

# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER



OFFICIAL ORGAN of the  
NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION  
OF NEW ZEALAND

*(An Organisation for the advancement of  
the Beekeeping Industry in New Zealand)*

Better Beekeeping

Better Marketing

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# The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

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Gilbert S. Kirker, Editor.

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## EDITORIAL.

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### Editorial Policy

Since some criticism has been levelled at our policy by the Chairman of the Control Board, we take this opportunity of making brief comment so as to clarify the position.

A contention that the General Executive of the Association must back up all that appears in these columns is interesting, but not necessarily true. We are, however, careful to publish editorially only that to which we believe the majority of the Executive will not object, even if they do not all completely approve. We must, of course, take a certain amount for granted, or our style would be so cramped that it would be difficult to be a little bit original.

Should we publish views completely contrary to the policy of the General Executive and of the Association, then the General Executive must deal with us, and we should certainly bow very willingly to any ruling given by the General Executive. We only endeavour to do our best, and, so far, have managed to escape disciplinary action of any kind. Perhaps we have been lucky.

That our writings should be confined to topics of past Conferences is just too silly, and is unworthy of the intelligence of the critic who advanced the proposition.

We are in a position to have a fairly good knowledge of the opinions of beekeepers throughout the whole Dominion and, therefore, have compiled our editorials accordingly. We quite expect some of them to prove provocative and promote discussion, but that is healthy and, we think, really desirable. And may we not be accorded the privilege of leading opinion a little—just occasionally?

### The Chairman Objects!

At a recent meeting of the Auckland Central Branch of the Association, the Chairman of the N.Z. Honey Control Board, Mr. W. Nelson, in reply to a question, stated that, "At present the Board had no intention whatever of increasing the seal levy." Neither have we.

The Board has no power to increase the seal levy. Neither have we.

The Board is empowered only to make recommendations on any such matters. So can we.

At a meeting of the Hawke's Bay Branch more recently, the Control Board Chairman was heard to disclaim, "I object to the Editor of the Association's Journal publishing such things as this: 'There should be no hesitation in increasing the amount of the seal levy from  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 1d. per lb., or even more.'"

To remove part of a sentence from its context and quote it as an objectionable statement is a practice which can be done in the case of almost any discussion, verbal or written, on almost any topic. But it is an objectionable practice and rarely ever quite honest.

If the Control Board Chairman objects to any of the views expressed in these columns, there are, in our opinion, better ways (and ways less unbecoming an official such as the Government representative on the Honey Control Board) of conveying his sentiments, than by endeavouring to foment discord between branch members and officers of the General Executive of the Association.

For instance, our correspondence columns are open to all; but an even greater facility is available to Mr. Nelson. An unlimited amount of

space is allowed for publication in this Journal of any official statement received over the signature of the Chairman of the N.Z. Honey Control Board, and Mr. Nelson would be quite justified in submitting a statement of Board policy setting out just where the Board's views were at variance with any expressed in these columns.

There is, of course, yet another alternative, and that would be to address an official communication to the General Executive of the Association, giving reasons why, in the Board's opinion, any editorial views should be modified.

With regard to our reference to an increase in the seal levy under certain specified circumstances (page 3, January number), this was merely a point or argument as to a further step which *could* be taken, if necessary to combat an evil. We do not recommend it at the present time, as we do not consider it either necessary or desirable. But it *would* serve as a check to competition against the Internal Marketing Division if such a hypothetical position as we referred to arose, and that was our sole reason for mentioning it.

On such occasions as the Control Board Chairman attends meetings of any branch of the Association in his official capacity as Chairman of the Board, it surely is only reasonable to assume that he will have the courtesy to confine his remarks to matters which are within the Board's province. As the Board functions as an Advisory Committee to the Hon. Minister of Marketing, this may presumably be defined as "Marketing," purely and simply.

We always try to avoid confusing the minds of beekeepers, but consider it is more democratic to let all beekeepers have an opportunity of considering any possible changes before an annual conference, rather than to have them sprung on them *at* a conference. And that was the reason for our editorial on Marketing and Price Fixation.

Furthermore, we know that a section of the beekeepers ardently desires this change and, while we were at one time inclined to agree with the expressed views of the Control Board Chairman, we now have to admit that

there are good reasons for its introduction. All the points in favour are being put forward and it is up to those who disagree to say so and why. That includes the Board, of course.

But the right to express a view contrary to one published in these columns does not confer on the Chairman of the Board the right (in the course of remarks to members of the Association at a branch meeting) to use his official position to criticise our actions in publishing views of any kind in this Journal. Such a course most definitely is not his function.

### Price Fixation

In our January number we advanced a point of view favouring the universal grading of honey and minimum price fixation (according to grade). The "Canadian Bee Journal" for December reports similar action at the Diamond Jubilee Convention of the Ontario Beekeepers' Association, when that Association's Grading Committee brought forward the following resolution which was carried unanimously:—

"That the Provincial Government be approached to incorporate, under the Agricultural Products Act, regulations similar to the Fruit, Vegetables and Honey Act requiring the classification and grading of all honey offered for public sale within the Province, excepting in the case of direct consumer sales at the apiary or honey house."

Supporting the resolution, one speaker said: "If a resolution demanding that honey be graded for domestic use had been accepted years ago, we probably would not be suffering from such a low price condition as exists at the present time. Most food products are bought or sold by grade or other control regulations for the purpose of encouraging the production of a more uniform quality in the article. Such products as grain, beef, hogs, potatoes, fruit, milk and cream, eggs, tea, sugar and export honey are some which are under regulations.

"Honey is graded for export purposes, but not for domestic use, and

there is more honey used at home. There is no encouragement to the producer to use better equipment and produce better honey for domestic use. Honey pails on the grocery shelf look alike to the buyer.

"The Alberta honey producers are at the present time making plans for better grading of Alberta honey. If honey were graded for Ontario domestic use, we believe prices would be better, and a higher grade article placed on the market."

Another speaker expressed himself: "I am in favour of grading honey for sale in Ontario. If we are going to increase the sale of honey by advertising, etc., we will have to make sure the grade we are advertising. To increase the sale of honey by allowing poor honey getting on the market is not right. It only discourages its use."

Here we have evidence that one of New Zealand's largest competitors in the United Kingdom market is aware of the same weakness in its domestic market as exists on our own domestic market and proposes a method of combating the difficulty parallel with that outlined in the "N.Z. Beekeeper" of January.

With this example before us, it may be expected that this year's Conference will see the adoption of a similar resolution with equal unanimity. This, it may be hoped, will speedily be followed by the Gazetting of the necessary regulations so that 1940 will see the end of price-cutting in our industry, coupled with the certainty of consumers getting exactly what is paid for every time they go to their stores and order honey.

With this achieved, we shall be in a position to say that the marketing side of our industry is finally completely organised and the last of many weak places thoroughly repaired.

### U.K. Honey Importations

We suggested in our January number that it was unlikely that New Zealand would long be the only Empire country having the privilege of exporting honey to Britain.

Actually (effective November 14, 1939) Empire honey, with the exception of Palestine and Transjordan, is

now being admitted under an open license, but, until further notice, no licenses are being issued for honey from foreign countries.

Prior to the outbreak of war, more than forty countries supplied Britain with honey. When the restrictions were lifted last November, nearly 450 tons of Canadian honey was awaiting shipment in Winnipeg and, while not necessarily better than the New Zealand product, Canadian honey is good honey. We still have strong competition, but the Marketing Division "can take it" (and all the honey which producers can send in to it too).

### Beeswax

The Marketing Division's measures to place the marketing of beeswax on a satisfactory footing this year are to be commended, and beekeepers will be wise to co-operate with the Division, if permits for importations of foreign beeswax are to be avoided.

Beeswax was imported last year and the Association protested on the grounds that it was considered that there was sufficient wax in the Dominion to cover requirements. Naturally, if beekeepers demand extortionate prices for their wax because permits to import are being withheld in the meantime, the position will deteriorate to the extent that permits must be granted to permit the users of wax securing supplies at economic prices. At the same time, we have had advice of quite large quantities of wax which have been disposed of in the North Island at 1/6 per pound at the apiaries. It is a fact also that while an increase of a penny or so per pound represents a considerable benefit to the beekeeper, owing to the very small proportion of beeswax used in manufactures such price increases represent a very small additional manufacturing cost in the case of the finished product containing a proportion of wax.

