyes and not with the fingers.

Extracting cold honey is not conducive to good morals.

Extracting too closely is worse than disease. Both together are forerunners of disaster.

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—Western Honey Bee.

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Postal Address :
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Dept. of Agriculture, Industries & Commerce,
Blenheim, Sept. 15th, 1920.

Mr. J. H. Todd, Renwicktown.

Sir,—Having examined every hive at your Apiary at Renwicktown, I have found no evidence of Foul-brood.

(Signed) A. P. YOUNG,
Apiary Inspector.