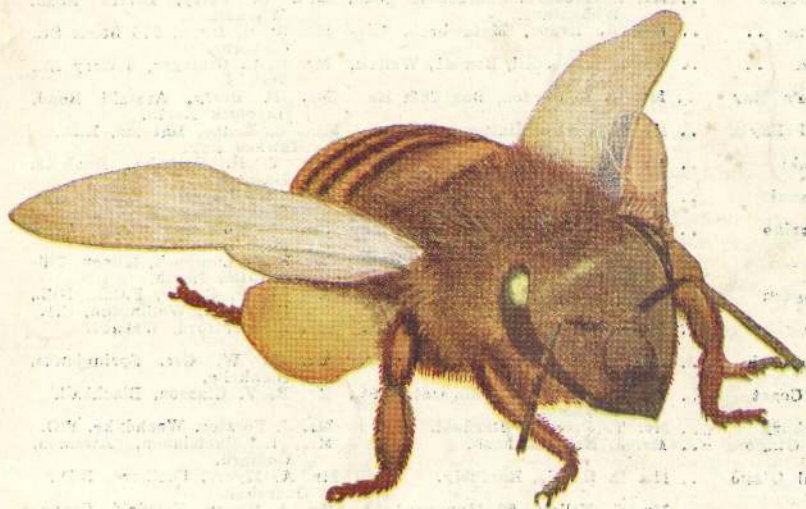


THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL. 9, No. 1.

FEBRUARY, 1947



OFFICIAL ORGAN of the
NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION
OF NEW ZEALAND
(Incorporated).

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

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Better Marketing

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The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

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W. J. Lennon, Editor.

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FEBRUARY, 1947.

EDITORIAL.

Research and Experiment.

D.D.T. and Nosema.

Readers will be interested to study the reports that appear elsewhere in this issue. It is gratifying to know that there is an organisation with skilled workers to handle the problems that beset the producer.

Experiments with D.D.T. show more promising results in the control of its use than appeared possible a year ago. Even now, it is too early to draw definite conclusions, but it appears that the danger to bees and the work of the honey producer has been exaggerated. Reports from many countries show that, where proper control measures are wisely applied, D.D.T. can be used without danger to honeybees.

"Spring Dwindling" has caused very serious loss of hive strength right through the country this season. Laboratory examinations have been made of samples of bees from widespread parts of the country, and a general infection of *Nosema Apis* appears to have been the cause of the dwindling. It is not a new disease as it is apparent that the disease has been in N.Z. for years. Its periodic recurrences seem to be due to certain climatic conditions that favour its growth. There does not seem to be any need for anxiety about its spread, as it is probably as widespread this year as ever before. Unless climatic or other conditions are the same next year as they have been this year, the position may return to

normal and little evidence of its presence may be found.

This does not remove the necessity of seeking a remedy. Experiments along certain lines are being tried to test out proposed remedies, but results to date are not encouraging. *Nosema* spores may live for some weeks in honey. They may also be picked up from such sources as drinking water. Literature on the subject shows that little is known of a possible cure. Beekeepers will serve the cause of investigation best by seeking instructions from their local Apiary Instructor, and by not demanding a quick cure from a bottle that in the meantime can only have the value of coloured water.

The symptoms of the presence of the disease are the absence of bees with frayed wings from the hive; a general and progressive shrinking of hive strength; superseding of queen, even several times; and, possibly crawling bees away from the hive, with dead bees along the lines of foraging flights. The effect may be evident in a group of hives in a certain part of the apiary. One conjecture is that weakened bees have drifted there from other hives and brought a heavy infection which has had the eventual effect of depopulating those hives more quickly. Bees generally die away from the hive.

The scientific workers have plenty of material to work upon, and the proving of possible remedies takes patience and care in testing their value. If the results are negative, the work may have to be done all over again from a new angle. The best thing the beekeeper can do is to keep following the best beekeeping practises by breeding from his best

stock and replacing failing queens with good young stock.

Executive Meeting.

The Executive has asked the delay of this issue, in order that a report of their meeting in Wellington, on 25th February, may be made.

A New Minister of Marketing and Agriculture.

Mr. E. Cullen, the new Minister of Marketing and Agriculture, comes to office at a time when problems of organisation and marketing within the beekeeping industry in N.Z. are overdue for attention. As these matters have not been resolved after much practical negotiation during the past three years, we hope Mr. Cullen will be able to approach them unfettered by past failure but anxious to see them settled before his term of office has expired. This Association, which represents over 80% of the commercial producers, and is the only

mouthpiece of many amateurs, will give him every assistance.

SEASON 1947.

Another production season has almost finished. Characterised by a fretful spring and a shy summer, it looked as if most of the Dominion would produce little honey. A last-minute recovery in many places has gladdened the hearts of most producers, and an average crop seems to be in sight. It has, however, been a difficult production year, with the weather making the best-laid plans miscarry. If man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards, then the beekeeper has had his share this year.

LEAFLET ON POLLENATION.

As a result of several inquiries for the article on page 23 of the May, 1946, issue of "The N.Z. Beekeeper," the Editor has had a number of reprints made. These are in the form of a three-page leaflet at 10/- per 50. A limited number is left. Apply to The Editor.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO BEEKEEPERS

BY THE EDITOR, W. J. LENNON.

After four years as your Editor, which included a period as Vice-President, I wish to record some impressions of trends within the beekeeping industry. Many members are ignorant of the consistently hard work performed by their Executives in a difficult period. When some members have not seen the results they have so much desired, it is natural for a note of criticism to be forthcoming. It is easy to blame the Government for procrastination and frustration when it suited the purpose of the Government to act so but members, and to some extent the executive, must take some responsibility for not repeating and pressing their claims more firmly. If members want an extension of bureaucratic control, they are getting it, but they should be warned that it will lead to their Statutory Board being representative of only a minority.

Commandeer was in force in 1943, when Mr. Barclay, then Minister of Agriculture and Marketing, accepted a resolution from conference dealing with the matters of price and representation and promised sympathetic consideration. A change in Ministerial office, as a result of the election that year, gave Mr. Barclay no chance of redeeming his pledge. When his successor, Mr. Roberts, was approached early in 1944 by the executive of the National Beekeepers' Association and repeatedly since, only unsympathetic consideration on these matters has been given.

For three years, the Executive has been discussing with the Government a proposed new basis for an elected Board to replace the present appointed Board. It was desired to have representation spread as fully as possible over all production. Last year, the Director of Marketing, who was acting for the Minister in these discussions—informed the Executive that the producer representation that the Government would consider could only be from bulk suppliers of honey to the Division. The fact that practically all negotiations on this matter—as well as on the matter of increased prices—were conducted by the Director of the I.M.D. is a most undesirable feature of the discussions because the Director is an interested party on behalf of the I.M.D. The Executive may have failed but only because it was an irresistible force against an immovable object.

