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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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EDITORIAL.

MARKING TIME.

After three seasons of Regulations, producers will be taking stock. How far has supply under Commandeer been successful or satisfactory? For two seasons, although the commandeer was 70%, an amount only equal to about 50% was delivered. The only reasonable explanation offered is that many producers refused to send all or any of the required amount. The loyal people who supplied according to the Regulations have the satisfaction of a clear conscience. Those who have failed to supply also seem to have an equally clear conscience! The excuses offered vary from matters of principle to plain love of money. A feeling is crystallising among the loyal suppliers that they have been let down. The absence of adequate prosecution and penalties confirms this view.

A modification of the commandeer this year to 30lbs. per hive, or approximately 40% on the average commercial holding, offered the hope of a reasonable solution, both from the viewpoint of the Honey Section and also of the producer. Unfortunately, a poor season over most of the North Island and particularly in the Dominion's highest producing area, has upset calculations. Not only will the Honey Section not get the required amount but producers face a poor income, even if they sell all of their small crop at the highest price. In assessing the position, we would be wise to regard conclusions drawn from the operation of the Regulations this year as exceptional. Attention is, however, drawn to the fact that producers are getting a return, over a period of years, that is too low.

Briefly and broadly, producers have delivered the goods in good faith, preferring to argue later. The main weakness has been the failure to have the bulk price adjusted before this. In 1942, Conference agreed to a 50% commandeer. The Government arbitrarily raised it to 70% within a few months. In 1943, Conference again agreed to 70% subject to a "sympathetic consideration" of an increase in the bulk price as promised by the then Minister of Marketing. A General Election the same year delayed the presentation of the case till February, 1944, when the Executive pressed for an increase of the bulk price by 1.67d. per lb. "Unsympathetic" consideration led the Executive to abandon this line of approach and to press for a reduction of the commandeer, as a means of gaining some relief. In February, 1945, the Executive, in conjunction with the Control Board, decided to urge the payment of an additional bonus of one half-penny per lb. as part satisfaction of the claims of the producer.

The Executive has patiently—probably too patiently as we see it now—endeavoured to gain an increased price. The Control board is redeeming its apparent past inactivity in the matter of price by actively pressing for this half-penny bonus now. The Government has excelled itself—as most Governments seem to do—by following a policy of masterly inactivity in the same matter. It seems to have been more concerned in gaining control of honey—for good reasons—than in the return the producer gets. It is easy to criticise now, and to see everybody's failing, but it is not in that spirit we write. We are not anxious to apportion blame but to find a remedy. We want to see better co-operation in the immediate future. It is time that all concerned tried to show

how an increase can be made rather than how or why it cannot.

In the post-war period, we see no reason why the objective should not be 9d. per lb. for bulk. This final penny increase would mean an additional income to the producer with the average commercial holding of £100 per year. Every producer needs this for better equipment, a better truck, better plant, or amenities in his home.

We need a more imaginative view of our marketing and productive possibilities. We need an aim to strive for, even if we do not attain it immediately. The past decade has been one of consolidation and credit is due to those who have endeavoured to guide us wisely. We require now to think in terms of better beekeeping, higher production, more advertising, greater consumption; of export markets and of a plan to assist U.N.N.R.A., without neglecting the important fact that the labourer is worthy of his hire.

CONFERENCE.

It is pleasing to know that it is planned to have Conference this year in the South Island, at Christchurch. Canterbury can be counted on to make the function a success. It is hoped to meet in the historic Provincial Council Chambers, probably about the middle of July. Arrangements are being finalised and secretaries will be notified as soon as details are arranged.

Matters that will command most attention are likely to be the proposed Marketing Council, Amendments to the Constitution regarding voting, and payments and Marketing Regulations.

Canterbury was made as a result of the policies hammered out in the old Chambers. Let us hope that the inspiration of meeting in such historic surroundings will inspire our debaters to flights of eloquence and words of wisdom.

HIVE MATS.

We cannot secure mats of the material previously used because it is used for patching woolpacks and sacks. The Woolpack Company is prepared to weave a special 20in. cloth for hive mats if the demand is sufficient. It will be a heavier cloth that should last longer, with selvage edges at the back and front where the mat fits on the hive.

FRAME WIRE.

The importers who handle bookbinding wire have offered branch secretaries supplies of 28 guage wire for frames. This wire is lighter than usually used and in coils of inconvenient size. We understand that there are now ample stocks of the standard 26 guage wire in small spools in the hands of distributors.

JULY ISSUE OF JOURNAL.

If Conference is held at the time anticipated, it will be necessary to delay the July issue about two weeks, in order that a report of proceedings may be published.

SUBSCRIBERS.

In making remittances, please send subscriptions direct to the General Secretary instead of to the Editor.

ASSOCIATION AFFAIRS

We are pleased to welcome a new branch to the family. The Far North has some keen beekeepers who have banded themselves together as an integral part of the National. We presume they live in the "Winterless North" where bees gather honey all the year round! We will hope to hear more of their doings.

Some outstanding results were reported to the Executive at its February meeting. First of all we go to the "Far South." Southland, at that date, had 97% of its subscriptions renewed, and several new members signed up; Otago came second. That good Scottish instinct of paying one's dues in good time!

Hawke's Bay, Gore and West Coast were all about 90% paid up, as well as having new members signed up.

Wellington has now reached the fine total of 200 members—almost as many members as hives.

Total membership again shows an increase of another 100 for the year.

EDITOR.

FAR NORTH.

The first "regular" meeting of the Far North Branch was held at the home of the president, Mr. W. I. Haines, Kaitaia, on Monday, March 5th, 1945. There were ten members present. Four apologies for absence were received. A letter was received from the General Secretary offering his congratulations on the formation of a Branch in the Far North.

The first part of the meeting was occupied in studying the Constitution. It was felt that although only a pamphlet, the Constitution is "multum in parvum." The insurance scheme, too, was carefully considered.

A talk by the president covered such matters as robbing, transferring and transporting, the incidence of disease, and winter feeding. Questions were asked, and members gained much valuable information, as well as inspiration from the "fellowship of kindred minds."

J. GRAHAM.

WELLINGTON.

FIELD DAY.

Seventy members and friends met at the home of Mr. O. Harrison, Normandale Road, Lower Hutt. The Chairman, Mr. Bodwin, was up to his best form and gave interesting and instructive demonstrations on the many facets of beekeeping. The observation hive of the Branch was up, and this was a source of considerable interest, especially to the womenfolk. There is no doubt that many keepers went home with good intentions and with knowledge which will definitely make them better beekeepers. Regret was expressed that these demonstrations could not be held more frequently. One member produced a very fine sample of wine made from honey, which was relished by those fortunate enough to have a taste. The recipe was much sought after! An excellent committee looked after the well-being of the refreshment portion of the day's outing, and all departed well satisfied with things. A word of praise is due to Mr. Harrison for his hospitality.

PRESENTATION.

The March meeting of the Wellington Branch will be a memorable one. Members gathered in force to pay homage to their worthy Chairman and his worthy wife—Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Bodmin. Mr. R. Gadd, a Vice-Chairman, conducted the meeting in approved styles, and after routine business had been disposed of, the guests of the evening were let into the secret of the meeting. Rcently a new and potential beekeeper had been brought by the stork to the Bodmin home. This being the first male of the line, members could not let the occasion pass without showing something of the esteem in which the parents were held. Mr. Gadd, in the course of his remarks, said he was afraid our worthy Chairman may be setting a precedent which aspiring Chairmen may not be able to live up to. He spoke of the untiring work the Chairman had put into the Association and his every readiness at any time of the day or night to give advice or instruction to any member, or non-member as well, in need of assistance. During his five years of office, the Branch had continued to grow in strength, and much of the improvement in methods of beekeeping in the district was due to his knowledge of the art and his method of imparting it. Mrs. Bodmin had had to bear the brunt of answering the telephone and to her members owed a debt of gratitude. In asking Mr. Bodmin to accept a number of National Savings Bonds as a nucleus for the prospective new member, he wished Mr. and Mrs. Bodmin and junior good health, happiness and prosperity. Messrs. Carter, Ayson and Armstrong spoke in sincere terms of their and the members' regard. The guests were accorded musical honours. In replying. Mr. Bodmin stated that his association with the Branch had ever been a happy one. It gave him much satisfaction to know that he had been of some help. Although a busy man he was never too busy to give advice to those in need of it, and he exhorted members to continue to consult him. He thanked members for their valuable expression of appreciation, which he doubted he deserved. Mrs. Bod-

min and himself would always remember this evening.

W. P. CARTER.

GORE.

FIELD DAY.

The weather was ideal for the field day held by the Gore Branch of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand at Mr. W. T. Herron's apiary, Greenvale, Waikaka, on Saturday, 27/1/45, and there was a record attendance of both commercial honey producers and domestic beekeepers, together with their wives and a large number of others interested in the manipulation of bees. Great interest was taken in the extraction of honey, which was proceeding during the afternoon, and demonstrated by Mr. Herron's staff. All methods are adopted with the object of maximum efficiency and convenience, and many labour-saving devices were to be seen. Mr. Herron uses a 50-frame radial extractor. The honey from this is drained into a vat, as is also the honey from the uncapping vat and frame rest. From there it is pumped to the warming tank and then taken by gravity to any one of a row of half-ton tanks.