With a view of putting the sale of beeswax on a satisfactory basis this year, by making it possible for users of wax to contact producers with stocks of wax, the Marketing Division proposes keeping a record of all those producers holding wax, quantity and price, and this list will be

amended as amending advices are received from producers. At the end of each month, a list of all holders, quantity and price, will be made available to anyone wanting wax.

If beekeepers wish to avoid import permits being issued, it is essential that they make it possible for the Division to avoid this by keeping the Division posted at all times. Naturally, if the Division refers users to beekeepers who have no wax (having sold without notifying the Division), the users will be able to point out that the information received from the Division does not help them, and the Division will not be in any position to do other than agree to importations to cover any apparent shortage and enable manufacturers to continue. It is in beekeepers' own interests, therefore, that they should cooperate with the Marketing Division in this matter.

The Marketing Division has considered the possibility of buying all the wax from beekeepers so as to be in a position to supply users' requirements direct, but this is hardly practicable.

In the first place, the amount of wax produced in the Dominion is too small to bring the cost of handling it within reasonable limits. Taking the production of honey as being about 3000 tons and the production of wax at 30 lb. per ton, the total production of wax would not be more than 40 tons. Allowing for odds and ends at the apiaries and old combs being rendered down might increase the figure to 50 tons, of which a large proportion goes to making comb foundation.

If the Marketing Division was handling this wax, it would need to collect it from all over the Dominion. The wax would come in in all sorts of quantities, as low as 5 lb. lots. The cost of carriage of these small lots would be excessive, especially where sea freight was involved. The quality of the wax also over a lot of these small lines would be such that it could not satisfactorily be marketed without reconditioning.

This would require special appliances and the room to accommodate them, which would be in use only for a very small part of the year.

It would appear, taking everything into consideration, that the overhead would so load the costs that the handling of wax in this way would not be justified. The Marketing Division just could not do this work for nothing and it would not be fair to suppliers of honey to involve them in costs for handling wax. Therefore, the wax would have to be loaded to pay those costs.

It is really a simple matter for the producer to give the necessary advice to enable their wax to be sold as is now being done, and it is only fair that producers should help themselves in this respect.

Wax is in good demand, and first grade bright lemon lines are readily bringing 1/5 per lb., while poorer quality ranges from 1/3 down to 1/-.

### Long Service

For a Branch Secretary to have been in office for 21 years must, we think, constitute a record for the Association, and all members will join in congratulating Mr. A. H. Davies, retiring secretary of the South Auckland Branch, on his performance.

While the task of a secretary is usually a more or less thankless one, so that there frequently is not much competition for the office, it is a fact that Mr. Davies has filled his position with singular success, having the gift of organising, just the right degree of tact, and a surprising capacity for hard work. It is a tribute to Mr. Davies' personal popularity among the members of his branch that he has been re-elected to office with such almost monotonous regularity. He would undoubtedly have been appointed again had he not become adamant in refusing to stand for nomination at the last Annual Meeting of his branch, the members of which are taking further steps to recognise Mr. Davies' services in tangible form.

### Is Sixpence Maximum?

The "Canadian Bee Journal" for February publishes an article by Dr. E. J. Dyce, who quotes an extract from the "Michigan Beekeeper" relating to marketing in New Zealand

and contributed by a New Zealander.

Under the heading "Price is Established," the following statement appears:—

"It is the intention of the Marketing Department to make 12c (6d) a pound pro rata a standard price, good seasons and bad, thus keeping a standard consumer price."

We think that this is not likely to be the case, but it is a point which will certainly be cleared up at the Conference next month. The way to stabilise prices is not to fix the price which the producer will receive, but to fix the retail prices at an economic level and then to pay the producer what is available after selling costs have been deducted. It must be borne in mind that returns from the local market are pooled with those received from overseas and, so long as these are subject to fluctuation, so will be the returns to the producers, regardless of prices at retail in New Zealand.

#### First Advance Payment

Already the benefit of the greater initial payout of 5d. per lb. pro rata is manifest. One of the points we made in urging an increase on 4½d. was that it would tend to reduce price-cutting, and this is borne out by the following paragraph which has appeared in another publication:—

"A big advance payment by the Honey Section of the Internal Marketing Division has been a big factor in the stabilisation of the local market this season, and is the highest advance made since the most flourishing days of the H.P.A. The first advance this season, made within two or three weeks of grading the honey, is the high figure of 5d. per lb. for 100-point honey. For the beekeeper who has required finance, this has been a welcome and helpful relief."

The same correspondent added:—

"During the past two seasons, the total payout reached the high level of 6d. on each occasion, and there is every reason to believe that the same amount should be attained this year."

We concur with this view and, although it is sometimes foolish to prophesy, we think that it may even

be exceeded for the 1940 crop, as there is no doubt that more than 5d. advance could have been made this season without any risk at all of the Marketing Division's realisations not making adequate cover.

#### Crop for 1940

The summer opened with first class prospects for excellent returns almost all over the Dominion, and reports were received from jubilant beekeepers prophesying record harvests, but the weather from the middle of January chopped the honey flow off short in almost every district and, although there was phenomenal growth of clover, which presaged good returns and which has, in fact, resulted in rather better grades of honey being extracted this year, the bees lost at least four to six weeks of the flowering period and so just that amount of heavy blooming went to waste. The result is that it may be fairly accurately estimated that a slightly below average crop of higher-than-average quality has been taken. Hawke's Bay seems to be the only area with really satisfactory returns, but isolated localities elsewhere show surprising figures also.

#### Marketing

There is no excuse for price-cutting this year. There never is any year, for that matter. Cases are already reported, however, of small producers who have sold their crops at absurd figures. One classic instance in Taranaki demonstrates that the producer must have sold his honey (packed in cartons) so low that the merchant concerned was able to pass it on to stores at 9/6 per dozen. This is below the figure the merchant should be paying, of course. Naturally, the retailers reaped the greatest profit and retailed at the normal retail price of 1/1 and 1/2, according to locality.

There is another matter in which producers can improve their interests and that is by sending in to the Internal Marketing Division, at this time of the year when the quantity of the crop should be known, a return of the amount of honey producers intend supplying.

To secure the best returns from the sale of our honey, the Division should be in a position, as soon as possible, to know how much honey will be available for disposal during the current year, both domestically and overseas. With this information, sales can be adjusted so as to get the best returns from the market. Without it, sales are being made in the dark.

### Annual Conference

Although an effort is being made to get this number out a little earlier than usual, it is likely that the Annual Conference of the Association, which is being held this year at the Centennial Exhibition, Rongotai, Wellington, April 17/18/19 next, will be in progress when the Journal is in the mail. In view of the locale of the Conference, it is anticipated that there will be a record attendance and, from the nature of remits already to hand, there is no doubt that the proceedings will be interesting. The Minister of Agriculture, Hon. W. Lee Martin, will open the Conference.

### New Bee Disease

The worries of Canterbury beekeepers have been increased by the appearance, this season, in their hives of a disease hitherto unknown in New Zealand. It appears to be "European foul-brood," but, though the infected brood-combs show all the symptoms consistent with this diagnosis, definite identification of the disease has not yet been announced. Specimens of infected brood are being examined by experts. Like "American foul-brood," which has long plagued apiarists in the Dominion, the European variety is a fungoid disease, but it is more easily eradicated.

According to the Apis Club's publication, "The Diseases of Bees," European foul brood is a disease of unsealed brood, usually occurring in spring or early summer. The first sign is the presence of gaps, or of cells with eggs or young grubs, in what ought to be a solid slap of sealed brood. Drone as well as worker brood may be affected.

Grubs four or five days old usually die, but younger ones and sealed

brood may succumb, especially in bad cases. The grub loses its plump appearance, turns yellow, then brown, finally often quite dark brown. The remains are not ropy, but more like porridge; this applies also to the scale when it is moistened with water. There may be a slight amount of ropiness, however. In bad cases, many of the dead grubs may still be whitish, but the unnatural attitudes in which they lie show that they are diseased.

If sealed brood dies, the cappings may be perforated and the case may look much like American foul brood; but the dead unsealed brood shows which disease is present. The grubs in the sealed cells have not had time to spin their cocoons; so that no silken cap will be found if the cappings are dissolved in petrol.

Purpae are said never to die of European foul brood; but some may be found dead (from chilling) when the disease has greatly weakened the colony.

When, as sometimes happens, the bees remove all the dead unsealed brood, leaving only grubs in sealed cells, this disease may be very difficult to distinguish from American foul brood. The smell in such cases is generally very bad; but the only sure method of making certain which disease is present is by microscopical examination.