The recently formed Suppliers' Association has the appearance of being representative of those who supply the Division. Membership is automatic for those who supply honey in bulk, but there is no subscription fee. The organisation was encouraged by the I.M.D. in its formation and is now financed by it from the seals fund. Suppliers never represented more than 30% (thirty) of our total honey production, before the war, and it is much less since. In 1945 they represented 15% (fifteen) approximately. In 1946, honey forwarded by suppliers to the Division represented only approximately 3% (three) of the estimated total production. One must of course take into account many other factors that have increased the demand for honey at prices more remunerative than the Division has paid, to explain in part the reason why suppliers represent such a small part of the annual production of honey. As voting power in the Suppliers' Association is confined to those who have supplied during the past two years, any move to limit representation on the Statutory Board to suppliers of the Division is discrimination of a most obvious kind. Such however was the decision of the Auckland Conference last year.

Considerable publicity and encouragement from the I.M.D. and the Control Board has been given to the Suppliers' Executive for its part in recommending a bonus payment of 3½d per lb from the seals revenue

received this year. If only a small tonnage of honey is received the fortunate suppliers may receive 10½ per lb. pro rata. From demands, threats, requests and pleadings to supply the Division with a progressively diminishing maximum for economic operation of the Honey Section, the incentive to supply has now been elevated to the chances of a fairly safe lottery.

Right up to this last year, both the I.M.D. and the Board have consistently refused to support the principle they now approve. It is significant that neither recommend it now. They are content with allowing the Suppliers' Executive to take the credit.

The success of the new plan of payment this season and in future is dependent on a steady inflow of funds to the Seals' Account. That steady inflow is only assured when the producers who pay the tax are convinced that the fund is serving the purpose for which it was created or if the tax is to serve a different purpose, that the new purpose is worth while. When the scheme was propounded ten years ago, the fund was to be used to increase the demand for honey "chiefly by advertising". It has not been necessary to use the fund for this purpose. It was expected then that about 1500 tons would bear the tax, on the assumption that approximately 1000 tons, which was to be received by the Division, would be tax-free. That scheme had a great deal to commend it. To-day, only about 900 tons pays the tax and very much less goes to the Division. To-day the fund is being used to pay bonuses to suppliers of the Division. The salaries of Control Board members—£200, plus expenses—are paid from it. The Suppliers' Association has received £100 in the first year of its existence. The National Beekeepers' Association has received £100 per year for some years. Whatever other expenses are charged to the fund are not disclosed because the I.M.D., which controls the fund, refuses to submit an account to those who pay the contributions, or to any organised section of producers.

There is some argument as to whether the consumer or the producer pays the halfpenny per lb. seal tax. If it is the consumer who pays, then only those consumers who purchase honey, mainly from shops, are taxed to support the fund. As the retail price for honey is the same for that with seals as for that without, it is hard to escape the argument that it is the producer who pays. In any case, only about 900 tons, out of a total estimated production of over 3000 tons, is charged with the tax. To expect producers to pay into the visible credit of a fund with an invisible debit, or to expect them to support the principle that their production should be taxed when they are to have no representation on the Statutory Board of their industry, is to invite the failure of the Marketing plan recommended by the Suppliers' Executive and approved by the Minister. It is taxation without representation.

He would be a rash critic who would say that there have been no benefits from the past decade's experiment in organised marketing. He is blind who sees no need for radical changes in present policy. One of the most obvious omissions has been the failure to send an adequate quantity of honey to England. Their need has been, and still is, greater than ours. We would have served their need and our own cause better had we not failed in an obvious duty. Ten years ago we had an elective Board responsible to the producers that elected them. That Board had promised sevenpence per lb. pro rata, for bulk honey. To-day the price is still the same with the promise of an illusory bonus. Had the original policy been followed, the price could have been several pence higher for the same honey. The producers were asking for price control in 1940, and they would be unwise not to retain its benefits still.

It seems that our industry has almost completed a full circle of walking unknown paths for ten years. Is it too much to hope that a straight course on a known road cannot be followed in the future? The obvious thing to do is to set our feet in that direction new.

N.Z. HONEY CONTROL BOARD

Reports from the principal honey producing areas describe the present season as one of the most disappointing in the history of commercial honey production. Cold, unseasonable weather continued until late in January, and in many districts beekeepers were feeding tons of sugar to their bees at a time of the year when half the honey crop would be collected if normal seasonal conditions had prevailed. The position of beekeepers in the Waikato (and in probably other localities) was made more difficult because of the heavy dwindling of bees, and when the weather conditions eventually did improve the force of bees were not there to collect a payable crop. This matter of dwindling is regarded very seriously by beekeepers in the affected areas and every effort is at present being made by the Department of Agriculture, and by the research officers at Wallaceville, to determine the cause of the trouble and to find a remedy.

Where hives have escaped "dwindling" and maintained their full strength, a fair crop might be possible if the existing fine weather continues throughout the greater part of February. The general outlook, however, at this date is that the honey crop will be an exceptionally poor one.

Under such conditions beekeepers will naturally dispose of their honey to the best possible advantage, and front door selling direct from the beekeeper to the consumer will in many instances account for the major portion of the beekeepers' output.

Whilst the Board has no desire to see the beekeeper restricted in selling his own honey direct to the consumer, we are at the same time concerned over the position where sufficient inducement is not offered the beekeeper to send his surplus honey direct to the I.M.D. The Board has repeatedly emphasised the unfair position in which the I.M.D. is placed in the matter of obtaining supplies, and we are at present await-

ing a reply to official representations for an increased I.M.D. pay-out on the current season's production. We are hoping that a favourable reply will be received to these representations and that authority will be given to increase the I.M.D. pay-out to at least a level that will enable the Honey Section to compete on even terms with outside commercial interests for that portion of the beekeepers' crop over his front door sales to consumers.

In the meantime beekeepers should in their own interest delay accepting orders from traders until an official statement is made on the subject of the pay-out from the I.M.D.

It should be mentioned that the Director of Marketing, Mr. Ross Fraser, is assisting in every possible way to ensure that the most favourable consideration is given to the request that the I.M.D. be authorised to grant an increased pay-out to suppliers.

The following further statement has been sent by Mr. Nelson as we go to press:—

The Board has just been officially advised that the I.M.D. has been authorised to distribute the current season's seal levy to a maximum of 3½d per lb. in addition to the existing price of 7d per lb., pro rata, on all honey received by the I.M.D. this season.

The above revised scale of payout is in line with the recommendations of the I.M.D. Honey Suppliers' Committee and the Honey Control Board.

WALLACE NELSON,

Chairman, Honey Control Board.

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BRANCH NOTES

NORTHLAND.

A Field Day of the Northland Branch was held at the Apiary of Messrs. Holdaway & Son, Whangarei, on Saturday, January 25th. There was a fair attendance of about 40, including members from as far afield as Dargaville and Okaihau. Mr. W. R. Fix, Apiary Instructor, Auckland, represented the Department of Agriculture. The President, Mr. J. Gavin, welcomed the visitors and handed the proceedings over to Mr. Holdaway. A demonstration on the method of making up and wiring frames, and embedding and fixing foundation, was then given. Also the method used in repairing damaged malthoid covers, using turpentine and the blow-lamp, which makes a joint which never comes loose. Mr. Fix spoke to the company, most of whom were beekeepers in a small way, about Extracting, especially the setting up of an extractor.