Mr. Herron, in his opening remarks, welcomed the visitors, who came from all parts of Southland, and hoped they would have an instructive and enjoyable time. It was an especial pleasure to welcome Mr. R. Stewart, notable queen breeder, of Heriot. Mr. Stewart, he said, was always willing to give of his knowledge and experience and his hearers would undoubtedly, that afternoon, learn much from his remarks. The first demonstration was given by Mr. Stewart, who opened a hive and spoke on the breeding of the queen controlling it. Questions were forthcoming freely, and as freely disposed of.

Mr. Geo. Swanson then addressed the gathering on the matter of wintering hives and spring management. The various stages were demonstrated at the hive and questions answered.

At this stage Mr. Herron introduced the apiary instructor for Southland, Mr. Forster, who has been recently appointed to the position vice Mr. Box. Mr. Forster lectured on the detection and treatment of foul brood. Various methods were touched upon, and although none was considered to be fully effective other than burning of bees and hives, Mr. Forster demonstrated what was considered to be the most practical. He advised beekeepers in any instances where bees wer apparently unhealthy, to refer the cases to the Department of Agriculture for investigation. Mr. Box then gave a talk on pollen substitutes and how they might be fed to the bees. Questions on this subject were freely answered, and some useful information brought out on this important food for bees.

Mr. L. Griffen, secretary for the Southland Branch of the N.B.A., spoke on hive management in respect of the drawing of foundation, and the best methods of placing it on the hives for the building of combs. The final demonstration was given by Mr. Herron, and it concerned the final taking of supers in the autumn and the dealing with surplus bees.

Afternoon tea was then taken, after which Mr. Swanson thanked the ladies on behalf of the assemblage for their generous provision of refreshments, and then proposed a vote of thanks to those who had given the talks and demonstrations. A vote of thanks, proposed by Mr. A. Burns, was accorded Mr. and Mrs. Herron for the use of their premises for holding the function, and on behalf of the other Branches, Mr. Griffen thanked the Gore Branch for the invitations to be present.

SOUTHLAND.

Has any beekeeper discovered an adhesive substance that will make the seals stick to tins?

FIELD DAY.

A highly successful field day was held on Saturday, 24th February, at the home apiary of Mr. W. J. Watson, Winton, when over 50 beekeepers and their friends attended. It was pleasing to see so many of the younger apiarists present, particularly as they responded to the request for questions to be asked at all times during demonstrations and talks. The programme was as comprehensive as possible, and all felt the day had been well worth while and the time all too short. Five new members were enrolled.

L. K. GRIFFIN.

HAWKE'S BAY.

Many important problems connected with the honey industry were discussed when the Hawke's Bay Branch held a general meeting in the Chamber of Commerce room, Hastings, on October 17th. Mr. B. Goodwin, Supervisor of the Horticulture Division, Department of Agriculture, and Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor, were among those present.

Concern was expressed that although the Dominion Executive last July had made representations to the Minister of Marketing and officers of his departments, regarding various matters connected with the industry, including the lowering of the percentage of the honey commandeer from 70 per cent. to 40 per cent., no reply had yet been received.

After various business matters had been dealt with, arrangements were made for a field day to be held at Taradale later in the season.

FIELD DAY.

An apiary should be well sheltered, but not under trees, stated Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor, when speaking at a field day at Mr. W. Neal's apiary, Greenmeadows, on February 10, 1945. The speaker said he considered Mr. Neal's apiary was in an ideal situation, as it was in an orchard and well sheltered by a belt of trees.

Mr. L. H. Maultsaid, in the absence of the President and Vice-President, spoke on behalf of the branch, and welcomed visitors to the apiary.

Mr. Maultsaid gave a practical demonstration of how to find a queen, sifting the bees through a queen excluder. Mr. Maultsaid also showed how to introduce a queen.

Mr. W. J. C. Ashcroft demonstrated the dividing up of a colony and making a nuclei hive for increase, introducing a young queen into the nuclei hive.

Mr. D. S. Robinson showed how to exam-

ine a colony for disease, and told how to deal with foul brood should a hive become infected. The speaker considered that the only safe method of treatment was to gas the bees and burn them, together with the frames, afterwards burning out the inside of the supers with a blow-lamp or flame thrower.

Another demonstration showed how a weak colony could be strengthened by placing it on a stand previously occupied by a strong colony, and shifting the strong colony to the weak colony's old stand.

After Mr. Robinson had answered numerous questions a vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Neal for the use of his apiary.

One prominent local beekeeper returned home with a pained expression, after his nose and eye had been attacked by a warrior bee that resented its home being disturbed on a rainy day.

HAWKE'S BAY AUTUMN SHOW.

An attractive feature at the Hawke's Bay Autumn Show on March 17 was the well patronised honey section. The quality of the honey was excellent, and there were sufficient entries in each class covering white, light amber and medium amber, liquid and granulated honeys, to make a really good display. The comb honey section, also, was most attractive, and there was a large entry in the classes for extracting frames and beeswax.

The Hawke's Bay branch display stand drew favourable attention, and throughout the day there were always crowds of people round the three observation hives.

Equipment made by ingenious local beekeepers was a feature of the display, and was as good or better than similar imported articles.

Outstanding exhibits, made by Mr. M. F. Leete, were a honey extractor, cappings strainer and melter, honey tank, steam-heated knife, and hive and frames.

D. DALGLIESH.

OTAGO.

FIELD DAY.

The Otago Branch of the N.B.A. held its annual field day at the home apiary of Mr. C. J. Kellett, 56 Montague Street, North-East Valley, Dunedin. The weather was perfect and there was a large attendance of members and friends. Mr. Kellett welcomed the members and their friends, and explained the advantages to be gained from the holding of these field days. To the beginner it was a marvel to see how bees could be controlled and handled, and to the experienced man, there was always something of interest. The demonstrators were Mr. J. McFadzien, Jr., President, Mr. J. M. Marshall, Mr. T. J. Jackson, Mr. C. J. Kellett, and Mr. E. Campbell. Mr. Kellett showed the company his honey extracting plant in action, and the novel method of heating the honey on its way from the extractor to the tank, and the finished article a light amber colour with a delicious flavour. Tea was served by the ladies and a pleasant hour was spent.

The committee met immediately after, and it was decided to hold the Annual Convention at Dunedin during Winter Show week. For particulars see advertisement.

E. CAMPBELL.

SOUTHERN BEEKEEPERS

The Editor was recently invited to attend a meeting of beekeepers from Gore and surrounding districts. It was a pleasure to meet old friends of the South and to make new acquaintances. The producers in this area were anxious to hear about the work of the Executive. After making a full report since the Conference of 1943, and answering questions, a unanimous vote of thanks to and confidence in the Executive was carried.

Among the new beekeepers in the district were: John Glass, prviously secretary of the Oamaru branch, now at Waihaka Valley; Miss Pearce, of the Otago branch, now at Mandeville, one of Southland's "watering" places; Len Box, previously Apiary Instructor, now at Heriot. Since leaving the Department, Len has been busy increasing. Just last month his wife presented him with twins! With seven little box's mouths to feed, Len will need to make every bee a busy bee.

Veteran beekeepers like Bill Heron, Ashley Lennie, Tom Barr, Steel, White, and George Swanson were present and having their little say. A number of ladies were present, apparently interested, but obeying the injunction of St. Paul to remain silent. It must have been hard!

On the road to the meeting a friendly hour was spent with the May family at Island Block. A. J. May has had half his internal economy cut away over the last twenty years, but still he carries on breeding good bees and being cheerful. On the road home another hour passed pleasantly chatting with Mr. "Bob" Stewart of Heriot. Mr. Stewart must be the "father" of queen breeders in this country. Mr. Stewart bears his years and his troubles with his customary cheerfulness. A fickle season and many orders for queens have kept him busy since early October. He says that the only time he has taken off from business was to attend one field day and two funerals. We think Mr. Stewart could have an easier time if he worried less about quality, but he is not built that way. We hope he can attend Conference this year, and be induced to join a brains trust as the expert on queens. Among several observations on current matters, Mr. Stewart hopes that the 'Department of Agriculture will issue a new Bulletin for beekeepers, so that beekeepers all over the Dominion will not need to write to him so frequently for advice. We understand a new bulletin is in course of preparation.

THE EDITOR.

NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND.

WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE.

Since the issue of the Circular in September last, the General Executive has met and has dealt with many matters relating to the welfare of the Association and of the beekeeping industry generally.

The Executive met in Wellington on the 14th, 15th and 16th February, all members being present.

At the commencement of the business, the President (Mr. E. A. Field) moved a vote of sympathy with the relatives of those members who had died since the last meeting. The motion was carried in the usual manner.

A good deal of time was taken up in discussions with the Chairman and members of the Honey Control Board and with the Acting-Director and the Manager of the Honey Section of the Internal Marketing Division. Separate discussions were held with each party, and the subjects dealt with included the proposed establishment of a Honey Marketing Council (or Executive Board as referred to in my September circular), and the question of securing an increased pay-out on bulk honey supplied to the Internal Marketing Division.

HONEY MARKETING COUNCIL.

As a counter to the Executive's proposals regarding the personnel of the Council (as set out in the resolutions shown in the previous circular) the Internal Marketing Division proposed that the Council should be set up on the same lines as the Fruit Marketing Council which had been established to deal with apples and pears. This would mean an organisation of eight members, four to be elected by the honey producers and four by the Government, the Government representatives to be (1) The Director of Marketing, or his deputy, to act as Chairman; (2) The Auckland Manager of the Internal Marketing Division, or his deputy, the Manager of the Honey Section; (3) The Director of Horticulture, or his deputy; (4) A non-official Government nominee, to represent the consumer interests.