At the moist rotten stage, of the colour of cocoa made with milk, the dead brood may give off an appalling odour, fully justifying the name "Stinking foul brood" sometimes applied to this disease. In other cases the smell may be sour and not so unpleasant; and there are probably other variations.

European foul brood does not usually attack strong colonies which have plenty of good stores and are properly housed and looked after. It is a disease of weak stocks, of bad beekeeping, and of districts where there is an early spring shortage of pollen or nectar, so that the colonies have difficulty in building up. A strong stock will often throw it off unaided, if—which is unusual—it becomes affected at all; but the beekeeper should at least assist the bees.



*Keep all your stocks strong!* If European foul brood appears—it will usually be noticed in early summer—unite all weak colonies putting two and even three diseased ones together, and crowding the bees onto no more combs than they can cover closely. Remove at least the badly infected combs, and any containing dead sealed brood. Feed liberally; this in itself will sometimes cure a stock. It is best also to remove the queen, and so cause a pause in brood rearing, which gives the bees time to clear all dead brood out of the cells. American experts advise requeening with a young and prolific Italian queen. Italian bees are energetic house-cleaners; this is probably why they can generally throw off the disease.

The bees may also be encouraged to spring-clean their hives by placing in them naphthaline and other strong-smelling substances harmless to them. This is only a makeshift, however, and not a substitute for good beekeeping.

It is no use to treat a case of European foul brood by the methods sometimes recommended for American foul brood (other than prompt destruction). Why this is so is not known. In some way the bees are able to carry the germs of the disease with them after being parted from their combs, to a much greater extent than is the case when the

trouble is American foul brood. On the other hand, if a case of American foul brood is wrongly diagnosed as European foul brood and "treated," there will most likely be a bad outbreak of American foul brood throughout the apiary, and probably all over the neighbourhood.

In cases of doubt, therefore, either call in expert help, or destroy the colony. The two diseases have been known to occur together. In such case, destruction is the only possible course.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

## VALUE OF JOURNAL.

[To the Editor.]

Sir,—As the owner for a short time of only two colonies, I have hesitated to rush into print with reference to the intimation in the October issue that the "N.Z. Beekeeper" may cease publication, but, as there did not appear in the January issue much evidence of strenuous protest by the large commercial beekeepers, I thought it as well for one who is not heavily interested financially in the industry to express an opinion.

To me, the Journal has been a source of great interest and valuable information, even although I am a subscriber to other journals.

However, may I refer members to the following extracts—which should speak for themselves—from the issue of January, 1939, viz.:

- (a) "While membership (of the Association) offers security and progress . . . these cannot be achieved without an Official Organ."—Dominion President of the Association.
- (b) "A journal such as this should prove invaluable as a medium by which beekeepers can exchange and express their views on matters . . . of fundamental interest."—Director of Internal Marketing.
- (c) "In the dissemination of knowledge on the production and marketing of honey, the Journal will be of incalculable value to producers."—Wallace W. Nelson, Chairman, Honey Control Board.

The failure of beekeepers to recognise the value of a journal is amazing and would give one the impression that their bankruptcy of outlook (and apparently of pocket) is due to lack of appreciation in the past of the value of an efficient means of contact and exchange of opinion on matters of vital import to them.

Surely when even non-profit associations, such as tramping clubs, can run a journal, self-interest demands

that the beekeeping industry runs a monthly journal?

Has it ever occurred to members who may want to buy or sell equipment or even their apiaries that advertising in a journal exclusively devoted to the industry must quickly reach all beekeepers, whereas an ordinary newspaper can reach only a few?

As the imposition of petrol restrictions will render attendance at branch meetings difficult, if not impossible, the Journal will provide the most convenient means of keeping Beekeepers throughout the Dominion in touch with each other. In conclusion, I would mention that I do not know any of the officers of the General Executive.—Yours, etc.,

M. ADAMSON.

Lower Hutt, 20/2/40.

## DEATH TO THE DRONES.

## Hybrid Bees.

[To the Editor.]

Sir,—I noticed at the beginning of this month that a number of hybrid hives had already begun killing off their drones, while in the same apiary pure Italian hives were retaining theirs and, in fact, some Italians still had drones unemerged from the cells.

Have any of your other readers observed the same thing? I am now wondering if it can be that Italian bees keep their drones longer than black or hybrid bees. If so, it would be rather useful in a season such as this, when queen-rearing could not be gone on with early because of unsuitable weather with the result that those raised now stand a good chance of getting mated with good drones.—Yours, etc.,

CURIOUS.

New Plymouth, 20/3/40.

(We have noticed the same phenomenon this autumn and hope to profit by it if the weather up to about the middle of April remains fair enough to permit of queens flying sufficiently to get mated.—Editor.)

## QUEENS AND THEIR MATING.

### Some Interesting Facts.

[To the Editor.]

Sir,—I had an opportunity some two years ago of visiting a South Island queen breeder—probably the best-known man in the Dominion—Mr Robert Stewart. Mr. Stewart told me many interesting things about queens and their peculiarities, and as some of his answers to my questions do not coincide with what one is sometimes lead to believe, I thought it might be interesting to other beekeepers if I were to pass on some of the facts which Mr. Stewart has established as a result of a life-time among his bees.

My first question referred to the fact that text-books state that queens must be mated within three weeks or they are useless. The answer was that queens could be mated up to four weeks and even to five weeks from the date of emergence from the cell, if weather conditions prevent earlier mating, so long as the ovaries do not develop and the queens' body fill out to laying condition.

Do queens ever get mated more than once? Yes, but a second mating must take place within a few days of the first and before the queen has started to lay. In most cases it occurs second or third day after the first mating, if weather is suitable. I have never known a queen to be mated once she has started to lay.

Second matings take place because the queen has not received sufficient semen from the drone to enable her to fertilise many eggs before she must turn into a drone layer. The proof of this is that there are far more second matings if there is a large number of very old or very young drones flying, and few in their full vigour.

Is a queen mated early better than one mated towards the end of the period (three weeks) within she can be mated?

The answer to this also surprised me as I had heard the contrary from many commercial beekeepers. It was—No. No better. In fact, usually, they fail early, but not always.

Then I asked, Do young queens sometimes lay a patch of drone eggs

before getting into their stride and go on with normal worker brood? Yes, occasionally a small patch.

How long after being mated is it that a queen commences laying? Three to four days, if the bees feed her for laying. A queen will start always by the fourth day if the bees want brood, but, if mated late in the season, the bees not wanting brood will not feed her, in which case she will not lay until the following spring. On the other hand, if you start feeding a hive, the bees will soon start their queen laying by feeding her!

Do weather conditions have any bearing on the time which elapses between date of mating and date of commencing to lay? No. It is the desire of the bees for brood to rear that causes them to feed their queen and start her laying no matter what the weather may be.—Yours, etc.,

YOUNG COMMERCIAL  
BEEKEEPER.

Taranaki, 1/3/40.

## GRADING AND PRICE FIXATION.

### If Fruit, Why Not Honey?

[To the Editor.]

Sir,—Since the Government has acceded to the growers' request, and the marketing of fruit is now undertaken by the Marketing Division, it is significant that (according to to-day's press) before a single case has been sold, it has been announced by the Division that growers will be permitted to sell direct to consumers provided the fruit sold complies with the grading standards and the price charged does not undercut that at which the Marketing Division is selling.

Obviously, having undertaken to sell 2½ to 3 million cases of fruit (at the request of the growers who apparently realised they could not rely on their own methods to dispose of their crops at payable prices) the Government could not allow the growers to undercut the prices fixed by the Marketing Division.

Having undertaken a similar function at the request of honey producers, why does the Government permit a large number of beekeepers

to undersell the Marketing Division's Honey Section? The answer is simply because of the industry and the Marketing Minister have taken the advice of the Honey Control Board (the advisory committee to the Minister) which most positively was antagonistic to any suggestion of price fixation.

That advice has not been sound and it is necessary that the honey producers' national organisation take steps to correct the situation. Actually, by the acceptance of bad advice, the industry has been deprived of a considerable amount of revenue.

This remark might be taken as censuring the Honey Control Board. While it is my personal opinion that there is no need for a Honey Control Board as at present constituted, I am not doing this. I do fail to see why, if the Minister of Marketing wants advice on any topic pertaining to the industry, he should consider it necessary to apply for same anywhere than to the Beekeepers' Association. But, at the same time, I believe that the advice tendered by the Board was put forward in good faith at the time, and although time has proved it based on a false appreciation of the facts, the industry generally did not foresee the situation any more than did the Board or the Minister's other advisors.