After lunch there was a practical demonstration with explanation by Mr. Fix of the different methods of taking off the honey, using the bee escape, and brushing. The honey was then taken to the extracting room. The use of the hot rooms were explained. Those present then saw how it was handled in the honey house and how it was prepared for sale.

Mr. A. H. Davies, late of Hamilton, demonstrated one method of fixing foundation in sections; also exhibited a very handy nail box.

Afternoon tea concluded the proceedings, and it was said by all that they had spent a profitable and enjoyable day. H. Holdaway.

WAIROA.

On 23rd November the Wairoa Branch of the National Beekeepers' Association held a Field Day at the Apiary of the President, Mr. S. L. Beedell, Mitchell Road. Despite the fact that the morning was dull and cold, there was a good attendance of members, and others interested in the beekeeping industry.

Mr. D. S. Robinson, Apiary Instructor, attached to the Department of Agriculture, Hastings, was in attendance, and gave a very instructive and informative lecture on the detection, and control of foul brood in a hive, raising queen bees and re-queening colonies, and other matters relating to hive management, and the production of first quality honey.

It is the intention of the Association to conduct further Field Days during the season, when Mr. Robinson will again be present; also to conduct a honey and beeswax competition among members.

Mr. Robinson answered numerous questions, and was accorded a hearty vote of thanks by those present. —R. Grainger.

WELLINGTON.

It is a sad commentary to make that the Branch with the largest membership is not so prodigal with reports of its doings, and of its meetings. We hope to make some amends from this out.

Visitors to Wellington are extended a

hearty invitation to our monthly meetings, at which we usually feature a discussion on members' problems, a talk of seasonal topics, and round off the evening with light refreshments, for which we are ever grateful to our lady members. The meetings develop into friendly gatherings. Should you be a visitor to the Empire City, ring the secretary (phone 46-586, day, or 60-249, night) and he will then tell you when and where to meet. Our meetings are in Wellington on the 2nd Wednesday and in Lower Hutt on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Recently we had the pleasure of a visit by two ladies from the Netherlands East Indies. They gave members a very interesting talk on beekeeping in Sumatra, and a vivid description of their country to which they were then making an early return. They left their country when it was overrun by the Japanese. This was a delightful evening.

Meetings are usually well attended, but I regret subs. are not coming in as promptly as they should. Is it due to the Government Housing Scheme in the Hutt area using up the rich fertile land which used to produce a wealth of flowers and clovers, thus seriously curtailing the honey crop; or the vagaries of the weather discouraging the half-hearted amateurs; or the fact that the subs. to the small man being raised 50 per cent. (this latter was moved by the Wellington delegate at a special general meeting to adopt the new constitution, Ed.); or is it a combination of all three? Certainly reports to date disclose in this area a honey crop well below average.

Weather conditions for the holding of the 8th Annual Field Day at the Apiary of Mr. Harrison, Normandale, Lower Hutt, although threatening in the early hours of Sunday, 19th January, turned out to be fairly satisfactory; the attendance was only fair as compared with past meetings. Those who attended were well rewarded. Our host left no stone unturned and succeeded in making the occasion a memorable one. Members had been asked to bring along gadgets they had made. This invitation was largely availed of, and the outstanding exhibit was an observation hive, a really super one. It was used to show the introduction of a queen by the paper bag method—a method which has had a great vogue in Wellington this season. Members were able to follow this demonstration closely, which was quite successful. The Chairman, Mr. Bodmin, gave clear-out addresses which were keenly listened to.

Many members expressed their pleasure and appreciation as they left for the outing and for the information they had gained. The secretary had with him a copy of the new Handbook on Beekeeping, which has been written by the Chief Apiary Instructor, Mr. T. S. Winter. This is an up-to-date book suitable to N.Z. conditions and should be possessed by all interested beekeepers. To save members the trouble of writing or calling at the Department's office, orders were taken and subsequently posted direct to members. —P. Carter.

NELSON.

At a recent meeting of the Nelson Branch of the N.B.A., members expressed much pleasure at the success of a Field Day held at Mr. T. Cropp's Apiary. Mr. Cropp was in charge of operations, assisted by Mr. A. Stratford. Beekeepers journeyed from all parts of the district to attend. For the benefit of beginners, a general inspection was carried out, enabling those interested insight into the correct use of smoke, handling of frames, conditions to be noted when hives are opened, etc. Afternoon tea was provided by Mrs. Cropp, after which the more advanced side of beekeeping was touched upon. This consisted of queen-rearing and a method of running two queens in one hive.

During the meeting a matter of special interest to small beekeepers was raised. It was stated that although there are people who have only one or two colonies, the Association was ready to render them all possible assistance in obtaining maximum results. It was pointed out that from one hive, when properly managed, over one hundred pounds of surplus honey could be obtained in one season. It was a case of fewer hives receiving closer attention. This required skill which was not acquired from text books, although they were helpful.

With regard to the present season, although weather conditions were not ideal on account of cold changes, members reported that nectar was coming in quite freely and good returns should be obtained.

—R. Whitwell.

WEST COAST.

A very successful Field Day was held at the Apiary of Mr. Joseph Bolitho, Black's Point, Reefton, on January 25th. Weather conditions were ideal for such an outing, and about forty beekeepers were present, coming from districts between Hari Hari and Inangahua.

The President, Mr. E. Airey, Senr., introduced Mr. Bolitho, on whose behalf Miss Bolitho replied, and then handed over the Apiary for the use of beekeepers for the day.

Mr. L. A. Ilton (Poerua), opened several hives and explained their working for the benefit of younger enthusiasts, after which Mr. E. Perry, Apiary Instructor for the West Coast, gave a talk on Section Honey Production.

Next came the lunch-interval, during which the President (Mr. Airey) gave an interesting lecture on the History of Beekeeping on the West Coast, dating his subject back to 1877 when bees were first kept on Coal Creek Flat. A point of interest was that the Annual Conference of the National Beekeepers' Association was held in Greymouth in 1925. He suggested that it would be in the best interests of all beekeepers if records of the industry were kept on the West Coast.

Mr. A. Baty (Coal Creek) then gave a demonstration and lecture on Queen Rearing as applied to West Coast conditions.

Mr. R. Glasson (Blackball) exhibited a nucleus containing a queen of pure Italian stock, and spoke of the many good qualities the Italian bees have as compared with the black bees. He also exhibited a nucleus containing a drone laying queen and another which had laying workers in it. Also he gave a talk on the nectar sources

of the West Coast.

Mr. P. H. Martin (Ahaura) gave a talk on splitting colonies for increase.

Mr. Groom (Karoro) gave a demonstration of his method of wiring frames, and Mr. Airey, Junr., gave a demonstration of preparing hives for transport.