The adoption of these Government proposals was strongly urged by the Acting-Director of the Internal Marketing Division. Subsequently, the Executive, after a further debate, resolved as follows:—"That after due consideration of all further points raised, this Executive adheres to its previous decision in regard to the constitution of the proposed Honey Marketing Council, and feels that if any further consideration is required, the matter be referred to Conference."

INCREASED PRICE.

Various aspects of this vexed and much contested claim for an increase in the amount paid to beekeepers on bulk honey supplied to the Internal Marketing Division were considered in the light of the discussions held with the Control Board and the officials of the Division. The Executive reiterated its determination to continue to press for an increase, the urgent necessity for which is heightened by the poor crops obtained in different parts of the Dominion during the current season.

In this respect, the Executive resolved: "That the President be authorised to jointly submit a case to the Stabilisation Commission in company with the Chairman of the Honey Control Board, for an increased bonus payment of ½d. per lb. to be met, if necessary, in whole or in part, by current seals revenue."

This matter is being dealt with by the two gentlemen concerned at the first possible opportunity.

CONSTITUTION.

A further review was made of the recommendations previously sent out to Branches from the Executive. Members of the Executive were unanimous

that a revision of the existing constitution upon the lines already stated, is essential, if the Association is to function successfully in the future. Although many Branches have already accepted the proposed changes in the form previously recommended, the Executive desires, as far as practicable, to meet the wishes of those Branches who feel that they could not agree to the amendments based on the rate of subscriptions set out. Finally, it was agreed that the basis of subscriptions be amended, and the following resolution was carried:—

"That we recommend the acceptance of the proposed amendments to the Constitution on the basis of 2d. per hive, with a maximum of 450 hives, with a minimum subscription of 7/6."

The following resolution was also carried:—

"That it be a recommendation to Conference that consideration be given to making provision in the Constitution whereby, when matters relating to Marketing are being discussed, a vote be taken by Commercial Producers only, Conference to decide what status constitutes a 'Commercial Producer'."

NOTE: These two resolutions are to be brought down by the Executive as recommendations to Conference, and will be shown as such on the list of remits sent to Branches.

CONFERENCE.

The Executive unanimously resolved that Conference this year be held at Christchurch.

REMITS.

It was resolved that Branches be notified that remits for Conference must be in the hands of the General Secretary by the 30th April. They will be circulated to Branches about the middle of May.

SALES OF HONEY FROM APIARIES.

Correspondence on this subject, with particular reference to the recent

magisterial decision in Hastings, where a beekeeper was fined £10 for selling honey at a price in excess of that authorised, was received and considered.

In this connection, it was decided that while anomalies appear to exist, the Executive would suggest that if any beekeeper wished to charge a price in excess of 10½d., it would be wise for him to secure legal advice on the matter beforehand.

SUPPLIES OF FRAME WIRE.

This matter has been referred to Branches.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.

Consideration was given to a letter received from the Director General of Agriculture, inviting the Executive to appoint two members to represent the Association on a Sub-Committee dealing with beekeeping, whose duty it will be to make reports and recommendations to the Main Development Committee. The Sub-Committee on beekeeping is to consist of representatives of the Horticultural Division of the Agriculture Department, the Internal Marketing Division, and two members of our Association. The Agricultural Development Committee is part of the Organisation for National Development set up by the Government for the purpose of conducting investigations into all phases of the Dominion's primary production, and to formulate plans for meeting the problems associated with post-war reconstruction and long-range development of the primary and allied industries. Separate Sub-Committees are being formed to include the various types of specialised intensive farming, e.g. fruit, poultry, bees, etc., and it was pointed out by the Director General that the urgency for these investigations at the present time arises mainly from the need for reliable surveys of the scope for development and expansion of specialised farming to assist in the rehabilitation and settlement of demobilised servicemen. The Executive resolved that the President (Mr. E. A. Field) and Mr. T. F. Penrose be appointed as the Association's representatives on the proposed Agricultural Development Sub-Committee.

The foregoing is a survey of the main work of the Executive at its recent meeting.

HIVE MATS.

A communication was received from Messrs. N.Z. Woolpack & Textiles Ltd. explaining the reasons for their inability to continue the supply of hive mats on the previous basis. The Company pointed out that until recently they had been glad to make into mats material which otherwise would have been wasted. Now, however, owing to the shortage of suitable material, the supply had been cut off. The Company intimated, however, that if beekeepers so desired, they were prepared to set up a special machine to weave bee-mat cloth 20 inches wide at 4½d. per mat. Being of special weave, these mats would have a selvage edge.

Reference was made to the fact that the usual advertisement for mats had appeared in the January issue of the Journal. Mr. Lennon explained that this was due to an error on the part of the Printer, to whom instructions had been given for the cancellation of the advertisement.

BRANCH RETURNS.

In conclusion, I wish to appeal to Branch Secretaries to forward at the earliest possible date all membership subscription counterfoils and remittances in hand.

This is most important, as it eases the last-minute rush connected with the closing of the Association's Books at the end of May. Branch Secretaries should realise the fact that a large amount of detail work is involved in the late stages of the year in dealing with remits, delegates' certificates, branch voting, etc., and the general arrangements necessary for the holding of Conference. I would greatly appreciate your co-operation in response to this appeal.

Yours faithfully,

G. V. FRASER,
General Secretary.

Foxton, 12th March, 1945.

N.Z. HONEY CONTROL BOARD

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

Latest reports to hand indicate that the total honey crop of the Dominion has fallen very far below that of an average season. In many of the principal honey producing areas, crops have varied from practically nil to well under half a normal crop. These conditions are particularly unfortunate at a time when honey is in such urgent demand as a food to meet priority war-time requirements, and it is clear that the Honey Section of the I.M.D. will be far short of the quantity which was originally estimated should be obtained under the operations of the existing war-time regulations.

Beekeepers are not responsible for crop failures, but it is obvious that after meeting their I.M.D. committments, everyone will be expected to voluntarily co-operate in an effort to establish an equitable distribution of what honey is available. Big scale front door selling may bring some advantages to the individual beekeeper and to the industry in times of surplus supplies, but if persisted in to a point where normal trading distributing channels are starved, then the consumption of honey must suffer in favour of some other foodstuff, and consequently the consumer demand may not be there in sufficient strength to dispose of a heavy crop.

THE PAY-OUT.

In the case referred to on this page in the last issue, for an increase in the present bonus pay-out, the Board has recommend that the increase should be retrospective over all honey supplied to the I.M.D. during the previous season, 1943-44.

The Board again interviewed the Minister on the matter some weeks ago, and met with a very favourable reception. We were informed, however, that the Stabilisation Committee alone has the authority to deal with the case. The Board emphasised the point that the request of the beekeepers was for a price based on the cost of production and NOT in the increased costs since the Stabilisation Order of 1942. The Board was given to understand that the Committee had power to deal with the case on the basis as requested.

BOARD CONSULTS THE EXECUTIVE.

The Executive of the National Beekeepers' Association was fully informed of the position, and agreed to the suggestion that their President, Mr. Field, should join the Chairman of the Board in presenting the case on behalf of the beekeepers to the Stabilisation Committee.

The Board has been advised by the Minister that instructions have been given to his officers to give every possible aid in our effort to obtain an increased price in the returns to I.M.D. suppliers.

The delay in reaching finality over the matter is no doubt disappointing to Division suppliers, but if authority is granted to make a retrospective payment, then the beekeepers will lose nothing by the delay. Moreover, the recent increase awarded to wage earners should assist us to influence the Committee.

The deputation expects to be given an opportunity to meet the Stabilisation Committee within a week or two. In the meantime, beekeepers may be assured that nothing will be left undone by their representatives in the effort to obtain a favourable decision from the Committee.

WALLACE NELSON, Chairman,
Honey Control Board.

JOURNALS WANTED.

BACK COPIES OF THE
N.Z. BEEKEEPER

We have requests from Subscribers whose Files are incomplete, for Previous Issues. Journals from Deceased Estates would be appreciated.

THE EDITOR.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
HORTICULTURE DIVISION

Auckland and North Auckland: Unseasonable weather conditions continued during January, when white clover was in evidence to an unusual degree, but failed to secrete nectar in appreciable quantities. Warm rains fell early in February followed by calm hot days during the remainder of the month, assisting luscious pasture growth which was of little use to beekeeping. Severe swarming continued in most parts much later than usual.

The total honey crop will be less than last season, with three-quarters to average in North Auckland areas, and a little better than half elsewhere.

Hamilton: Seasonal conditions since December were similar to Auckland district, and while the weather appeared ideal at times for nectar gathernig, only very small gains were recorded. Pennyroyal was showing up prominently in many pastures, and although honey stored from this source is not the best for marketing purposes, it does assist greatly for winter feeding of bees.

The total crop from this district will not exceed half the normal average.

Palmerston North: Improved weather conditions during January enabled the bees to build up well; but during February heavy gales greatly reduced colony strength in the Taranaki district, and white clover yielded very little nectar. Two weeks of wet weather prevented the bees working blackberry when it was in full bloom. During short spells of fair weather catsear and other pasture weeds yielded well, as did also rewa rewa and manuka. In the main, however, the surplus honey crop was almost a complete failure in Taranaki.

Conditions, generally, were better in Wanganui areas, also in Manawatu, where light crops of white clover and mixed pasture sources were harvested.

Hastings: In central and northern Hawkes Bay area good crops of excellent quality honey has been secured from white clover and mixed pasture sources; while north of Wairoa only light crops will be secured. In southern portions of the district from Dannevirke through the Waiararapa poor crops have been harvested.