I must point out, however, that some producers did, and at least three branches of the Association actually passed resolutions bearing on the matter. On the other hand, other advice tendered by the Board has been sound enough.

I think you have already argued the case for compulsory grading of all honey offered for sale (similar to the grading of fruit) and the fixing of honey prices (similar to fruit) in your editorial in the January Journal sufficiently to convince all of its necessity and practicability, and I congratulate you on your commonsense and able summarising of the position.

Since I have offered some criticism of the Honey Control Board and, as I dislike tendering criticism unless I can suggest an improvement in the scheme of things or a better alternative, I will say this:—

The Board Chairman receives £100 per annum and the two producer-members get £50 p.a. each. That is £200 per year. Add travelling expenses for members travelling to two or three meetings per year and you have, say, another £100. Other expenses, including secretarial salaries, stationery and other incidentals must account for £200 or £300 a year, which makes a total of £500 or £600 that the industry is carrying in the maintenance of a superimposed organisation over our own mutual National Beekeepers' Association. In my opinion, the return does not justify the outlay. But, suppose that sum were diverted to the Association (where it rightfully belongs) and what would be the result?

In the first place, we'd not be running cap in hand to the Ministers of Agriculture and Finance (or the Control Board Chairman) for a measly £100 subsidy on subscriptions to help pay a part-time secretary's salary and run a quarterly Journal. We could instead afford a full-time organising secretary and a monthly newspaper.

But, much more important, funds would be available to pay the expenses of the members of the General Executive so that they could meet and discuss our affairs—the affairs of our industry. Their proceedings could be reported in the Journal, or at least circulated to the Branches. How much of the Control Board's proceedings are reported anywhere? Certainly we have periodical statements from the Chairman of the Board, but he is appointed to his position, not elected.

Then, when the Minister of Marketing or any other Minister wanted advice, or an expression of the industry's views on any matter pertaining to the industry, application could be made to the proper place—the General Executive of the Association—the members of which are elected by their fellow beekeepers; and in a democratic country such as this, especially with a democratic Labour Government in power, such a system surely should appeal to all producers as well as the present Government.

One more point—as all the members of the Honey Control Board are

beekeepers, their brains and ability would not be lost to the industry or the Government. If they command the confidence of producers in sufficient degree, they will be elected to positions where their counsel still may be availed of. But the new arrangements would be much more democratic and of greater financial and practical advantage to the Association and therefore the industry.

I trust that you will take this up in your usual direct style and that publication of this letter will bring to light other views.—Yours, etc.,

DEMOCRAT.

Wellington, 5/2/40.

[We have made enquiries as to the actual cost to the industry of the Honey Control Board, as incorrect statements, if let go without qualification, can only be disruptive. The reply we have received includes the following statement of the position:—

“The following makes up the total cost to the Industry of the Board for 1939:—

	£	s.	d.
Payments to Journal	20	0	0
Election Expenses	8	2	2
General Expenses	6	5	0
Postages—Cables, etc.	13	11	0
Printing & Stationery	6	11	8
Honorariums	200	0	0
Travelling, Meetings etc.	126	10	5
	£381	0	3

It can be assumed that the Board's usefulness extends to the industry as a whole, and a fair estimate of its cost would be per lb. of the whole production; but take the cost against say 1,000 tons a year handled by the Internal Marketing Division, the cost would be .04d per lb.

Last year £100 was paid by the Board to the Association, but this does not come into the general cost.”  
—Editor.]

### WAIKATO HONEY SEASON.

Although prospects for the honey season in the Waikato district appeared promising in the early spring, crops on the whole are slightly below those of previous years on account of the heavy rain experienced during the spring and early summer. Recent rain has also made the removal of the combs from the hives difficult. Only in a few isolated instances have the crops been good.

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## ASSOCIATION MATTERS

### BENZINE RESTRICTIONS.

Consequent upon representations made to the Minister of Supply, the following statement of the position has been received:—

"Farmers in general have been classed as essential users and are entitled to petrol sufficient to enable them to carry on national production.

"Under the liberal interpretation of the term 'farmer,' beekeepers should be included in this class. In any case, private trucks are entitled to receive petrol on the same scale of licenses issued under the previous restrictions, less a flat cut of 33 1/3%.

"At the same time, Local Controllers have been instructed that it is very important that careful attention is to be paid to the possible effect of the reduction on national production, and sufficient petrol supplies are to be made available to ensure that production is maintained."

### FRAME WIRE.

There is a definite shortage of frame wire in the Dominion at the present time. The Minister of Customs gives the following explanation:—

"The suppliers of wire in England have been unable to obtain the necessary license to export the wire, but in view of the urgency of the matter, I am forwarding a cablegram to the High Commissioner in London asking him to obtain priority for the order which has been placed for the wire and to approach the Export Licensing Branch of the Board of Trade regarding an early issue of the Export License."

Unfortunately, this is not the whole story, as there are other difficulties at this end before licenses to import into New Zealand are made available, and then sterling has to be negotiated for through the Reserve Bank. All this entails delay and,

when it is considered that licenses to import are based on previous importations over a period when consumption was low, there is still a likelihood that the shortage will not be overtaken for some considerable time.

However, the General Executive is in close contact with the situation and will endeavour to ensure that beekeepers' reasonable requirements are not too much subordinated to other interests, which, of course, cannot be lightly dismissed at this time of stress.

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

Remits for the Annual Conference to hand at time of writing cover a variety of topics. Manawatu has proposals of a fairly wide-reaching nature involving amendments to the Constitution. Another remit calls for investigation into the necessity for the continued existence of The N.Z. Export Honey Control Board in view of the fact that no honey is exported except through the Internal Marketing Division.

North Taranaki has submitted a remit objecting to the action of a member of the Control Board and President of the South Taranaki Branch, writing to the Minister of Agriculture and subscribing himself as "President of the Taranaki Beekeepers' Association."

The Government is urged to make provision for the continuance of the system of Part-time Inspection, and many branches have submitted remits favouring importation of beeswax only through the Internal Marketing Division, profits accruing therefrom to be credited to the Honey Section account; resentment is expressed over the granting of licenses in the past in view of the lack of any evidence indicating any shortage. Eight remits have been received regarding the remission of duty on sugar used for bee-feed.

Support is sought for the classification of all honey offered for sale

(other than private sales at the apiary), and that the grade be endorsed on containers; that prices be fixed for each grade (group) and prices to retailers or wholesalers be arrived at by the allowance of discounts on fixed retail prices.

The prevailing difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies of cartons forms the subject of another remit which urges the lifting of importation restrictions failing the situation improving rapidly.

Destruction of disease on sight is supported by a number of remits.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS.

The Association's financial year ends at the end of next month. Members are reminded that, to ensure continuity of insurance cover, they must renew not later than June 1. Unfinancial members do not receive notices regarding non-payment of their subscriptions so that they may continue to receive the Journal—it simply is not sent to them unless duplicate copies of receipts for subscriptions paid are received by the General Secretary from the Branch Secretaries. Similarly, Journal subscriptions must be renewed when due or names are automatically deleted from the Journal mailing list.

### JOURNAL.

Numerous branches have submitted resolutions deploring the loss of the Government subsidy to the Association; thanking two unknown members for offering to finance the publication of an issue; recording their appreciation of the work of the General Secretary and Editor of the Journal; pointing out that the publication has proved invaluable in attracting new members and, by providing a means for the exchange of ideas, has brought about a much needed sense of unity throughout the industry; also that, in the opinion of members, the continued publication is a vital necessity in assisting them to support the Government's programme to stimulate primary production.

### VICIOUS BEES.

Beginners are sometimes very disappointed and discouraged, when they find their bees which were so quiet and docile in the spring and early summer suddenly become vicious and difficult to control. The reason for this is that just after the honey season there are large numbers of new bees and not sufficient nectar available to keep them occupied. They then fly around looking for any unprotected hives to rob or for any sweet substance. Failure to find this appears to upset their temper, and at such times the least sign of interference will cause them to sting.

After a week or two these bees die off, and the younger generation, which has not been disappointed in the stoppage of the honey flow, is not so disposed to sting. Experience has shown that it is often much easier to examine the hives during April to July than during February and March.