Beekeepers on the West Coast are viewing with alarm the destruction by the opossums of the native trees, especially the Rata, and are making representations to the Minister of Internal Affairs (Hon. W. E. Parry) in respect of having steps taken for the total destruction of the vermin.

A resolution which was moved by Mr. D. Cochrane and seconded by Mr. Fitton was carried unanimously and was as follows:—

"That owing to the destruction of native forests by opossums, the Minister of Internal Affairs be approached in respect to having steps taken for the total destruction of the vermin."

An enjoyable day terminated with the serving of afternoon-tea, and a vote of thanks to Mr. Bolitho.

Obituary.

We regret to record the death of one of the oldest members of our Branch, Mr. J. Coulson, of Paroa, which occurred since the last issue of the Journal.

The late Mr. Coulson was a very keen member of our Branch, and a regular attendant at meetings, where his presence will be greatly missed.

—R. Glasson.

CENTRAL OTAGO.

On February 8th, under ideal weather conditions, beekeepers rallied forth from as far afield as Invercargill, Dunedin and Wanaka to attend a Field Day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Lennon, Omakau.

In thanking Mr. Lennon for kindly placing his honey-house at the disposal of visitors for the day, our President (Mr. R. Farmer) extended a hearty welcome to those present, and then asked Mr. Lennon to explain the lay-out and procedure of operation of the honey extracting and packing plant. After listening to a very interesting address on the handling of the honey from the truck tray to the packing-room, the plant was set in operation and visitors were shown uncapping with the steam plane and given an opportunity to use the plane. (If only to have secured the chance of really uncapping a comb this season.)

After passing through the extractor, the honey is heated and clarified and pumped into settling tanks, which, after scumming is then gravitated to a graining tank in the packing-room.

By this time all present were enjoying themselves, either discussing some aspect of the plant, crop prospects, or sampling choice pickings from the uncappings box, when an adjournment was called for lunch. A spread of the usual Field Day standard was served by the ladies, upon the lawn, surrounded by an old English garden, containing a beautiful display of hollyhocks and other garden flowers.

After lunch a hive lid and bottom board, made of concrete, were exhibited by Mr. Lennon, who spoke upon their manufacture and suggested minor improvements to the mould for further lots. Hive stands made of concrete, by the semi-dry method, were

also shown by Mr. Myers.

Mr. I. Förster, Apiary Instructor, then gave a talk on Nosema disease, which was followed with interest. After a general discussion upon this subject afternoon tea was served, when, as usual, opportunity was taken to discuss one's particular problems with some other member.

Mr. J. McFadzien, Vice-President of the National Executive, then gave a short talk, keeping members in touch with the latest developments of the industry. As a visitor he moved a vote of thanks to those responsible for the very enjoyable day, which was carried by acclamation.

Mr. A. A. Lennie, President of the Southland Branch, endorsed the remarks of the previous speaker.

On behalf of the members of the Central Otago Branch, Mr. Farmer thanked Mr. and Mrs. Lennon for yet another very pleasant and sociable day in the history of the Branch, and also expressed appreciation for the assistance rendered by Mr. Förster.

Suitable and brief replies by Mr. and Mrs. Lennon brought what seemed an all-to-short day to a close.

—A. T. Myers.

GORE.

Ideal weather conditions, interesting lectures and demonstrations all contributed to the success of the Annual Field Day, at Mr. Geo. Swanson's home apiary at Waikaka Valley, on February 1st. In all, about 120 people gathered for the occasion. Besides local beekeepers and interested district residents, Otago, Otago Central, Clutha and Southland branches were well represented.

After Mr. Swanson had welcomed the visitors, the proceedings were officially opened by the Branch President, Mr. L. Box.

Mr. T. S. Winter, Chief Apiary Instructor, Wellington, gave a full and most interesting address relating to various aspects of the industry and the work of his Department.

Demonstrations were given by Mr. Robert Stewart, Heriot, on queen breeding, who also answered many questions. Mr. I. Förster, Apiary Instructor, spoke on the formation of nucleus hives. Mr. Swanson showed his breeding stock and spoke of the various strains of bees. Mr. Herron demonstrated his modified Demaree system of swarm control. A general comparison of beekeeping on the West Coast and in Southland was given by Mr. J. Glynn.

In addressing the meeting briefly, Mr. W. Lennon made reference to the value of bees as pollinators in agriculture, and to the help given by the Department of Agriculture to the industry.

Prospects are now for average to good crops.

—J. Glass.

SOUTHLAND.

The Field Day is to be held on Saturday, February 22nd, at the farm of Mr. W. Cawthorn, Riverton. It will cater especially for beginner beekeepers.

Weather conditions up to the end of December continued wintry. This played havoc with the hives, and swarming was excessive as the weather prevented hive operations.

Conditions have improved greatly in January, and heavy yielding is reported for brief periods.

(We saw your beautiful areas of clover

on 1st-3rd Feb., and we hope Southland gets a long and heavy flow.—Ed.)

—L. Griffin.

A SCALE HIVE RECORD.

Mr. C. Larsen, of Myrose Bush, Southland, records a gain of 26lbs. on each of two consecutive days. Mr. Larsen has been keeping bees for 40 years in the same place and he records these weights as the heaviest in his experience. Can readers report a better yield of honey elsewhere? Did it take 40 years to learn the trick, Mr. Larsen?

HAWKES BAY.

A very successful and instructive Field Day was held on Saturday afternoon at Mr. A. Adrian's Apiary, Kopua Road, Norsewood. Approximately 30 beekeepers and a number of the public interested were present, despite very showery weather. Lectures were given in a roomy shed owing to the rain. Mr. Hedge expressed pleasure at the number present, and introduced the various speakers and those to give demonstrations from Hastings and Havelock. Mr. Leete's discourse upon his home-made electric boiler which supplies steam for the uncapping, knife and other machines was most instructive and interesting. Mr. Leete with the aid of a black board, fully explained the working of his 50-frame radial extractor. Hive construction, and care and management of honey from the hive to the pots, was very capably dealt with by Mr. Gordon. Mr. Maultsaid gave a very valuable outline of the general management of hives and the correct storing of wax combs, and wax moth control. He also gave valuable advice to those taking up beekeeping, and stressed the use of standard equipment for obtaining the best results. Mr. P. Berry, the queen bee breeder, of Havelock North, delivered a most interesting talk on the introduction of the queen bees into the hives, nursery cages, nursery frames with bars, wax cells, transferring the larvae into the artificial wax queen bee cells, also untested and tested queen bees. The final speaker was Mr. D. S. Robinson, official Apiary Instructor for Hawkes Bay, and his subject was the treating of foul brood in affected hives, and the manufacture of candy for the feeding of bees. Many questions were asked of the speakers, who dealt with them in a very able manner. Mr. Hedge thanked the speakers and demonstrators for a most educative and interesting afternoon, and said the valuable information gained should help considerably those in the district who are engaged in the important industry. Afternoon tea was served by the ladies, who were accorded a hearty vote of thanks. Mr. Adrian was also accorded a hearty vote of thanks and appreciation for the use of his apiary, and hospitality.