Westland, Nelson and Marlborough: In Westland weather conditions continued unfavourable during January. Native holly, white rata vine and lotus major were the main sources of nectar supply during the month, with very little surplus showing in the hives from these sources. The ratas from which the main crop of honey is usually produced in Westland, failed to bloom this year, with the exception of a few trees high up on mountain sides. Hives in some localities gathered a little surplus from kamahi earlier in the season; but on the whole the season just closed was the worst experienced for many years.

Nelson: Weather conditions were unfavourable for normal nectar secretion from white clover; but moderate to average crops have been secured. Manuka bloomed well, and average crops were secured from this source.

Marlborough: The past season was the best experienced for many years in the Marlborough district, and excellent crops of honey from white clover and mixed pasture sources were secured.

Christchurch: White clover continued to yield well until the middle of February, when frosts caused a complete cessation of the nectar flow from this source, but thistle, catsear and red clover gave good results until exceptional rains which caused serious flooding in some areas brought the season to a close for the storage of surplus honey.

Apiaries located on light and medium land did fairly well, while crops gathered from heavy lands are slightly below average. Apiaries situated along the foothills produced comparatively fair to poor crops, due to the higher rainfall in these areas. Despite the wide variations of climatic

conditions, however, the total production for this district is better than average.

Invercargill: In North Otago extracting operations began early in January, and crops well above average of excellent quality honey have been secured.

Pastures generally continued in good condition much later than usual and good crops were also harvested in Otago Central and northern parts of Southland; elsewhere below average to poor.

W. K. DALLAS,
Director of the Horticulture Division.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor.

Sir,—The Chairman of the Control Board selects the matter of export for his first comment; certainly there will be little export while the I.M.D. is calling the tune. Will the Board say that a guaranteed price for export will not protect the local market? Every beekeeper is entitled to increased costs since 1940. I cannot imagine other Branches accepting the South Auckland basis; it is a theoretical basis from a Government Department, the details being entered by a few in the best production areas. Mr. Nelson, in December, 1942, told us in Hamilton that the I.M.D. price was satisfactory, also that he had agreed to prices which later became Price Order 121. Re the Board's commitments for honey, in 1942, the supply was a season's output in arrear, also the new store was not operating to capacity, the whole procedure being reduced to the ridiculous. Producers are indebted to the Board for the honest statement that the I.M.D. intend to allow price levels to fluctuate.

In the 1939-40 season the Board refused to sanction an advance payment which in the Board's opinion might have lead to reclamation. Was and is it the Board's duty to act as scaremonger with regard to price levels?

ALEX MAWHINNEY.

This letter has not been referred either to the I.M.D. or Mr. Nelson, as time was too short before publication.

—Editor.

INTERNAL MARKETING DIVISION
(HONEY SECTION)

FORWARDING OF HONEY.

So far this season, honey has been coming forward from producers very slowly, and while it is admitted that the season has been later than usual, the quantity received by the Honey Section up to the end of March is a long way short of that received last year. Producers are asked if they have honey ready for forwarding, to make every endeavour to despatch it promptly. So far this season, approximately 220 tons of honey have been received. For the producers' information, the following is a list of approximate quantities of honey which the honey section has been asked to supply:—

	Tons
Army, Navy & Air Force	110
Essential Manufacturing	100
Hospitals, etc.	50
Patriotic Parcels	30
Special Overseas Order (War Priority)	100
TOTAL	390

In the above quantities, there is no provision made for export to London, and this, the Honey Section feels, should have some priority for at least another 100 tons. Then there is the local distribution to the main populated areas which based on a 50% distribution, would take approximately 400 tons. Some areas have had particularly bad seasons this year, and if producers, particularly those in areas which have had good seasons, could forward more honey than they are required to under the Regulations, it will assist the Honey Section to fulfil the above orders.

REGULATIONS.

By the correspondence received, it would appear that many producers do not read the Regulations forwarded to them. In the Regulations, it is stated quite definitely that if a producer estimated his production would be less than an average of 40 pounds per hive for the season, he should notify the Director, or an authorised officer of the Department on or before the 1st day of March, 1945.

In many instances, this has not been done. Producers who wish to apply for an exemption under the Regulations owing to their average production being below 40 pounds per hive are asked to support their application with a Statutory Declaration witnessed by a Justice of the Peace; this Declaration to contain the number of hives they are registered with as at 1st December, 1944, together with the total amount of honey extracted for the season. This Declaration is necessary, as in the Regulations the Director has power to grant a partial exemption and therefore must have some legal evidence before doing so.

H. F. STOUPE, Manager,
Honey Section.

WINTER STORES WASTED BY ACTIVITY.

By Wayne Keller.

The primary essentials of wintering are the same for all cold climates. They need only to be listed: an adequate number of youthful bees with fertile queen, an abundance of good food within easy reach of the cluster, and a hive that allows good ventilation and gives maximum protection from the cold. Successful wintering depends on how well the beekeeper understands the requirements and carries them out. The subject involves three sets of conditions; bee conditions, food conditions, and hive conditions.

To provide a large cluster of young

bees for winter a young queen may be introduced three to six weeks before cold weather begins. This is not usually necessary, as most localities allow sufficient fall breeding. If most of the bees of the winter cluster are old, it is necessary to have some pollen in the cluster to allow bee replacement in late winter. If most of the bees of the winter cluster are young, it may be necessary to remove most of the reserve pollen to prevent extra honey consumption. When bees are wintered with extra pollen available, they should have extra honey also. Some colonies will use the reserve for late fall brood-rearing, and others will use it in early spring. This difference in colonies may be caused by heredity or the age of bees or queen, or simply by the location of the pollen in the hive.

It is believed that at no time should the temperature inside the hive reach the freezing point. Last winter I opened colonies of bees that had used their honey while rearing brood. They were very strong. They were not packed and had a good deal of ice hanging from the frames and the sides of the hives. The frames were wet and water ran from the entrance.

It takes water to rear any great amount of brood. If a top entrance was used to release the moisture-laden air, brood-rearing could not take place until the outside temperature allowed bees to fly for water. This seems to me to be an advantage.

—("Gleanings in Bee Culture.")

MEETINGS.

A CONVENTION of the Otago and Southland Apiarists will be held in the OTAGO PIONEER WOMEN'S HALL, 362 Moray Place, DUNEDIN, on MONDAY, JUNE 4th, 1945, at 7 p.m., continuing at 2 p.m. and at 7.30 p.m. on Tuesday June 5th. Apiarists from other centres visiting Dunedin will be given a cordial welcome.

E. Campbell, Hon. Secy.,
P.O. Box 845, Dunedin, C.1.

HONEY FOR SUBMARINES

Mr. J. Bee-Mason, of Burgess Hill, Sussex, England, has writen very interestingly on this matter, and included a circular which we are pleased to print. Among other things, Mr. Mason says:—

Dear Sir,— . . . . I am sending a copy of a circular I had printed with the approval of the Admiral (Submarines); several thousand were printed and sent out with excellent results.

We have had a terrible harvest in England and Scotland, but in spite of that the beekeepers have responded most generously. Last year we sent 5 tons 2 cwt., and I believe we shall not be far short of that amount this year . . . .

I paid a visit to a submarine base and found the lads were most grateful for the honey. They asked me to thank the beekeepers on their behalf.

I would like to know if there is room for more beekeepers in New Zealand, or is there any fear of over production of honey in normal times. I am doing my best here to encourage people to eat honey instead of jam, marmalade, etc., hoping there will be a big demand for it after the war. Hundreds of the submariners had never tasted honey before, and have got to like it, and will doubtless want more when they get home . . .

If there is anything I can do this end for you, please let me know . . .

(Copy of circular.)

HONEY FOR SUBMARINE CREWS.

An appeal is again being made for the Submarine Service. It is frequently asked why these gallant lads should require honey in preference to other seafarers. Here are the reasons:

When submerged the men cannot smoke, and they crave for something sweet. Honey is better than sweets. It has a high food value, and is a gentle laxative and purifier of the blood.

The men frequently have to remain submerged for long periods, and the air becomes very foul and is the cause of throat irritation. Should they be in enemy waters they dare not cough for fear of betraying their whereabouts. A spoonful of honey stops the irritation.

The Admiral (Submarines) writes: "I can say without a shadow of doubt that there is nothing more appreciated by the submarine sailors when on patrol than honey. I have arranged to take over the distribution of all honey to submariners, as we know better than anyone else where to send it, so as to ensure that it goes to those who are actually doing the submarine patrols."

It is hoped that you will generously consider this appeal for the men who are daily facing perils and hardships on our behalf.

The Admiralty asks for the honey to be packed in 2lb. tins. 2lb. Golden Syrup tins are most suitable.

For further information apply to: J. C. Bee-Mason, Burgess Hill.

BEWARE THE CARELESS BEEKEEPER!

HE'S NOT MUCH GOOD TO HIMSELF AND HE'S A DAMAGE TO EVERYBODY ELSE.

By GRANT D. MORSE, IN "GLEANINGS."

A few years ago I recall reading of a man inquiring if it was safe to go into beekeeping as a sole means of making a living. The answer, as I vaguely remember, was that a certain type of man is required if beekeeping is to be a success financially. The author stressed chiefly, I believe, the importance carefulness plays in a beekeeper's success. How true that is!

Personally, I don't see how a careless man can help starving to death in the beekeeping business. It's difficult to do bee work successfully even if one exercises the utmost care.