Inexperienced bee-keepers often mistake the early flights of young bees in front of the hives for robber bees. If a hive is being robbed by other bees it will be found that a number of bees will be fighting at the entrance while others will be flying around attempting to gain admission. When a robber bee is coming out of a hive with a load of stolen honey it climbs up the front of the hive to get a good "take-off" with its load. Empty bees belonging to the hive usually fly straight off from the alighting board.

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## BRANCH ACTIVITIES

### SOUTH AUCKLAND.

#### LONG SERVICE.

##### Secretaryship Relinquished.

After 21 years as secretary of the South Auckland Beekeepers' Association, Mr. A. H. Davies, of Hamilton, relinquished the position at the annual meeting. References to Mr. Davies' services to the association were made by the President, Mr. W. J. Trownson, and by several other members. Opportunity is to be taken in the near future to give tangible recognition to Mr. Davies' work.

The election of officers for 1940 resulted:—President, Mr. F. D. Holt; Vice-president, Mr. E. D. Williams; Secretary, Mr. A. E. Deadman; Committee, Messrs. A. H. Davies, W. J. Trownson, T. H. Pearson, V. Sage, and A. L. Pearson; Delegates to National Conference, Messrs. Holt and Deadman.

A long discussion took place on the benzine restrictions, and it was eventually decided that Conference be asked to set up a Committee to watch beekeepers' interests.

It was also decided to request that Conference go into the matter of rail freights, especially regarding having empty tins carried at return freight rates.

Messrs. A. H. Honeyfield, J. Renault and W. Nelson gave addresses covering the past year's working, many questions being asked and answered, and the meeting concluded with votes of thanks to the speakers and the Press.

### MANAWATU.

#### HEAVY LOSS.

##### Valuable Machinery Destroyed.

The second largest honey producer in Wellington province, Mr. A. Anderson, of Kowhai Road, Feilding, suffered a severe loss when his honey extracting machinery and packing

plant were destroyed by fire. The essential machinery, which deals with the produce from over 1000 hives, was housed in a substantial shed on the farm property of Mr. Anderson.

The outbreak was discovered at 2.15 a.m., when the whole building was enveloped in flames, which, drawing fuel from a vat containing approximately a ton and a-half of honey as well as a store of beeswax, created terrific heat, preventing all attempts to save anything. The reflection from the flames could be seen for many miles, and Mr. Anderson was powerless to do anything but stand by and watch the destruction of his valuable plant.

There was stored in the shed over a ton and a-half of honey ready for packing in cartons, which represented the first of the season's extractions, and practically the whole of it was required for immediate orders. Valued at 8d a pound, this amounted to a loss of over £100, while the extracting machinery, which had been imported, and all other sundries, brought the loss to several hundred pounds.

The insurance on the plant and building amounted to £450, which is claimed to be short of the replacement cost. The produce was not covered by insurance. As the season has been a good one, Mr. Anderson estimated that he had approximately 40 tons to extract from his hives, and he would be put to some difficulty to carry this out until new machinery could be procured.

##### Branch Convention.

The Manawatu Branch resolved at a recent meeting "That, while we recognise the value of the Convention, we do not think it advisable to hold one this autumn owing to the war and restrictions."

##### Instructors.

The Branch members feel concern that lectures to members by Apiary Instructors may be discontinued by the Department of Agriculture. It is felt that the lectures have been of



great benefit and should be allowed to continue. A remit is expected for consideration at the Conference and as the point concerns all branches it is certain to receive universal support.

## CENTRAL SOUTHERN HAWKE'S BAY.

### BEEKEEPERS' PICNIC.

At Anzac Park, Norsewood.

A very successful picnic was held on January 2nd, at Anzac Park, Norsewood, under the auspices of the Central - Southern Hawke's Bay Branch of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand. The weather conditions were rather boisterous, but the splendid shelter of the park enabled the crowd of picnickers to enjoy themselves in comfort. Members of neighbouring branches and their friends from as far as Napier and Hastings were present, and many complimentary remarks were passed by them on the surroundings of the park, with its beautiful native trees, shrubs, ferns, and streamlet running through it. An added attraction to the young folk was the swimming bath, which was in constant use throughout the day.

Mr. John Gillam, President of the Central - Southern Hawke's Bay Beekeepers' Branch, in an address, outlined the object of the picnic, which was to bring together members of the various branches throughout Hawke's Bay, as well as the local public, so that all could get better acquainted with one another. He introduced Mr. E. A. Field, President of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand, and also members of the Hawke's Bay branches represented, and extended to them a hearty welcome, which was carried by acclamation. Mr. Gillam expressed his pleasure and appreciation at seeing such a good number of the local public who, it was quite apparent, were thoroughly enjoying themselves.

Mr. Field then addressed the gathering, and took for his subject, "The efficient organisation of the Beekeepers' Association." The speaker touched on matters of vital interest,

especially the young beekeeper. He intimated that the Beekeepers' Annual Conference would be held this year in April, at Wellington. Delegates to the Conference would also be afforded an opportunity of visiting the Centennial Exhibition.

Messrs. J. M. Walker and H. Little, of the Hawke's Bay Branch, Hastings, also spoke on matters pertaining to the bee industry.

The secretary of the Southern Hawke's Bay Branch, Mr. A. F. Adrian, invited questions, and a number were asked and answered.

Owing to a heavy shower of rain a demonstration on a hive of bees—brought on to the ground for the purpose—had to be abandoned.

Before dispersing, Mr. Gillam thanked all for attending and making the picnic such a success. Special thanks were due to the secretary and his committee for the splendid arrangements made for the picnic, also to the ladies for providing the dainty refreshments. To the wives and friends of the members of the Hawke's Bay Hastings Branch, he, with all present, thanked them for their thoughtful action in bringing along and distributing a generous supply of delicious fruit.

By this time the afternoon was well spent and further showers made conditions underfoot too wet to continue what had proved a very enjoyable day.

## SOUTHLAND.

Invercargill may be a "dry" district, but with monotonous regularity the annual Field Day of the Southland Branch coincides with very wet conditions (not "Hokonui" brand!), that held on January 13 being the fourth successive Field Day marred by excessive rain.

There was a good attendance of beekeepers at the home apiary of Mr. R. Powell, Wallacetown. As it was not possible to manipulate hives, the morning was occupied inspecting the appliances and workshop, a caravan fitted up for out-yard extracting being a novelty to Southland beekeepers. After lunch, a discussion profitable to beginners and experi-

enced beekeepers took place, when many aspects of beekeeping were covered. Such opportunities for the exchange of ideas and knowledge are most valuable and are of course the case whenever beekeepers get together.

The latest information regarding marketing prospects was announced, indicating that a healthy position existed, and support for the Internal Marketing Division was urged so that valuable markets could be retained. Local sellers were given a scale of prices and were especially appealed to to adhere to those prices and not indulge in unnecessary price-cutting.

A remit was unanimously adopted expressing a keen sense of appreciation of the Journal and the day closed with votes of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Powell for their hospitality, and to the ladies who had helped dispense lunch and afternoon tea.

## WEST COAST.

### Unusual Postal Packet.

An unusual postal packet arrived at the Greymouth Post Office, addressed to Messrs. Baty Brothers, Jacksons. It contained about two dozen queen bees and had been forwarded by Nelson apiarists who make a speciality of breeding queens. The container comprised a number of small wooden cells, in each of which was a queen bee and several workers, for company. It was open at the top, a small hole at the top of each cell being covered by wire gauze. The queens are valued at 6/6 each and there had, apparently, been no losses in transit. There has been a revival of interest in beekeeping on the West Coast this year, and a successful field day held at Rotomanu is to be followed by another at Runanga, under the auspices of the Association. A good season was expected for honey in the district, one of the contributing features being the prolific blooming of the rata.

### Field Day at Rotomanu.

The West Coast beekeepers held a successful field day at the apiary of Mr. J. Ilton, Rotomanu, on January 13, 35 beekeepers and friends being present. At 11.30 a.m. Mr. E. Airey,

President, extended a cordial welcome to those present, and mentioned the fact that it had been a few years since a field day had been held; but now there again was interest being shown in the industry and the time had come for a forward move in the interests of the Association, and beekeepers were fortunate in having a man of the calibre of Mr. R. Paterson as their inspector - instructor, whom he had the pleasure in calling upon to take charge of operations for the day.

Mr. Paterson introduced his first subject in a talk to beginners and demonstrated how to open up a hive. He stressed the point of always making use of the veil and smoker, or at least of having these appliances handy, as many a good stinging had resulted, and many a beginner had been discouraged from carrying on owing to this. A further point he made was that, by subduing the bees, they did not interfere with any neighbours who might be living near. He explained the Italian bee, the hybrid, and the black bee.