—S. Hedge.

NORTH OTAGO.

A meeting of the North Otago Branch of the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand was held in Oamaru on the evening of November 8th, there being an attendance of nine of the district's most enthusiastic beekeepers. The President, Mr. J. C. Neill, occupied the chair and conducted the business before the meeting in his usual capable manner.

During the evening a very interesting ad-

dress was delivered by Mr. N. Glass, who spoke of the necessity for keeping fencing round out-apiaries in good repair, the maintenance of equipment, correct storage of combs and gear not in use, and the wisdom of attending to repairs immediately the necessity arose. The speaker also explained the method employed when cyano gas was used to expedite the removal of the last of the honey crop.

After Mr. Glass' address members of his audience discussed the various points mentioned by him and much useful information regarding the final clean-up for the season was gained by those members who are still in the beginners' class. —I. MacKinnon.

SOUTH AUCKLAND.

After what appeared to be one of the worst seasons for honey production ever experienced in the Waikato, hives in reasonable condition have made a remarkable recovery due to the ideal conditions at the end of January. It is anticipated that a normal crop of high-grade honey will result.

Beekeepers report serious losses through Spring Dwindling. Nosema Apis has taken its toll, leaving hives in such a weak state that a crop from them is out of the question.

Due to the protracted cold and changeable weather during Christmas and New Year, many hives have swarmed. The temperatures at the beginning of February have been some of the highest in the history of the Waikato. Mr. A. Pearson reports a similar late flow during the summer of 1918 when a crop was obtained from the 3rd of February on. —J. D. Lorimer.

PRICE AND SALE OF HONEY.

Master Grocers Concerned. Deputation to Minister of Finance.

A Press Association message from Gisborne, where the Master Grocers have been having their Annual Conference, contains the following reference to honey:—

At the opening of the Conference, the Minister of Supply (Mr. D. G. Sullivan) said that the question was being re-examined.

It was decided to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that honey was not passing through the normal channels because it was being sold by certain apiarists, at prices in excess of those authorised, direct to a limited section of the public, and to manufacturers, and to urge that immediate action be taken to direct that the honey be retailed through recognised channels at the authorised price.

The conference further decided that the Minister be urged to initiate immediate inquiries with a view to securing the importation of this commodity from Australia or elsewhere, and to investigate the adequacy or otherwise of the maximum price payable to the producer.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

P.O. Box 19, Foxton.
24th July, 1946.

Mr. J. Rentoul,
Farmers' Road, Matamata.

Dear Mr. Rentoul,

I have great pleasure in advising you that at its first meeting of this newly constituted Association, the General Executive unanimously passed a resolution electing you the first Life Member of the Association.

Glowing tributes to your most valuable and much appreciated service to the Industry over a long period of years was voiced by members, and at the Annual Conference held in Auckland on the 12th instant, the recommendation of the Executive was unanimously endorsed, the resolution being carried by acclamation.

You are therefore now a Life Member of this Association, and on behalf of the General Executive I extend to you their congratulations and their earnest wish that you may long be spared to enjoy the fruits of your retirement from the position of Manager of the Honey Section of the Internal Marketing Division.

With kindest regards, I remain,

Yours faithfully,
G. V. FRASER,
General Secretary.

Farmers' Road, Matamata.
31st July, 1946.

Mr. G. V. Fraser, Gen. Sec.,
National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z.
Foxton.

Dear Mr. Fraser,

Would you please communicate to the Executive of your Association my very keen appreciation of the honour they and the Association as a whole have conferred on me, by electing me a Life Member.

It is now something over thirty years since I became actively associated with the affairs of beekeepers.

In the early part of that period I was more closely associated with the production side of the business than in the later part, when my whole attention had to be given to the marketing side.

In that earlier period I served a term as President of the Association. Since my first connection with the Industry considerable progress has been made, the craft having grown from just beekeeping to producing with a fairly substantial standing and some order has been brought into the business.

I would like to think I have had some part in this.

I thank you for your expression of the General Executive's congratulations and good wishes. They will be valued throughout the remaining years.

With best regards, Yours sincerely,

J. RENTOUL.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE MEETING

The General Executive of the Association met in Wellington on the 24th and 25th February, when all members were present.

Owing to the fact that the Minister of Marketing (Mr. Cullen) had made a public announcement regarding payments for bulk honey supplied to the Internal Marketing Division subsequent to arrangements having been made for the Executive to meet the Minister, the Executive decided that there was now no point in meeting the Minister and the appointment was cancelled.

In the general discussion which led up to this decision being taken, criticism was voiced at the manner in which the Minister had worded his statement to the Press, when credit for obtaining the increased bonus payment was given solely to the recently-formed Suppliers' Association, whereas the General Executive of the National Association had been pressing for an increase in prices for the past three years. It was pointed out furthermore that correspondence from the National on the same subject in line with the decision of last Dominion Conference was still on the Minister's file unanswered, yet in making his statement the Minister failed to appreciate these facts. Discussion on the matter was closed with the passing of a resolution expressing surprise at the Minister's action and the registration of a protest against same.

The Executive also gave consideration to matters relating to the insurance of members' apiaries in respect of public liability and as a successful result of negotiations which have been proceeding for some time, have decided that the premiums payable by members will be reduced from 1/6 to

1/3 per apiary as from the 1st June next.

Certain amendments to the Constitution designed to still further facilitate the carrying out of the Association's business were discussed, and it was decided to circulate the proposals to Branches for consideration at a special general meeting, to be held at the conclusion of the next Conference.

It was further decided that the Conference this year shall be held in Wellington early in July. Branches will be advised of the dates and further details as soon as final arrangements are completed.

Matters relating to the appointment of Life Members of the Association were also discussed, and the names of certain members who have rendered outstanding service to the Association and to the Industry over a long period of years were noted for submission to the next Conference. (In this connection it is recommended that Branch Secretaries should go back through their Branch records and submit to the General Secretary the names of any of their members who have previously been elected as Life Members of the old Association.)

The question of presenting appropriate Certificates to recipients of this honour was also considered. The suggestion met with approval and the General Secretary was requested to go further into the matter.

A matter of interest to queen breeders—that of the basis of subscription to the Association—was also discussed, the outcome of which was the passing of a resolution, "that Queen Breeders' subscriptions to the Association be based on the actual number of colonies carried through the winter, the word colony to include nuclei."

In connection with the representations made to the Minister of Industries and Commerce concerning the resolution from the last Conference dealing with defective locally-produced carton containers, the Executive had before it a reply just received from the Minister (Mr. D. G. Sullivan), which read as follows:—

Wellington,
20th February, 1947.

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z., Inc.,
FOXTON.

Dear Sir,—

I have received your letter dated 6th February and can now advise that, following your earlier representations in regard to the quality of locally-made honey cartons, a full investigation of the position has been made by my Department.