Take, for example, the care of combs that have been extracted and stored until needed in the next honey flow. First, the place where they were stored must be bee tight else robber bees will get in and make a tremendous nuisance of themselves. They all must be mouse-proof, else these pesky rodents will gain entrance and destroy comb after comb before we discover it. But worst of all, of course, is the wax moth. If the beekeeper neglects for just a few days to apply the gas when needed every comb may be ruined, and how complete that ruin can be!

Then there is the trick of handling the brood combs carefully when inspecting them for any reason whatsoever. A careless placing of the thumb or finger in the wrong place and gone is the queen. It's amazing how adept queens are at walking under thumbs or fingers and getting crushed! Many queens get crushed without our knowing it at the time by our shoving two frames together too tightly. This constant danger has led many a good beekeeper to use nine frames in a hive and substitute a board for the tenth frame. This board is not so thick as a frame and enables the operator to shove it far enough over to the side of the hive body to allow for loosening all the frames in the hive with the hive tool before taking any one of them out.

Some careless workers glance hurriedly at both sides of a frame and failing to see the queen, give the frame a good shake to free it of bees. This treatment frequently leads to shaking the queen out on to the ground where she may be lost or injured to such an extent as to impair her egg-laying powers.

Watch some men at work with hives and observe how carelessly they stack them, especially when the bees are a bit ugly. Careless placement of one hive body on another may lead to many ill consequences including robbing and damage to the hive body and frames. One way to avoid misplacement of one hive body on another and to do it quickly is to form the habit of cupping the fingers around the diagonally opposite corners of the two bodies at the point where they join each other. This one movement of the two hands in a simultaneous action tells the operator if he has placed the two hive bodies in perfect alignment.

A careless man gains little advantage in striving to eliminate swarming through cutting of queen cells. He misses too many cells. One cell undiscovered nullifies the benefit of cutting all the others in any one colony.

Even careless reading of how to perform a given operation may end disastrously. I recall the instance of one beekeeper, a very clever one in most matters, too, who read a description of swarm control by the Demaree method. He misinterpreted the instructions to state that all one has to do to prevent swarming is to raise the brood out of the brood nest, so he raised the sealed brood in each of his hives and placed it in a second hive immediately adjacent to the one on the bottom board. Of course he wasted his time.

I know another beekeeper who spent most of one winter making some hives for himself. They were splendid looking objects and seemed to have but one outstanding fault. But what a fault that was! He set the tins on which the frames rest so far down from the top of the hive that when a super is placed on them during a honey flow, drone comb about an inch and a half deep is placed there by the bees. And what a mess it is when the super is pried off, as pried off it must be to get it off! It takes a mighty clever carpenter to make home-made bee supplies. Their product is usually as much inferior to the real thing as most restaurants' so-called home-baked pies are inferior to the kind mother bakes.

And then there's the problem of disease. I know of beekeepers who are never without foulbrood in their apiaries. With them it is just a question of how much they have in any one year. Careless men are the cause of the continuance of this pest to beekeepers. Infected colonies must be isolated and destroyed. To mix clean and infected colonies means eventual infection of them all. Tools, gloves, extractors, hives, and frames—all must be kept free from contact with the infected colony.

A careless man brings down the wrath of the layman upon us, too. He transports bees without closing entrances and gets people stung. Beekeepers don't mind stings but laymen do. Most of them are almost deathly afraid of a bee. He works colonies when horses are being driven nearby by farmers. He leaves apiaries open so cattle can get in and do damage or be damaged. He leaves honey uncovered and starts robbing.

All these things are only part of the careless man's misdoings. But beware of him. He is not much good to himself and he's a menace to those who are capable of care and who are inclined to be careful.

BEEKEEPING IN AUSTRALIA

"The Australasian Beekeeper." Illustrated magazine, published monthly by Messrs. Pender Bros. Pty. Ltd. Subscription, 5/- per year, posted. Sample copy free on application to

The Editor, P.O. Box 20,
West Maitland, N.S.W., Australia

WAX WAGES WAR.

Owing to its unique characteristics and indestructibility (a boatload of beeswax was salvaged, in good condition, after lying several hundred years on the bottom of the ocean), and having been known for many hundreds of years, beeswax has a wider range of uses throughout the world than most other products.

While, formerly, women possibly used the largest percentage of beeswax so that a young beekeeper might at one time have remarked, when approaching a lady on the street, "Here comes my slumgum!" because wax mixed with other ingredients and some colouring matter, then applied to the face, fingers and toes, not only gives protection from the elements but has certain psychological effects on the mere male, the progress of civilization gave rise to many other uses.

Every automobile. or aeroplane motor requires at least half a pound of beeswax; the electricity industry uses wax in insulating millions of electrical units; ropes and sails are wax treated; orchardists use wax in grafting operations; harness makers waterproof their threads with it; flat-irons used to be waxed, but now modern laundries use it on the rolls, while wax finds its way into the machine shop, the foundry, and is used in high school and college art work.

Beeswax Production Aids Axis Destruction.

But, now, apart from the beekeeping industry itself, beeswax is used for waterproofing munitions and war equipment. There is a world shortage of wax and civilian uses must be reduced for war purposes. Recent studies of the part played by beeswax in the war effort in overseas countries indicates that there are approximately 350 uses, from munitions to medicines, in the Navy, Army and Air forces. In the pharmaceutical field alone, there are approximately 150 uses.

The Services need wax and their requirements must and will come first. It has become the patriotic duty of every beekeeper to save every possible fragment of wax. Beekeepers can produce more wax and they must do this by saving every particle of beeswax, every scrap previously often lost and wasted about the apiary and honeyhouse.

The production of beeswax can come only secondary to the production of honey. The production of beeswax as such cannot be considered a profitable thing and must be considered along with the production of honey. But beekeepers can increase their production of beeswax and at the same time produce just as much honey as they ordinarily would.

This can be accomplished by the use of one less comb in the supers and will result in fatter combs and a greater yield of cappings wax. Some beekeepers use two less combs in their supers, but if any less number than this is used, brace and bridge combs will be built to too great an extent. If uncapping these fat combs, cutting even with the wood will yield a large amount of cappings wax.

Commercial experience has shown that this system gives even and smooth-sealed combs of honey practically free of brace combs. (During the honey-flox bees apparently secrete so much wax that unless they have need for it in drawing out the cells this additional depth and capping them, an excessive amount of burr and brace combs result.)

Beekeepers are urged to make it a practice to scrape the burr comb wax from tops of frames whenever colonies are opened. In a honeyflow, this can be put above an escape board with the hope open for the bees to remove the nectar and honey. When extracting, clean round the frame of any excess comb. Throughout the entire season, look for and discard poor combs which are of greater value in the form of beeswax for industry than as homes in which drones are reared.

Wax the Way to Victory.

Save beeswax. Save the bits which are often lost about the apiary. Pick up and save every scraping, every bit of comb, no matter how small. Prevent the ravages of the wax moth, and remember that the scraping from bottoms of wax blocks and slumgum is rich in beeswax which can be recov-

ered by specialist beeswax rendering services.

Producing more beeswax—saving more beeswax—is a patriotic effort. It is part of the campaign for Victory. Beekeepers have a definite task to perform in helping win the war. It is to produce more beeswax and to save every bit of beeswax which is produced.

(With acknowledgements to "American Bee Journal.")

BOOK REVIEW

"HONEY GETTING."

E. L. Sechrist.

This book deals with the fundamentals of profitable beekeeping. Mr. Sechrist has exceptional qualifications to warrant his writing a book on practical beekeeping. He has kept bees in several parts of the world, he has spent his life as a commercial beekeeper, and his employment in the U.S. Bee Culture Laboratories for a period gave him the opportunity of studying the methods of most of the best beekeepers of the U.S.

As G. H. Cale says, "Beginners who base their first knowledge on it steer a straight course; experts revise their ways with profit."

American price, $1.50.

"THE BEE CRAFTSMAN."

H. J. Wadey.

This is a Short Guide to the Life Story and management of the Honey-Bee, from the English view. The book is now in its second edition. Mr. Wadey deals in an interesting way with practices that have stood the test of time. It is a book designed to assist beginners, but it deals with most aspects of the Craftsman's work. Swarm-control measures, queen rearing, honey processing, bee diseases, and wintering, are only some of the many subjects dealt with.

Mr. Wadey is also a lecturer and the book is written more as one would speak. We think the book gains rather than loses when the writer has an audience in his mind.

English price, 3/6.

FOOLISH NOTIONS.

(By E. S. Miller in "American Bee Journal.")

There are many present day practices among beekeepers that should be superseded by better methods.

Spreading the brood in the attempt to increase egg laying is no longer practised by well-informed beemen. The Alexander plan of building up colony strength in the spring by daily feeding small quantities of sugar syrup involves much labour and is of little value. Then there is the more recent practice of selling the honey and buying sugar for winter feed, necessitating extra labour and expense. There is no better or cheaper winter bee food than full combs of honey placed above the brood, preferably a second storey food chamber containing at least 50 or 60lbs of honey and pollen.

Probably one of the most foolish notions, and one that seems to be quite prevalent at the present time, is that of thinking that prime swarms can be prevented by picking out queen cells. Where this is practised the bees will out-smart the beekeepers every time. Even if it were effective, the labour involved renders it not worth while. There are ways in which practically all swarming can be eliminated and it pays to learn the better methods.