The bees on Saturday were inclined to be rather troublesome, so a frame of brood and honey with the queen adhering were placed in an observation hive and carried into the large extracting house and the demonstration was carried on there. An instructive address was given on the various aspects of the brood, and the opportunity was taken of explaining and detecting the stages of foul brood. The instructor impressed upon his listeners the necessity of detecting and dealing with foul brood in its early stages, and of not allowing it to spread right through the apiary. Chilled brood and pickled brood were also explained. These were sometimes mistaken for foul brood. He explained how this came about. Questions were fully answered.

After lunch, Mr. Smithson gave a talk on Association matters, urging all beekeepers to join the branch, and so link up with the parent National Association.

The President followed with a talk on organisation and co-operation, which were so necessary these days. He suggested that in all probability the national conference would be held

in Greymouth next year, when the local branch would be called on to pave the way.

Mr. Paterson again took charge and supported the plea of Mr. Airey and Mr. Smithson for new members, pointing out that the Government recognised the Association and worked with them, rather than with the individual, so it was in the interest of the beekeepers to link up with associated members.

#### Marketing of Honey.

The instructor continued, dealing with the advantage of the Foxton mat over the old method of cutting up an ordinary sack into mats, which seldom was cut to the right size and shape. He stressed the importance of the marketing of honey, both for the Internal Marketing Board and local sales. Undercutting of prices on the local markets was to be regretted. It could be easily remedied. Even retailers themselves complained of beekeepers selling at various prices. This was fair to no one. It was in the interests of all for the beekeepers to get together and fix a price for their honey. The Internal Marketing Department was now prepared to take, in sixty-pound tins, liquid honey consigned to Auckland, when an immediate pay-out would be made. This was a great advancement on the old system. The honey, of course, would be sent forward in special containers.

Mr. Paterson gave full details of a special type of lid. An interesting demonstration was given and honey in containers exhibited for show purposes. He dealt at some length with the processing of honey for the local and other shows, and urged as many as could to exhibit at the West Coast Agricultural Show next month.

A move was again made into the apiary for the purpose of making up nucleus colonies, the instructor showing the various methods adopted and how the end was achieved; also why they should be made up in the autumn, both for increase and spring dwindling and losses sustained through the winter. He pointed out and demonstrated how it could be done without making any special material, using only the surplus material not in use. A demonstration which proved to be most interesting, especi-

ally to the ladies, was the taking of honey from the hives, uncapping these with a new honey plane (the first seen in operation on the West Coast), and extracting with an eight-frame extractor. In addition to this, and also new to West Coast beekeepers, was the latest method of straining the honey from the extractor into the honey tank. The men-folk were very interested in this, for it was far in advance of the various old methods in operation. This device Mr. Paterson had himself made and used prior to taking over his present position. It does the job as no other strainer has done on the West Coast, and will probably be readily adopted by all who see it in operation.

The beekeepers (both experienced and beginners), expressed great appreciation of the splendid day they had put in, the instruction they had received, and the untiring efforts of Mr. Paterson. An adjournment for afternoon tea was made. The President thanked Mr. Ilton for the use of his apiary and the work he had put in to make it a success. Mr. Ilton expressed his pleasure at being able to assist.

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### WEST OTAGO.

Our Field Day was held on January 17, at the apiary of Mr. A. G. Body. We had a good sunny day with a breeze in the afternoon, and between 30 and 40 beekeepers and friends turned up. There was a demonstration of extracting honey, and Mr. R. Stewart showed how to open a hive, while Mr. George Swanson (Gore Branch) talked and demonstrated on swarm control. Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor, illustrated the use of fine shavings in the smoker and a simple method of attaching small sticks to a smoker for handiness when looking for foul brood. It was a very successful day, a number of remits being passed for the annual conference; we had a little "speechifying" and gained one new member for the branch. Afternoon tea went well and votes of thanks were passed to our hosts and those who had contributed to the success of the outing.

## CLUTHA.

The annual Field Day was held on January 27, at the apiary of Mr. M. Morrison, North Balclutha. Unfortunately the weather was too boisterous to allow of the meeting being held outside with any comfort, and Mrs. Morrison placed a room cheered by a nicely glowing fire at the disposal of the meeting, which was conducive to many-sided discussions on the industry. Mr. H. N. Goodman, branch secretary, and Mr. Morrison welcomed the visitors, and Mr. Goodman spoke feelingly on the work entailed in running a branch and asked for more help and co-operation from members.

Mr. A. B. Callick, Dunedin, spoke on the advantages of keeping faith with the Marketing Division, and urged the sending in of as much honey as possible. Mr. J. Drummond's subject was Apiary Sites and Management, while Mr. A. Ogilvy spoke on Queen Rearing and the Management of Out Apiaries. Mr. Morrison then had something to say about the Carniolian Bee, of which he is a

strong supporter. Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor, endorsed Mr. Goodman's remarks and urged all present who were not members to join up now, and he also made a strong plea for members to send in every possible ounce of honey they had to the Internal Marketing Division. He then touched on many other items of general interest.

A motion was passed expressing regret at the discontinuation of the subsidy towards the cost of running the Journal and asking that it be reinstated. A remit was also passed pledging the members of the Branch to look after the bees of any member joining with the Defence forces.

It was pleasing to see visitors from West Plains and Myross Bush, Southland, and several from Dunedin and Milton. A dainty afternoon tea was served and votes of thanks were accorded to Mr. and Mrs. Morrison and all who had contributed to the success of the meeting.

Members will regret that Mr. Goodman, the Branch Secretary, has been laid up lately, but he is now making a recovery.



Clutha Branch Field Day at North Balclutha, January 27, 1940.

At the extreme right, Mr. G. Hendry, who photographed the group, including himself. Clasp the cat to his bosom is Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor. Second from left, seated, Mr. A. W. Ogilvy, Branch President. Mr. M. Morrison stands at the left with his tie waving in the breeze, while the striped tie on the figure fifth from left, same row, disguises Mr. H. N. Goodman, Branch Secretary. The grey hat, third from left at back, adorns Mr. A. B. Callick, Dunedin, while fourth from left in the back row is Mr. A. A. Lennie, West Plains, far famed as a brewer of honey beer possessing a sleep-inducing kick.

## GORE.

The annual Field Day was held on January 20, at the apiary of Mr. Geo. Watt, Riversdale. The day was ideal and about 30 beekeepers attended. Demonstrations on swarm control and queen rearing proved of much interest. Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor, was present and gave an interesting talk on various matters pertaining to our industry. Several new members were enrolled and they expressed themselves as being very interested in the activities of the branch. Hearty votes of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Watt for their hospitality concluded the day.

## NORTH OTAGO.

The Field Day was held on February 10, at the apiary of Mr. H. S. Wilson, All Day Bay. The weather was not favourable for the outing, but failed to dampen the enthusiasm of those taking part, there being a very fair attendance of members and friends. Mr. C. Slater, Branch President, extended a welcome to the

visitors, and Mr. D. S. Robinson gave an address on matters relative to the industry. During the afternoon, a question box was introduced, and this novelty led to much discussion, Mr. Robinson having a busy time answering the questions.

A special resolution in support of the Journal was passed, and then afternoon tea was dispensed by the ladies. A successful day was concluded by the passing of hearty votes of thanks proposed by Mr. H. H. Dunn, to those who had made the day such a happy one.

## MILTON.

There was a good attendance at the Field Day held on February 17. Talks were given by Mr. A. B. Callick, on Marketing; Mr. D. S. Robinson, on General Topics; Mr. H. N. Goodman (Clutha Branch), on Out Apiaries; and Mr. J. Campbell, on Introducing Queens. There was interested discussion on a number of matters and resolutions were adopted for remission to the forthcoming annual conference.

## BEESWAX.

### CHARACTER AND COMPOSITION.

Just as oil is secreted in the human ear and solidifies into wax on exposure to the air, so beeswax is secreted by special wax-glands on the under side of the abdomen of the worker bee for the purpose of forming the cells in which the honey is deposited. In the process of wax secretion, the bee consumes honey; it has been estimated that about 15 to 20 lb. of honey are consumed in the production of 1 lb. of wax.

The chief chemical constituents of beeswax are cerotic acid and myrican (myricyl palmitate). The colour of beeswax varies with the race of bee, the food of the bee and the care taken in the preparation of the wax for market. The colours of waxes of European origin include green, red, brown and darker colours. The colour of British wax varies from primrose-yellow to dark brown. The lighter

the colour of wax, the greater its commercial value.