Whilst certain weaknesses have been evident in some of the cartons produced, it is generally agreed that the quality has been greatly improved over recent years and the manufacturers are anxious to provide as high a quality carton as possible. As an indication of their good faith an offer has been made by the manufacturers to recompense purchasers for any cartons which are received in damaged or unsatisfactory condition if these cartons are returned to them.

Apart, however, from the question of whether or not locally-made cartons are of comparable quality, New Zealand is at present experiencing some difficulty in maintaining adequate supplies of container board. If, therefore, it is possible to import finished cartons this would to some extent relieve the general shortage of cardboard and permit the available supplies to be diverted to other essential uses.

Although, therefore, I am not in a posi-

tion to indicate the outcome of any applications, I suggest that the beekeepers investigate the availability of cartons from overseas and make appropriate application to the Customs Department supported by evidence that they are actually obtainable. I feel sure that any such application would be given due consideration by the Customs Department.

Yours faithfully,

D. G. SULLIVAN,

Minister of Industries & Commerce.

Matters of a purely domestic nature were also considered by the Executive and these will be dealt with later in a circular to Branches by the General Secretary.

Customer: I'm not a great reader myself, but I want a book to give to a friend.

Assistant: We have some nice editions in the classics. What about something by Dickens?

Customer: Yes, that will do. What's his latest?

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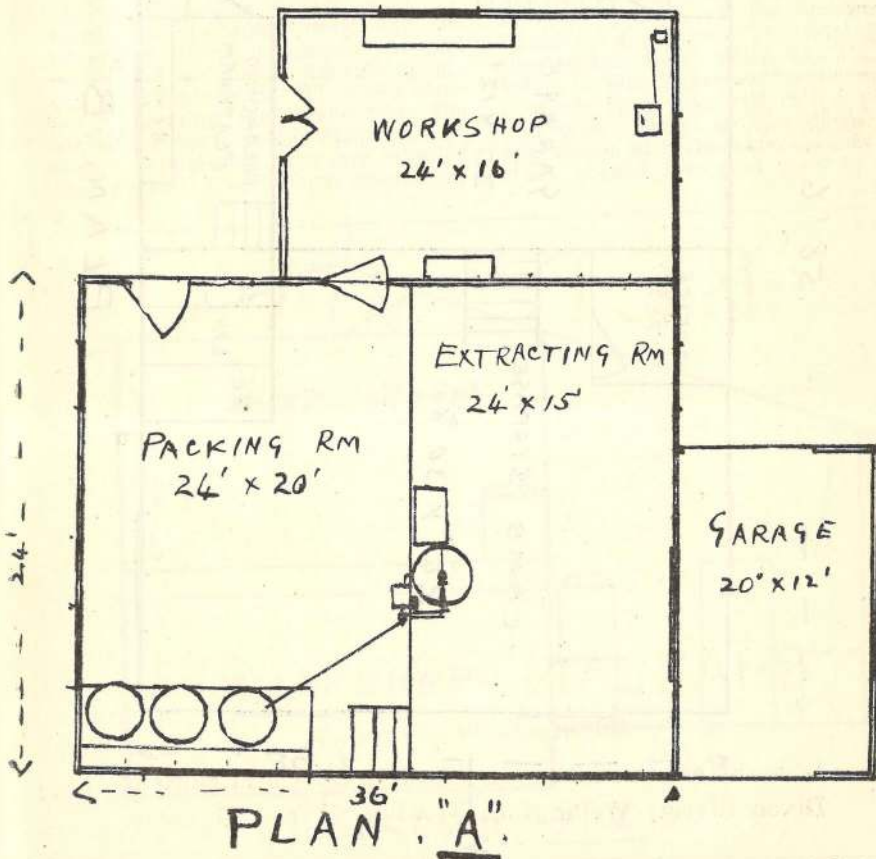
HONEY HOUSE PLANS.

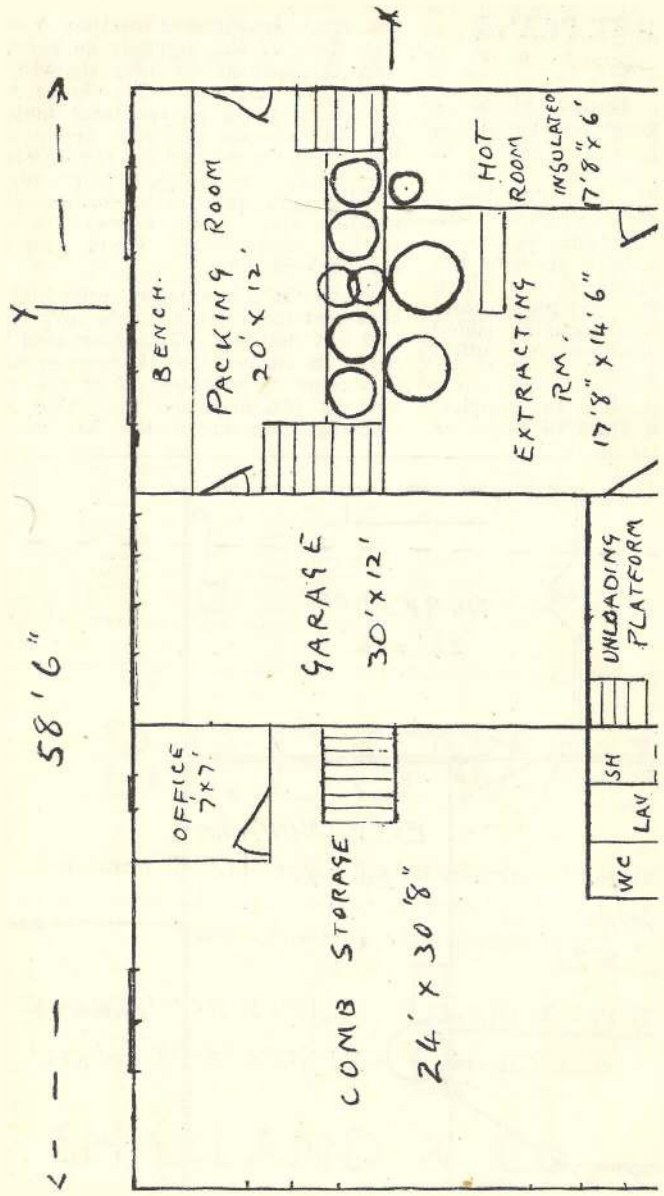
Here are two further plans of honey houses. Both are based on the principle of the use of gravity to carry the honey from the extractor to the honey tanks. Plan "A" has a main building 36ft. x 24ft. with lean-to's for garage and workshop. Plan "B" could be built up from the extracting and packing room which is 30ft. 8in. x 20ft. The garage and comb storage rooms could be added later. Both are designed for outfits of around 450 hives.

In plan "A," which is the simpler, honey is unloaded from the side of

the lorry into the extracting room. The floor of this room is on a level with the deck of the lorry so that no lifting is required. The honey is placed on trays on the lorry and it can be wheeled directly from the lorry into the extracting room. When the honey is extracted it flows through the wall to the heater and strainer from which it flows to the settling tanks on the lower floor of the packing room.