Many books on beekeeping state that a good way to requeen is to kill the old queen and introduce a ripe queen cell. Let's consider what actually happens. It is a well-known fact that when a laying queen is removed from a strong colony the bees at once start numerous queen cells. Introducing a ripe cell does not alter the case in the least. The bees start other cells just the same and a few days after the virgin emerges and the new queen cells are well along, she leaves the hive, taking with her a swarm, and the bees proceed to rear a queen from their town stock. Some weeks later, Mr Beekeeper opens the hive and finds a laying queen and thinks it a wonderful suc-

cess, but it is not the queen reared from his choice stock, as he imagines. About the only exception to the above is when conditions are not favourable for swarming and that is the time when queen cells are usually not available. After many trials in the last twenty-five years with close observation as to what actually takes place in the hive, it has been fully demonstrated that this is what occurs in more than 90 per cent. of the cases where requeening is attempted in the above manner. Even in nuclei, virgins often decamp when larvae are present.

Laying queens should be clipped, not to keep them from swarming, as many suppose, but for the purpose of identification. A record should be kept of the age of each queen, preferably written on the hive or attached to it in some manner. It is advisable to requeen every second year, usually in February, or whenever a queen is found to be of poor stock or shows signs of failure. By destroying all swarm cells and rearing queens only from the best non-swarmers available, the stock may be greatly improved. The notion that swarm cells are better than those obtained by grafting has no basis in fact, provided the queen-rearing is properly performed under favourable conditions.

Small hives, as formerly used, are now practically a thing of the past in modern beekeeping. A two-storey ten-frame Langstroth is none too large for wintering, and in the production of extracted honey, the second storey should be kept the year round as a food chamber with an abundance of honey and pollen.

A two-storey brood nest, as advocated by some, is not wholly effective as a means of swarm control. Demareeing the whole yard before queen cells are started and again three weeks later, eliminates swarms for the season, assuming that one has good stock. In this process all except one frame of brood is raised to the third or top storey and the queen confined to the lower storey on drawn combs.

In comb honey production, swarming may be prevented by operating as for extracted honey until the beginning of the main flow when the second storey food chamber is set down on the bottom board and the bees shaken in front from the brood which is then placed above some weak colony or used in nuclei. It is essential that all of the brood be removed, not merely a part of it. Two or more comb supers should be added at this time to the broodless hive.

Foundation should always be drawn out in the second storey or food chamber, using full sheets—never in the lower storey if one expects good combs drawn entirely down to the bottom bars. Alternating combs with foundation in the brood chamber as a supposed means of swarm control is not good beekeeping practice. All combs not built entirely down or which contain more than five per cent. of open space or of drone cells should be discarded or at least kept out of the brood chamber.

Trying to requeen laying workers or, in fact, any colony in which all of the brood has emerged, is unprofitable. Such a colony should be united with a queenright colony by placing the queenless one on the top of the other with a sheet of newspaper between. The old plan of shaking workers out in the grass is useless.

Beekeeping methods have been greatly improved in the last 25 years. Every year there is something new to be learned by one who reads, experiments, and studies bee behaviour, enabling him to omit many needless operations and to work out many short-cuts in manipulation. By so doing, it is possible to more than double colony production and at the same time reduce to less than half the amount of labour required.

The Paper Controller has denied me the paper for printing a booklet giving the answer to the misleading propaganda which Branches have been subjected to in recent years.

I am prepared to attend as many Branch meetings as can be arranged to answer those who would plan the industry into a straight-jacket. Would Branches co-operate with me to arrange a suitable itinerary?

Write to W. B. BRAY, Leeston.

SUPERCHARGER QUEENS.

By A. M. Southwick in "Gleanings."

It is preferable for the honey producer to save and use the naturally built queen cells in the strong hives which start them. This avoids the expense, labour, equipment, injuries, and hazards of grafting, cell forcing and transferring, starting feeding and disposal of nuclei, and mailing and introduction of queens; and enables the selection of queens to be made by the honey producer on the basis of his local requirements.

The only economic objections to raising and mating queens in strong colonies are the break in brood-rearing which occurs if the queen is removed, the diminution of brood-rearing and the chance of division or reduction of the working force by swarming when the new queens emerge, the chance of loss of the remaining queen before she starts laying, and the fact that only one queen remains. These natural losses in colony strength are avoided, swarming prevented, and the best new queens raised by a single manipulation using one cheap piece of extra equipment for each hive of swarming strength.

Purchased queens are of value to accompany package bees; and occasionally to save strong colonies which become hopelessly queenless, if the beekeeper knows the special method usually necessary to successfully introduce a queen to a hive in this condition.

Queens raised from colonies with the best records should be given preference. By best records we mean large relative honey production, gentleness, calmness, nonswarming, little propolizing, low supersedure rate, good disease and pest resistance, hardiness, and good appearance of the queen and her progeny. The first is the most important and the last is definitely the least. Many beekeepers may recognize other qualities valuable in their locality. It pays well to mark the age of each laying queen found by painting her, and to plan the work and work the plans by keeping good hive records with a page for each hive. A continuously strong colony run for honey production which does not complete any queen cells until the third or fourth year of the queen's life may be considered to have a low swarming and supersedure tendency. Such colonies usually have had numerous natural queen cell cups in each body all summer long with eggs sometimes laid in some. No attention need to be paid to these cups until the bees supply them with royal jelly.

Queen-cell completion may be forced by the beekeeper reducing the entrance or otherwise congesting the hive, thereby increasing the swarming impulse, and this impulse may come by the natural congestions incident to a rapid flow of thin nectar or the brood increase of spring.

The supersedure impulse is essentially a queenlessness impulse, and often results in a building of cells about worker larvae. This is shown by the queen cells occurring more generally on the face of the comb rather than on the lower edge. Bees often raise excellent queens from the natural cells built under this impulse, whether it is caused by failure of the old queen or the manipulation of queen removal, but owing to the reduction of brood-rearing by a failing queen and the break in brood-rearing caused by the removal of the queen, the swarming impulse is preferred for cell starting in order to keep the colony at maximum strength.

For producing the best queens a prosperous condition should exist in the hive where the new queens are developing, from the time the egg is laid to the time the new queen commences laying. Suitable flying weather and a few matured drones are necessary for the mating period. It should be remembered that drones are not fully matured until two or three weeks after they emerge. A prosperous condition of the hive means adequate stores or supplies of honey, nectar or syrup and pollen, with sufficient worker bees of ages suitable for guarding, heating, ventilating, nursing, feeding, attending, and water-gathering. During a mid-year honey flow is the best time for these conditions to be found in temperate climates, but with strong colonies they may continue at all times between the period in spring when the first drones are fully mature and

the closing of the fall flow when the drones are expelled. So the stronger the colony the easier to raise in it good queens.

The manipulations combined and improved upon are the Demaree system of swarm control and the Demuth plan of mating queens from upper stories while the old queen continues laying below excluders.

The special equipment required is simply a standard inner cover with 2-inch by 5-inch pieces of queen excluding metal cut from a standard zinc queen excluder and fastened over and under the centre hole. The side edging strip of this cover is cut and pivoted with a nail to form an adjustable side-entrance in the top edge of the board. Why mutilate hive bodies to make upper entrances? Let us call this equipment a new-queen board.

Inner cover with queen-excluding zinc on both sides of the hole in the centre, also bee-flight-opening made in the side of the rim.

Excluder strips are used so that the workers are free to pass and ventilate between the upper and lower regions, and they apportion themselves and their stores to the needs of each place, no brood or guarding is neglected, and there is no fighting or queen injury in subsequent reuniting.

When queen cells are found at the regular weekly or ten-day examination of the colony, all combs containing queen cells are placed in the upper portion of the hive with most of the brood and stores, and the queen is put in the lower portion with mostly empty combs. The new-queen board is placed between with the entrance side up and this entrance narrowed to about three-eighths of an inch. No attempt is made to apportion the bees and care is taken not to shake the combs containing queen cells. Workers sort themselves, nearly all of the field bees going below, the nurse bees going to the brood, and a few guards to the upper entrance. If the colony is several stories and very strong another queen may be developed at the same time by the use of another new-queen board in the same stack of bodies.

If sufficient spare room has been given the lower portion at this visit, no attention need be given the colony for a month. During this time the old queen goes on laying at an equal or increased rate, the field bees go on storing honey through the lower front entrance, heat of the busy hive rises to the upper portion where the brood is tended and emerging, queen cells are completed, and some flight is gradually established from the upper side-entrance. When the queens emerge there is no swarming or after-swarming impulse, and a natural selection of queens is made. Why waste time cutting queen cells? The successful queen mates from the upper entrance. She usually returns to this entrance, and presently commences laying. Rarely she returns to the lower entrance, is lost in mating or becomes a drone layer owing to imperfection or inclemency of weather during the whole of her mating period.

The beekeeper should examine this colony any time within two or three weeks after the month is passed. If the new queen is a drone layer she is killed by the beekeeper, and if she has been lost in mating or has returned to the lower entrance superseding the old queen, or if the lower queen is old or failing, the operator removes the new-queen board. The younger queen survives the workers join forces peaceably and those field bees returning to the missing upper entrance location soon find the lower one. If the new queen is laying well above and the old queen is doing well

below, the operator may wish to take away for increase the upper portion which is now a complete colony; or he may prefer to widen the upper entrance, add a super above to avoid congestion of the upper portion and leave the pile as a two-queen hive making a very strong colony for the fall flow. Unless late increase by division is desired one queen should be removed or sacrificed by taking away the new-queen board about three weeks before the fall flow.