Beeswax is much more adhesive than paraffin wax. At low temperatures it is brittle and shows a fine granular fracture. In the refined state, the yellow wax has a pleasant aroma of honey and is almost tasteless.

### SUPPLIES.

Wax is only a by-product of the beekeeping industry. The two sources of wax are cappings and old combs. It is estimated that about 1 lb. of capping wax is produced for every 100 lb. of honey. It is extremely difficult to estimate the amount of wax recovered from old combs; in the majority of instances this wax is wasted, and probably only large-scale beekeepers make any attempt to render down their old combs. No official records are available of the production of beeswax in Britain or of the quan-

tities which enter into trade. Manufacturers of comb-foundation in the United Kingdom estimate that not more than 5 per cent. of their supplies of raw material are home-produced.

In the years 1924-29, an average of about 28,000 cwt. of beeswax was imported into the United Kingdom, largely from African sources.

### USES.

Apart from the manufacture of comb-foundation for beekeeping purposes, beeswax is used in the unrefined state for the manufacture of floor and boot polishes, varnishes, insulating plates, etc., and in the refined state for cosmetics, ointments, encaustic paints and special inks. Pure beeswax is also used for modelling flowers and fruit and in the construction of anatomical models.

The manufacture of beeswax candles for use in churches provides a substantial outlet for the refined article. Since 1907, makers of beeswax candles have been obliged by the ecclesiastical authorities to guarantee the percentage of beeswax in the candles. The percentage of beeswax has to be stamped on the butt end of the candle. The usual grades sold are guaranteed to contain respectively 95, 75, 65, 55 and 25 per cent. of genuine beeswax.

### REFINING.

The process of refining beeswax consists of two main operations—purification and bleaching.

The crude wax is purified by melting in pitch-pine vats over boiling water. The addition of a small quantity of sulphuric acid to the contents of the vat reduces considerably the amount of emulsion formed between the aqueous and wax layers, and hastens the process. After prolonged boiling and stirring, the wax is allowed to rise to the surface and is then skimmed off.

For the manufacture of candles, the wax is then put through a bleaching process with the aid of air and sunlight or chemicals, or both. In the air-bleaching process, the wax is cut up into ribbons and mixed with a trace of turpentine or tallow. This

accelerates the bleaching and at the same time renders the wax less friable. The method of bleaching by air and sunlight has been used for generations; although it produces the highest quality of wax, it is extremely slow. The rate of bleaching depends on the area of wax exposed to the air and on the intensity of light on the wax.

Animal charcoal and Fuller's earth are sometimes added to accelerate the decolourising, but the principal chemicals used are hydrogen peroxide, ozone and potassium bichromate.

Beeswax varies considerably in the ease with which it may be bleached, and in hardness when refined. The refiner of waxes has to select and blend different kinds of beeswax in order to attain the desired colour and hardness.

### ADULTERATION.

Beeswax may be adulterated by the addition of water, mineral matter (ochre, gypsum, etc.), flour starch, tallow, Japan wax, stearic acid, paraffin wax and other waxes.

### DISPOSAL BY PRODUCERS.

The systematic collection and extraction of beeswax is in general only carried out by beekeepers with a large number of colonies. Cappings and old combs are rendered down by heat in wax extractors, and the wax is sold either to local furniture-polish manufacturers, cabinet makers, or leather workers, or to manufacturers of beekeeping supplies for the preparation of fresh comb-foundation.

(From British Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries "Report on the Marketing of Honey and Beeswax in England and Wales."—1931.)

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### WANTED TO BUY.

**A**PIARY and Equipment as a going concern. 400-500 Colonies. Particulars to—

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## INTERNAL MARKETING DIVISION (HONEY SECTION)

### "TOO LOW."

#### 1939 HONEY EXPORT.

##### Supplying London Market.

"For the 1939 season shipments of honey to the United Kingdom amounted to 180 tons, which is far too low and exposes the industry to the possibility of running short of supplies in London," said Mr. A. H. Honeyfield, Assistant-director of the Internal Marketing Department, at the annual meeting of the South Auckland Beekeepers' Association held in Hamilton.

"This is a procedure which must be avoided at all costs. In future, thought must be given to ensure heavier supplies for export purposes, as the policy of being in-and-out of the London market is unwise and prevents a permanent trade being developed.

"In January, 1940, our stocks in London were very low. Fortunately, this season, with the co-operation of producers, we have been able to ship 1000 cases of honey earlier than usual, and we will endeavour to make regular shipments for the balance of the season provided we receive producers' support and the shipping space is available."

#### CLOSING DATE FOR THE RECEIPT OF HONEY

Producers are reminded that the closing date for receiving honey is June 30th. Honey advised before that date which cannot be delivered by that date, must be delivered by July 30th.

#### SAMPLES FOR GRADING

While the Honey Section is out to help producers all it can, it does not undertake to grade samples. This takes up too much of the grader's time and if undertaken would seriously interfere with the grading and prompt payment of advances.

The grader, however, will advise producers whether or not any particular sample will come within the grade standards. If producers are in doubt as to whether or not a particular honey will be accepted first send in a sample, before consigning.

#### ADVICE NOTES

It is essential for producers to send TWO advice notes to the office when consigning honey. No payments are made until advice notes are received.

#### EXTRACTION MARKS

In some cases confusion arises through successive lines of honey which are not the same quality being sent in with the same extraction mark or with no mark. The same mark on two consignments or no mark on two consignments should only be used if both consignments are part of the same line.

#### TINS AND CASES

Tins and cases should be standard and in such condition that the packages can be exported as they are, if required. If packages are below the standard the cost of new packages, repacking and branding will necessarily be charged. Those to whom this applies will appreciate that uniformity in the treatment of suppliers requires this to be done.

#### ADVICE OF HONEY TO BE SUPPLIED

It is of urgent importance at this stage that ALL PRODUCERS intending to send in honey this season advise the office of the amount they will be supplying from the date of their advice. We can't sell advantageously what we don't know we have to sell.

#### THE REASON WHY

Our circulars and these notes in the Journal are not sent out as a

matter of form but are with a view to getting a smoothly working system which will save costs and increase payments.

If the instructions in Circular No. 6 are put into practise as a matter of routine, it will save much paper, ink and stamps in correspondence

and wages in labour while leaving more time for the real job.

### GIFT PARCELS N.Z. HONEY

Owing to difficulties in deliveries under present conditions, our Gift Parcel Service is being suspended for the duration of the war.

## HONEY COOKERY.

[Contributed by Mrs. W. T. Herron.]

Mrs. Herron has sent us some more recipes which she has tested out herself. Having sampled Mrs. Herron's cookery, we can recommend them also!

### CREAM BISCUITS.

1 teacup extracted honey, 1 pint sour cream, small teaspoon baking soda, a little of any flavouring essence, flour to mix to dough.

Cream honey and cream; add essence and then flour. Roll out and cut to any shape.

These may be iced and decorated in any way or put together with jam as Belgian biscuits. This recipe makes a large quantity but, as they improve with keeping, I do not find it too much.

[From "The Use of Honey in Cooking," published by A. I. Root Company, Medina, Ohio, U.S.A.]

### FILLING FOR BISCUITS OR CHILDREN'S SANDWICHES.

(Original.)

Equal parts granulated honey and hard butter. Beat with fork until well mixed but not soft. Add chopped raisins or nuts and spread on top or between as desired.

If for immediate use, soft fresh fruits or berries make a delicious change for a sponge cake.

### RAISIN CAKE.

3 eggs, 1 teacup extracted honey, 4 tablespoons melted butter, 1 cup sweet milk, 1½ cups raisins chopped, 3 cups flour, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon soda, 2 teaspoons baking powder, 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.

Cream together butter, honey and eggs. Sift dry ingredients and add alternately with milk. Lastly, add

fruit. Bake in moderate oven 1½ hours.

This is not a rich cake and, as it very definitely improves with keeping, I suggest that it be put away for several weeks.

[From "The Use of Honey in Cooking.]"

### HONEY DATE NUT BREAD.

1 cup dates, 1 cup boiling water, 2 tablespoons butter, 1 cup honey, 1 egg, 2½ cups flour, 1 cup nuts, ¼ teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons baking powder.

Stone and cut dates. Cook in water till soft. Mix until thick. Cool. Cream honey and butter; add beaten egg, date mixture and nuts. Sift dry ingredients and add. Bake in moderate oven 1 hour 20 minutes.