Plan "B" has many refinements that cost money, but it is a very well laid out building. The lorry load of honey is backed into the garage and the honey is wheeled on to the unloading platform and into the extracting room or to the hot room.

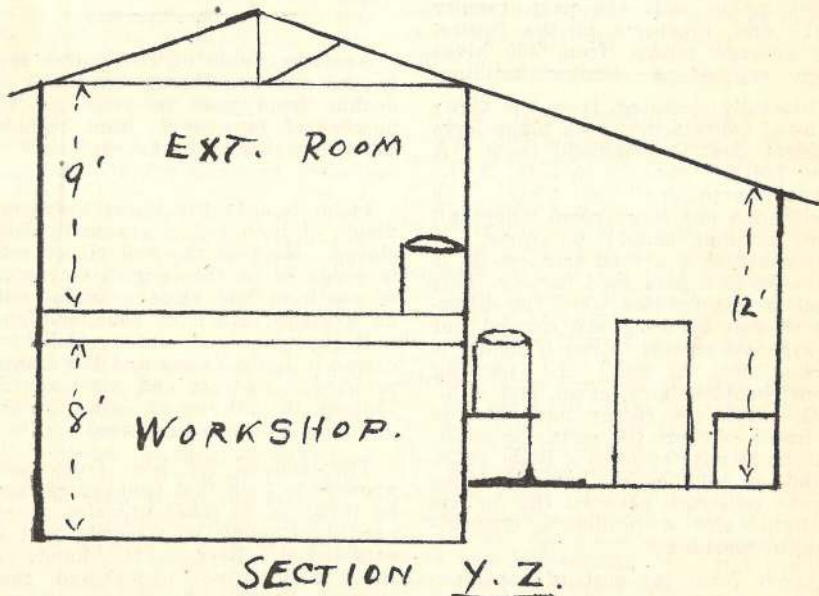


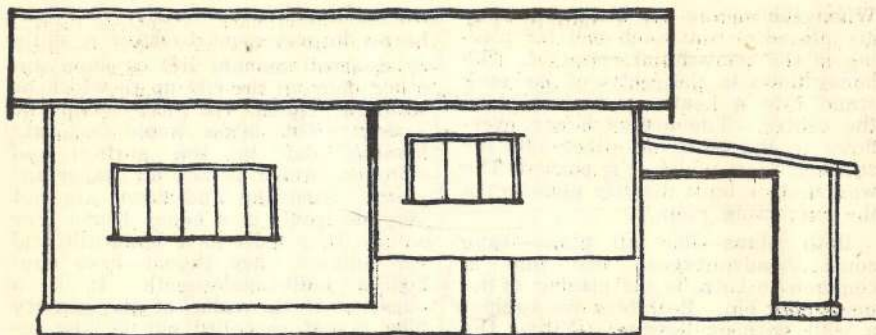


When the combs are uncapped, they are placed on the comb reel for placing in the semi-radial extractor. The honey flows to the centre of the tank stand into a heater and clarifier in the centre. The heated honey overflows to the tanks on either side for settling, from which it is packed. The workshop is built directly underneath the extracting room.

Both plans—like all plans—have some disadvantages. One that is common to both, is the placing of the uncapping bin. Both bins are against a wall without lighting. Either the operator stands in his own light or stacks of supers will block the light. In "A" the matter could be corrected by placing the bin and extractor near the end wall as the tanks are placed. In "B" the hot room would be better against the other outside wall towards the unloading dock, and the uncapping bin put against the end wall under a window. Another apparent disadvantage in "B" is the manner of getting the combs from the extracting room to the comb storage room. Apparently they are wheeled back on to the lorry from where they

are manhandled downstairs. It might be an improvement to have a shute or a small manual lift or even another door on the end up to which or through which the lorry can be backed. This latter would facilitate loading out in the spring and summer, which is not an important point. Steps up and down are not very desirable in a honey house. For safety, they must have handrails, and for tidiness, they should have cupboards built underneath. It is a question if the value of the gravity flow is not cancelled out by the inconvenience of running up and downstairs, as well as from danger of slipping. The cost of building to plan "B" is considerably increased by adopting the gravity principle, as it is to some smaller extent in "A." The extracting room floor, which is also the ceiling of the workshop, would be expensive. The raising of the garage floor, which has to be solid, is also expensive, while there is waste room overhead in the packing room. Stairs up and down are not cheap and the extra height of studs means increased cost in the





Side Elevation

framework of the building, whether it is of wood or of concrete. Of course there is a saving in roof space, but that would seem to be offset by the increased cost of the superstructure. We think this building could hardly be put up for much under £2,000 today, plus equipment. That is rather a heavy capital cost, considering that another £3,000 would be necessary for hives and a lorry. In the face of honey prices over the past twenty years and prospects in the future, the average return from 450 hives might suggest a simpler building.

Generally speaking, from the viewpoint of convenience, both plans have a great deal to commend them. A good feature, common to both, is the "departmentalising" of work. The day of the one large room where all work is done should be gone. A honey house is a food factory—it is more—it is a pure food factory. This ideal is best realised when the different classes of work are carried out in separate rooms. Even if honey is packed only in bulk, the packing room should be airy, clean, and light. Both plans are roomy and that is desirable. Where the money is available, it is wise to have a little extra room—as in a house, but a balance has to be struck between the finance available and a minimum convenience of working.

Apart from the cost of construction, and for those who prefer the

use of the gravity principle, plan "B" is complete and almost ideal. Many beekeepers would revel in owning and using such a place.

Next time, we hope to have plans of a honey house on one floor. At a later date, types of equipment and of building construction will be featured. The editor welcomes your suggestions and thanks those who have offered material.

Average yields of red clover seed in the mid-west have continued to decline from year to year as the number of bees have been reduced until less than a bushel per acre is harvested in many neighbourhoods.

Idaho reports the highest average yields of both red clover and alsike clover. Most of the red clover seed is produced in the irrigated counties of southern and eastern Idaho with an average return of four and one-half bushels per acre. Alsike is grown in Long Valley and Big Camas prairies in western and north-central Idaho with little or no irrigation and similar yields are harvested.

The demand for bees from seed-growers is such that beekeepers must be prepared to place apiaries where needed or many new outfits will be established. Bees in the hands of those who do not understand their care are likely to be disappointing.

BEEKEEPING IN TASMANIA

We have received an interesting letter from Mr. H. L. Jones, President of the newly-formed Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association, written on the 30th December, 1946. He sends greetings from his Association and hopes for a bountiful harvest in N.Z. this year. We quote parts of Mr. Jones' letter. His remarks on blackberry honey in particular will interest many of our readers.

We wish your new Association every success Mr. Jones.