The beekeeper soon finds himself with a supply of fine young tested queen well cared for and producing valuable brood. During a honey flow preferably, but at any other time if necessary, an undesirable queen may be hunted out, her head pinched off and one of the new queens selected, carried in a dry cage without attendants and run in by the smoke method or any other shock method with which the beekeeper is familiar. Do not keep a good queen in a dry cage without attendants for much longer than half an hour, and do not lay the cage in the hot sun or a cold wind. Removal of the new queen board adds the queenless brood and bees to the lower portion of the parent colony without loss.

This new-queen system is ideal for the let-alone non-swarming management of out-apiaries and all other strong colonies run for extracted honey or moderate increase. Many beekeepers will never know what really strong hives are or can do until they try this economical supercharging method which keeps strong colonies stronger, gives them the best youngest queens, controls swarming, and continually improves the stock.

HONEY FOR COWS, MILK FOR BEES!

Some years ago, we recollect a well-known Waikato beekeeper receiving a telephone call for a tin of honey which was required by a farmer as medicine for a sick cow. The cow recovered.

The following appears in "The Bee World" for January, comments in brackets being by the editor of that journal:—

The honey tax in France was abrogated on 17 July. The crop seems to be scanty, and honey prices are being fixed at 25-44 fr., according to the district (Gazette Apicole, August, September). In the August issue, J. Scrive writes on stimulative feeding with milk. Stocks so fed bred much more rapidly and gave increased surplus. The feeding should begin 2 months before the main flow and last for 4 to 5 weeks. Its effect continues for some fortnight after ceasing to feed. The author thinks that milk-fed stocks ought not to be used for queen-rearing, because of the danger that the queens may be overtired by the rapid breeding, and their colonies degenerated. He wants big beekeepers to keep special breeding stocks, and make selection of breeding material among these only. [We think this risk is less than the author believes, and that selection ought to comprise all the apiary, as far as possible. After all, the beekeeper will want to rear a strain that responds to milk treatment, if he proposes to use it regularly in future.] The stocks so stimulated should be re-queened every two years. Either skim or full milk is suitable for use, and it is mixed with 1 kg. sugar per litre milk, bringing just to the boil. The author states that this strength is necessary (compared with 1 part sugar in 2 water in ordinary syrup) in order to make the milk palatable to the bees. The milk mixture should be fed 2 or 3 times during the first week, at the rate of 80-1000 gm. per stock (about 2 to 3½ oz.), increasing to 400 gm. (close on 14 oz.) each evening during the fourth week. These figures are only approximate; so the beekeeper should no doubt use his own discretion and take strength of colonies, etc., into account. [Present knowledge of pollen substitutes confirms the value of milk, and when it and sugar are again plentiful beekeepers might well give the system a trial. Great care will have to be taken, however, to keep feeders clean; and we are not sure of the action of the lactic acid in milk on aluminium feeders, or of the effect of compounds formed by such action on the health of the bees. There are also disadvantages in all forms of spring stimulation.]

POISONING OF HONEY BEES.

BY C. G. BUTLER, FROM "THE BEE WORLD," MARCH, 1941.

Bee Research Laboratory, Rothamsted Experimental Station.

A number of cases of poisoning of colonies of honey bees by orchard spraying have been brought to my notice this season. The opportunity has also been taken of making a few preliminary investigations on this important subject. Since many questions have been sent to Rothamsted, it might be useful to publish a few notes.

In general what little information I have so far been able to collect is in complete agreement with that obtained by C. B. Gooderham, of Canada, and his assistants. . . . The conclusions reached in this paper, and supported so far by our own preliminary observations in this country, are:—

(1) Under orchard conditions it would appear that arsenic in the form of lead or calcium arsenate is the main source of bee poisoning in the usual insecticidal and fungicidal spray mixtures used to-day.

(2) Even sulphur alone may cause trouble, though not to the same degree as that caused by the above chemicals.

(3) Clear evidence of repulsion from copper sulphate, lime sulphur and nicotine has been obtained from tests under controlled conditions by Gooderham and myself; but, under orchard conditions this repulsion appears to be temporary and does not prevent serious losses from occurring at times.

(4) The sign of arsenical poisoning is partial or complete paralysis and is first evidenced by numbers of "crawlers" appearing in front of the hive. The bees tend to congregate on the alighting board and ground in front of the hive. The abdomen becomes greatly distended. Dysentry appears, followed by the death of the adult bees concerned. This is in severe cases followed by the death of the larvæ.

(5) Symptoms of sulphur poisoning are similar but usually less severe.

(6) Neither Gooderham nor myself have as yet come across clear cases of either *copper* or *nicotine* piosoning under field conditions.

(7) It should be realised that the presence of some arsenic in the body of a bee (precautions have been taken to make certain that its external surface was arsenic-free) does not necessarily indicate that poisoning has occurred. *But*, if the internal arsenic content is greater than 0.00005 mg. of arsenic per bee, poisoning has probably occurred. If it is over 0.0008 mg. poisoning has definitely occurred.

From a general review of the data available we can, I consider, *tentatively* conclude:—

(a) All sprays containing arsenicals are dangerous when applied during bloom.

(b) Only sprays or dusts containing arsenic result in dead brood.

(c) The most powerful bee-poison appears to be sulphur-lead arsenate in dust form.

(d) In general it appears true to say that less mortality results from sprays and dusts containing copper or nicotine as an ingredient together with the arsenical.

(e) Sulphur dust, free from other chemicals, may cause death of bees, but it is unlikely that this occurs to any extent in the field.

(f) Observations, supplemented by chemical analyses, indicate that the greatest poisoning usually occurs just previous to and just after main bloom. On the other hand no time from Sept.-Jan. is completely safe.

(g) Weather conditions have set an important bearing on the incidence of poisoning. Very severe poisoning has been noted even when the weather is cool and wet, and many of the worst cases have taken plaec following brief bursts of fine weather intervening between periods of broken weather. On the other hand, attempts to secure

poisoning by placing a few hives in an orchard, sprayed or dusted with the most deadly mixtures when the weather was optimum for flight, have sometimes resulted in failure. Several factors may account for this:—

1. Bees, after several days' confinement, greedily seek moisture from poison-covered leaves, petals and herbage growing beneath trees.

2. During confinement stores become depleted and at the first opportunity bees are very active in collecting new stores near at hand, resulting in much poisoned pollen being brought in.

3. During the periods of weather favourable to flight, poisoned pollen may be collected but not consumed, and this may be fed upon during periods of confinement.

(h) The main source of poisoning of bees and brood is clearly poisoned pollen, but under certain conditions drop-water from sprayed leaves, petals or herbage growing in the orchard may be a very important factor. Some writers mention nectar, but chemical analysis show little evidence of this being a source of poisoning.

(i) Many of the poison sprays remain on the trunks of trees for a very considerable time (Sept.-Jan.), and though dry in dry weather, naturally become wet after rain or heavy dew. Bees seem attracted to tree trunks as a source of water and so pick up the poison long after spraying.

(j) It is often assumed that poison applied to the fruit-bloom is the chief cause of loss. *This is not the case.* Severe cases of poisoning before and during bloom are often (*this was very true in this country this season*) attributable to poison obtained from dandelion bloom, on which poison has fallen, growing in or near the orchard.

(k) Strong colonies often exhibit the most severe poisoning.

From the foregoing I think we may rightly suggest that:—

1. Bees should not be placed in orchards until the early varieties are in bloom after the application of sprays applied during the "pink" bud stage.

2. Bees should be taken away before the beginning of the "Calyx" spray —i.e. directly after petal fall.

3. Owners of orchards should be asked, whenever possible, and certainly whenever they hire colonies of bees for pollination, not to dust or spray open blossom. It should, however, be realised by beekeepers that, as happened this season, sometimes the blossoms open at a much greater rate than usual, in which case the orchardist may be late with his spraying and, if he does not want to lose his crop, he has to spray at a time unfavourable to the bees. This rarely happens, but when it does it is, I consider, still debatable as to whether the spraying or the pollination effected by the bees is the more important.

4. The provision of adequate and correctly constituted drinking water in the apiary is suggested as a possible method of helping to keep bees from collecting poisoned water from tree trunks, etc.

(l) Work is being done in an attempt to find various substances which act as repellants to bees and which can be added to sprays without spoiling their effects. This appears to be a hopeful line of enquiry.

(m) Other work is being done, notably in America, to discover satisfactory alternative sprays and dusts which are not harmful to bees. This may prove successful eventually, but it is, in my opinion, unlikely to bear fruit in the near future.

(n) Derris and Pyrethrum dusts or sprays have been shown in our preliminary experiments to be relatively harmless to bees, except, of course, when they come into direct contact with the bee's body, acting in the same way as "Flit" which is, I believe, composed of these substances in suspension in alcohol, etc. It is unlikely that even if collected as "pollen" and fed to the larvæ they would cause much damage.

In conclusion, it seems to me that most of the trouble caused periodically to beekeepers by poison sprays is due mainly to unfortunate weather conditions, and secondly to lack of knowledge on the part of fruit-growers. The spreading of *accurate* knowledge on this subject by beekeepers would seem to be very desirable, coupled with friendly co-operation with fruit-growers and farmers. I am convinced that very much more could be done in

the latter way, and would bring nothing but good to the beekeeper and the grower. I feel that this is particularly important at the present time. Research is still very necessary on this subject, since little work has yet been done in this country, and to generalise from work done in other countries, often under entirely different climatic conditions, is dangerous. Such research is being carried out at Rothamsted, and the results obtained will be made known both to beekeepers and to growers through their journals. Beekeepers can rest assured that this important subject is not being neglected.

(May-Aug. period in England corrected to Sept.-Jan. period for N.Z. —Ed.)

ARE HIVE MATS NECESSARY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR?