This is a good lunch bread and improves with age.

[From "American Bee Journal,"—May, 1937.]

### SCOTCH DATE SQUARES.

1 cup flour, 1 cup oatmeal or creamota, 1/3 cup honey, 1/3 cup butter, 1 teaspoon soda, ¼ teaspoon each of cinnamon and cloves, ½ teaspoon salt.

Sift flour, soda, salt and spices; rub in butter, stir in honey, knead well. Roll out on paper; spread half dough with date mixture and cover with rest of dough; press edges together. Mark in squares and bake in moderate oven. Cut while still warm.

Filling.—1 cup stoned dates, cut small; ¼ cup water. Cook together until soft; remove from heat and add 3 tablespoons honey. Mix well and cool.

[From "American Bee Journal,"—December, 1936.]



## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HORTICULTURE DIVISION

### HONEY CROP PROSPECTS

The Director of the Horticultural Division has received from the Apiary Instructors reports concerning the honey crop prospects at the end of February, 1940:—

#### AUCKLAND & NORTH AUCKLAND.

The position regarding honey production in Auckland and North Auckland has not altered to any appreciable extent during February, because the weather has been variable and many unfavourable days have been experienced.

Hive stores have been heavily consumed for this time of the year, and this has caused a slight shrinkage in the estimates of individual apiary crops which, in the aggregate, will give an average seasonal return of approximately 3½ tons per 100 colonies.

L. Reisterer.

#### FRANKLIN & MANAKAU COUNTIES.

Except for an occasional fine day, the weather has continued unfavourable for the production of honey and queen rearing since my last report.

The position remains the same as when my last report was made. Good payable crops of honey have been secured. The returns would have been a record had the weather continued fine after the middle of January.

T. S. Winter.

#### WAIKATO.

**Weather.** Unsettled weather continued throughout the month, with exceptionally heavy rain in parts of the district. Temperatures have remained high, but there has been little bright sunshine.

**Condition of Bees.** Bees generally are in good condition, and this should continue provided the weather improves sufficiently to permit seasonal operations to be carried out.

**Honey Crop.** It is extremely difficult to estimate the extent of the crop, owing to the variation of conditions within the space of a few miles. Practically no honey has been stored during the month, and as brood is still abundant part of the surplus honey has been used, so in cases where extracting has already been completed the food supply will call for close attention before wintering.

W. J. Fix.

#### HAWKES BAY, POVERTY BAY & WAIRARAPA.

From reports to hand Hawkes Bay is likely to have a record crop. Good crops are reported from Poverty Bay, while in the Wairarapa district an average crop is expected.

G. V. Westbrooke.

#### PALMERSTON NORTH.

Continuously adverse weather conditions were prevalent in this district throughout February, with occasional very brief fine periods. Heavy rain, cold temperatures and winds reaching gale force at times were features of the month. These circumstances account for a considerable reduction in the estimated crop. An average of 80 lb. per colony may be reasonably expected in this district.

H. F. Dodson.

#### WEST COAST, NELSON & MARLBOROUGH.

**West Coast.** All chances of even average crops being secured here have been dispelled by the continual wet conditions experienced during February. An unusual feature has been the cool temperatures ruling at night. Beekeepers with well forward colonies were able to secure a small surplus during the fine weather about Xmas time.

**Nelson.** Weather conditions have adversely affected crops in this dis-

district, and from reports to hand crops will be below average.

**Marlborough.** Prospects for good crops being secured in this district were very promising, but high winds followed by cold nights have been responsible for reversing the position.

C. R. Paterson.

### CHRISTCHURCH.

**Weather Conditions.** Light rainfall during the month, 1 inch being recorded; but the Plains are still showing the effects of the prolonged dry weather and heavy north-westerly winds.

**Condition of Bees.** There is little change in the general condition of the bees. They should go into winter quarters in fair condition, and earlier than usual.

**Crop Prospects.** The total crop for the Province will be in the vicinity of one-third of last season's output.

Early frosts have already been recorded, and any further surplus from the clover is unlikely. The bees are still working catsear and thistle. The manuka has yielded heavily in districts where the bees have not previously stored surpluses from this source.

R. S. Walsh.

### OTAGO & SOUTHLAND.

The position of the honey crop has changed considerably since my last report. Throughout February wet and boisterous weather has been experienced, bees have had practically no opportunity to fly, and a large portion of the honey on the hives has been consumed by the bees. The general prospects are now for a light crop throughout Otago and Southland.

Final extractions have not yet been made so that definite figures are as yet unobtainable.

## "THE N.Z. BEEKEEPER"

This Journal is issued free to all members of the National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z. Future numbers will not be forwarded to members who are in arrears with their subscriptions to the Association.

Subscription rates for the Journal are 2/- per annum, 6d. per copy, post free. Please notify any irregularity in receipt of the Journal to the Editor.

Literary contributions and advertisements must be in the hands of the General Secretary, National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z., Pungarehu, Taranaki, N.Z., not later than the first of month of publication.

Nom-de-plume letters must be signed by the writer and address given, not necessarily for publication, but as proof of good faith. Letters accepted for publication do not necessarily express the views of the Editor.

### ADVERTISEMENT RATES.

Trade Announcements, 5/- per inch per insertion; £5 per page; £2/15/- per half-page; £1/10/- per quarter-page per issue.

"Wanted," 2d. per word per insertion.

### FOR SALE

ONE SIX FRAME A. I. ROOT'S REV. EXTRACTOR, complete with Power Gear .... £15  
 ALL STEEL WAX PRESS (large size) .... £2/10/-  
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### WANTED TO BUY

WANTED—100/150 HIVES, in one or more apiaries, in good clover district, with Honeyhouse in running order and living quarters.

"APIS."

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# Open Letter to Beekeepers

Dear Sir(s),—

*You are aware that it has been our practice for many years past to issue an annual Price List, but in view of the present state of emergency we have decided that no useful purpose would be served by issuing a Price List for the 1940-41 season.*

*As a result of import restrictions and war conditions there is a good deal of uncertainty as to supplies and prices of raw materials and finished goods. Consequently any prices quoted in a printed list may, in a number of instances, have little relation to prices current at date of delivery.*

*We feel the only use of a Price List, under present conditions, would be to remind our clients of our continued existence. Our goodwill is such that we consider it unnecessary to issue a list for this purpose only, and you may rest assured that our price list will again be issued as soon as we feel the time has come when firm prices can be quoted and when a printed list can be a useful guide to you in placing orders.*

*In the meantime we will endeavour to keep prices as low as possible in accordance with changing costs, and, at the same time we will do our utmost to give you as adequate service as possible under present difficult trading conditions.*

*As costs and selling prices become known these will be communicated to our Provincial Agents, to whom clients in the various territories should apply for quotations.*

*Yours faithfully,*

## **The Alliance Bee-Supplies**

Company, Limited

MASON STREET, DUNEDIN

Postal Address:  
P.O. Box 572,  
DUNEDIN.

Telegraphic Address:  
"Beeware,"  
DUNEDIN.

## N.Z. HONEY CONTROL BOARD

Reports from the principal honey districts indicate that owing to unfavourable weather conditions the honey crop will not be as great as was anticipated earlier in the season.

No shortage of honey appears to be in sight to meet local demands but the question of finding adequate supplies to meet the requirements of our export business should be a matter of no small concern to beekeepers. The Internal Marketing Division is anxious to obtain maximum supplies in order that full advantage may be taken of the opportunity now offering to improve our position on the export market, and thus prepare the way for marketing a very much larger crop than is available at the present time.

The question of placing the Marketing Division in a position of greater security in regard to supply and distribution is a matter that will no doubt be considered at the Annual Conference of the National Beekeepers' Association. It appears to be fairly generally recognized that the half-penny per pound seal levy has

not served as a price-stabilizing factor in the principal centres, and it is obvious that, in a season of plenty, unrestricted selling against the central organization will again be in evidence and this can only bring about a repetition of the same unfortunate results we have all too frequently experienced in the past.

The Board has in mind certain proposals that might meet the position and these may be discussed at the Annual Conference or with the General Executive of the Association this month.

### BEESWAX.

It is extremely desirable that beekeepers should advise the Marketing Division concerning their stocks of beeswax. The Board is strongly opposed to the importation of beeswax unless it can be proved that inadequate stocks are available to meet local trade demands. It is also desirable that beekeepers should reach a decision at Conference concerning the price that should be charged for wax.

WALLACE NELSON,

Chairman,

N.Z. Honey Control Board.