Over a period of years I have observed the conditions in hives wintered with sack mats as contrasted with those without any covering beneath the lid. The hives observed without mats were usually kept by beekeepers who were not particularly interested in the welfare of their bees, whilst careful beekeepers seldom failed to use mats and frequently applied two or three to each hive. Text-books and journals devoted to beekeeping stress the necessity for good mats, as an essential part of good wintering. It is claimed that the mats conserved the warmth of the hive, and kept the bees snug during the winter months.

It has been my experience, however, that hives wintered without mats appear to come through the winter in much better condition than those having mats. It is imperative that hive lids be tight fitting and completely water-tight. Under these conditions the hives without mats opened up in the spring perfectly dry and the bees show marked activity. On the other hand, those having mats are very frequently found to have them sodden with moisture, resulting from condensation created within the hive. The tops of the frames and the sides of the hive bodies are wet and sometimes covered with a thick slime. Slaters and other insects are often observed, apparently having been induced to enter the hives by the dampness therein, and where conditions are really bad the bees are extremely sluggish. During the early part of August last year I found it necessary to make an inspection of an apiary located in low-lying swamp country, where the ground was so water-logged that I was compelled to wear gumboots. None of the twenty hives in this apiary possessed a mat, which I am sure was quite inadvertent, and the perfectly dry condition of the hives and liveliness of the bees was evidence of the advantage of wintering without mats. In Auckland and also districts where similar climatic conditions prevail, it would appear to be an advantage to remove hive mats when colonies are receiving their final preparation before being closed down for the winter. If the bees require feeding in the early spring the mats should be replaced at this time or when the hives receive their first complete examination.

It is intended to experiment further with this phase of wintering bees and to make tests in the early spring with regard to the stores consumed by colonies over-wintered with and without mats.

Mr. F. D. White, of Whangarei, who operates 600 colonies, carried out an experiment during the past winter in wintering fifteen colonies with mats and fifteen without. He reports as follows:—

"Hives were of equal strength in the autumn and in good condition for wintering. When opened up in early September the whole thirty hives appeared to be of about equal strength. They were wintered in two supers. The hives with the mats had the greater part of their brood in the top box whilst those without had all their brood in the lower box. The matless hives were perfectly dry but the others were so wet that slime covered the frames."

R. S. WALSH,
Apiary Instructor, Auckland.

TALKS TO BEGINNERS.

We will deal with principles rather than with detailed practices. But first of all there are some questions asked and "Skep" thanks those who sent them in.

Q. What is the most critical time for pollen and honey in any district?

Ans. Undoubtedly the month between willow and clover flows. In some districts there is a greater pollen shortage than is realised at this time.

Q. Have beekeepers any suggestions as to how to maintain an ideal flow of honey and pollen in any district?

Ans. This is addressed to "beekeepers," which lets Skep out. Let's have your answers for next issue.

Q. What results have been obtained in using pollen traps, or reasons why they are unnecessary?

Ans. In Australia and America excellent results have been obtained. The pollen is used to mix with soybean flour which is a substitute. In this country isolated efforts have been made which indicate promising results. There is a large scope for experimentation. Traps are unnecessary in districts where pollen is not scarce. On the other hand these districts could be trapping pollen for use elsewhere.

Q. What results have been obtained by using a two-queen hive or reasons why it is impracticable?

Ans. Excellent results have been obtained by some N.Z. beekeepers. It is a form of intensive beekeeping. Too many producers in this country suffer from megalomania. They think it necessary to have many hives to be successful. More honey could be obtained from fewer hives, with less total effort, if our practises were more intensive and less extensive. The two-queen system is a practical and intensive method.

SPRING MANAGEMENT.

Having made your first inspection earlier you will now need to take stock of hive conditions. Check carefully for foul brood. Watch pollen supply. Provided you are free from disease, supplement with pollen combs from the honey supers, if you do not find solid patches of pollen in the brood combs. You should have at least the equal of three combs of sealed honey in the hive right up to the honey flow. Otherwise the queen will not lay to her full capacity. Feed sugar syrup if you have no honey. If you are in a district where honey comes in freely in the month before the main flow, you can add the third box on top to prevent the queen being crowded for laying room. Remember that the force of bees to gather the honey from the main flow is bred in the month before that flow. The queen is just an egg-laying machine which requires the right hive temperature and sufficient food to gain the best results. If you have a poor queen in the spring replace her. You cannot judge this by looking at her but at her brood. A poor queen misses laying in about every third or fourth cell, and the hive raises drones earlier than other hives. Do not go spreading the brood rest to encourage the queen to lay faster. A good queen will lay all over the place. Your job should be to prevent the results of this later in swarming.

SWARM CONTROL MEASURES.
THE DEMAREE METHOD.

When the two or three-storied hive is beginning to raise swarm cells, remove nine frames of brood, shake the bees, making sure the queen is below—do not bump her violently off the frame as she is a delicate machine—and place these nine combs in a separate super. Fill out the bottom box with empty combs and place a queen excluder over the box. Place a box of empty combs over this, and if there were three boxes previously, the third over this. Finally, put the box of brood on the top and replace the lid. There are many modifications of the Demaree method but the principle involved is the confining of the queen to the bottom box with plenty of room to lay, and the isolation of the brood above with the brood-free super or supers over the excluder. Cells must be removed from the top box in from seven to nine days. (See page 7, Oct. issue, 1943, of *The N.Z. Beekeeper*.)

USE OF FOUNDATION.

Remove three or four frames of brood from the brood nest and insert frames of foundation in their place. This enables the young bees to make wax and modifies one of the impulses to swarm.

"SWITCHING" OF HIVES.

Place a strong hive wanting to swarm on the stand of a weak hive

and put the weak hive on the stand of the strong hive. The field bees from the strong hive will go to the old stand, thus relieving the pressure of population, and at the same time switching the excess population to the weak hive.

PRODUCTION OF COMB HONEY.

Hives are run as for extracted honey right up to the main flow. Then the queen is confined to one super under an excluder and two half sections supers placed above. The crowding of bees into such a small space forces them to work on the sections. The desire to swarm is partially checked by the fact that the young bees have so much new comb to build. Extra supers are added as required.

The full-depth super or two taken from the original hive can be set on a new stand, given a cell or queen, and used for increase or united to the parent hive at the close of the season.

For details of supering for section honey read Mr. Walsh's article in the Dec. issue of the *N.Z. Journal of Agriculture*, page 461.

All beekeepers should make a point of marketing honey in the finest condition. The way to sell honey is to sell good honey. We have the finest sweet in the world. Pack it with all the loving care you would use on something precious. One way to hold the war-time market is to be sure that the quality of our product is right and kept right.

Before we hibernate like the bees, it is as well to take a final look at the hives. About all that can be done is to make sure that the bees are in good condition for wintering. The stores of sealed honey should be in the top box above the cluster. As the cluster contracts it moves upward, keeping honey above itself. Many of us have learned from experience that bees can starve to death with honey beside or below the cluster because as the cluster moved upwards it found only the wood of the roof. If enough warm weather lasts, the bees may have time to bring the honey in, but very often, in our N.Z. climate, winter sets in early and the bees are forced to cluster before they can remedy the mistakes of the amateur.

Make sure at the same time that the bottom board is raised from dampness by stones or bricks. Obviously you will see that the roof is watertight and the entrance mouseproof.

If you managed to raise some autumn queens, the young queen may not have a large force of bees. Help her by contracting the size of the hive with a division board or by transferring the hive to a nucleus box. Remember to mark or take a note of the hive from which you reared the queens. Next season you can note which young queens are as good as their mothers. Some you will find are decidedly poorer. Only those that are equal to or better than their mothers are the strain you want. A breeding queen is not only a queen that has all the good points of a honey-gathering strain, but particularly one that can transmit these characteristics to her daughters. When you find that the daughters can again transmit those qualities to her daughters, you are on a good thing. That strain has what is called prepotency firmly fixed on the female side. This is something to think and read about during the winter. We will have more to say about this breeding business later.

Having decided what you can spend on new material for next year, it is a good idea to make up your list of requirements and place your orders to have delivery in good time.

Here is a good question sent in by one correspondent:

Q. I would like to know if there is any reason for farmers here not growing Sainfoin or Sweet Clover. I note that fine-strawed, more leafy, thin-seeded, and coumarin-free types of sweet clover have been developed at Saskatchewan in Canada. Could we not import some to further our honey industry here? Both sweet clover and sainfoin are reputed to be good yielders of nectar.

Ans. Well, to use a vulgarism, that is a mouthful, but it is very much to the point.

First of all, Skep does not have sufficient information on sainfoin to give an answer on this point at present. In regard to sweet clover, Skep thinks we can and should grow more of it. Sweet clover has been the wonder honey plant of America. It is one of the oldest legumes of the world, known to Greece and Rome. It is grown in several parts of the South Island by beekeepers, and farmers are beginning to take a greater interest in it because of its nitrogen-building qualities. Its general use by farmers is limited at present by some disadvantages. The particular one is that the seed needs to

be scarified in a sand drum to assist germination. Lucerne and the red clovers seem to be regarded as hay crops of greater value to farmers at present.

From the viewpoint of the beekeeper, sweet clover is readily worked by the bees early and late. The types so far grown are autumn flowering. While this is of value, it is to be remembered that full value cannot be taken of it because hive population is much reduced. We agree that seeds should be imported and trial plots laid down. Will readers please write in to state their experience of sweet clover?

Wishing you a good winter.

SKEP.

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"THE N.Z. BEEKEEPER"

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