"We here in Tasmania have had a very trying time this spring. We have had the worst weather on record. The bees were unable to leave the hives more than two or three days weekly for several months. Many hives became short of pollen, and brood rearing almost stopped for many weeks. The climate here is the great problem. Along the sea coast and on the East coast, where the weather is better, there are very few honey producing plants. Our main flow is just starting from clover and blackberry, and generally lasts three or four weeks when it cuts out suddenly. We then pack up most of our hives and move by motor truck to the Leatherwood, 80 miles away. This flow lasts about six weeks, and if the weather is good is very heavy. We get a two-tin average from the Leatherwood on good seasons, but where we used to get a two-tin average from clover and blackberry, we now only get one tin. The prospects for white honey are very good. We have just had a beautiful rain, and there is more white clover in bloom now than I have ever known. The demand for our honey is so great that it is booked up many months before we get it. We used to bottle most of our crop, but owing to shortage of glass jars and labour troubles it is nearly all sold in bulk. We breed our own queens; leather-colour Italian with black blood in them. You must have a touch of black blood for

this terrible climate. I noticed something in your journal about coarse and smooth grain honey. Blackberry honey is considered by many to be coarse grain, and if it is extracted as soon as it is sealed it is coarse grained, but if it is left on the hives for a long time it is quite smooth in the grain and also a better honey."

With best regards, yours sincerely,

H. L. JONES,

President Tasmanian Beekeepers'
Association.

A SWEETER SMOKE.

Mr. J. Fitton, of Marsden on the West Coast, sends in a suggestion for breaking-in a new pipe. Smear the inside of the bowl with honey. This can be done about six times before filling and smoking, and there will be no hot burning. He says that there is no unpleasant taste and the smoke is a cool one.

We hope some reader will try this out and let us know the effects. We have no new pipe to try it on at present, but anything is worth trying once.

April last brought Swiss beekeepers the unwelcome news that the sugar allowance for the winter of 1945-46 would have to be reduced to three-quarters of the 1944-45 amount. In consequence, the authorities instructed beekeepers to reduce their apiaries to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the 1944 number of colonies. (Honey, it may be recalled, is strictly rationed in Switzerland, and no more than 4lbs. (2 kg.) per colony of the extracted crop is allowed to be kept for the bees, plus one kg. per head of the household for the family's use. All the rest must be sold, and beekeepers have the joy (?) of keeping strict account of the coupons they receive for it. We rather wonder how the law is enforced; but the Swiss are a conscientious and law-abiding folk, and possibly there is little evasion.

—"The Bee World."

CORRESPONDENCE.

Sir,

In the honey industry, we have a system of marketing based on two points: first a central depot to take the honey which cannot be marketed conveniently by the producer, and second a levy of one halfpenny per lb. on all honey sold publicly outside this depot. The levy is an acknowledgment of the benefits which are enjoyed by producers through the operation of a central packing plant, and a method by which they contribute a fair share towards its costs.

Recently, however, it has been stated that the levy is paid not by the producer but by the consumer, and that the beekeeper who buys seals is not entitled on that score to a voice in the direction of the marketing organisation.

It seems hardly logical that the consumer should be charged for a service which is rendered to the producer, and actually no such position exists. The weight of the seal levy is borne by the producer.

In the first place, it should be noted that honey which is subject to the levy fetched only the same price as honey which is exempted from it, and the price is not influenced by the fixing of seals. Since the introduction of price controls, only one general increase in retail levels has been authorised, and this resulted from evidence submitted by the Internal Marketing Division. Naturally this price includes no allowance for the halfpenny levy, because no seal revenue is obtained from I.M.D. honey.

In any case, it is a fallacy to suppose that an extra payment can be extracted from the consumer by the simple process of fixing a stamp to the container. Normally the price level is limited by the demand for the honey itself, and when a levy is imposed on some honey it must be borne by the producer concerned.

It is generally agreed that the seal levy is a vital part of the present marketing system. Its enforcement, which is difficult enough at any time, will be impossible without the good-

will of producers, and it is therefore important that its incidence should be clearly stated and freely acknowledged. And all who contribute to organised marketing should be represented in the administration of it.

I am, etc.,

J. McFADZIEN, Outram.

Sir,—

The pious resolution passed by Conference in regard to prosecuting those who fail to affix seals to their honey packages has not achieved very much. The Department's officials have secured the evidence but they hesitate to face the issue in Court now they know that the big bluff is being called. Until the Commercial Trusts Act, or the relevant clauses of that Act are repealed, the collection of money under the Seals' Regulations is a bluff, for the whole procedure is illegal, and cannot be made legal by any legislation.

Stabilisation for everyone except the honey producer has gone to the winds, and the only way he can meet the higher costs all round is to save on the seals. The retailers today recognise that the inducement to save the seals' money is leading many producers to sell at the door so they are quite willing to accept the honey without seals.

Producers generally showed their appreciation of the action of those who fought the Government all the way in its attempt to force control on the industry. The way they returned to their own marketing showed their appreciation. Perhaps they will continue to develop their individuality in spite of conference resolutions.

I am, etc., W. B. BRAY.

When this letter was submitted to the Manager of the Honey Section, the following reply was received:

Last year, a prosecution was taken for failing to affix seals and the offender was fined \$5 and costs, plus solicitor's fees. From the reading of the above letter, it would appear that the correspondent is trying to create unrest in the minds of those who support orderly marketing and eventually destroy, for the benefit of a few, something which is required by the majority of the producers.

H. F. STOUPE,

Manager, Honey Section, I.M.D.

Unfortunately, there are other matters urgently required by the majority of producers which the Government seems determined to refuse. The continued ignoring of these requests, over the past three years at least, could well prejudice the continued support for the seals' system.—Editor.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HORTICULTURE DIVISION

CROP PROSPECTS.

The following is a summary of reports received from Apiary Instructors at the end of January concerning seasonal beekeeping conditions and honey crops for the 1946-47 season:—

Auckland: High rainfall, cold winds and low temperatures prevailed during October, November and December. The weather was fine and warm during January, when a heavy flow of nectar was available from all pasture sources, which were in excellent condition for this time of the year.

In North Auckland honey crops will be good to average, despite poor yields from manuka. In Franklin and Manukau Counties, south of Auckland, two-thirds average crop was on the hives by the end of January; and prospects were for average crops, depending on favourable weather conditions for the remainder of the season.

Extensive late swarming occurred in most districts.

Hamilton: Unsettled weather conditions early in the season retarded colony progress, and later excessive swarming tendency in many apiaries added to the difficulty in keeping up colony strength sufficient to take full advantage of improved conditions and available nectar supplies during January. Good crops of honey are now being secured by all strong colonies. A noticeable feature this season is the almost complete absence of tea tree honey.

In the main, indications are for slightly below average crops of good quality honey.

Palmerston North: Conditions generally were unfavourable for beekeeping during spring, and much cloudy weather, strong gales and cool temperatures were general in early January. Later temperatures gradually became warmer, and colony strength improved until the end of January, when the majority of hives were reasonably populous in bees.

In Taranaki, clover, blackberry and Lotus major showed an abundance of

bloom, while in areas north and south of the Manawatu the flora was predominantly clover with a lesser amount of catsear and thistles.

The main honey flow, which was five weeks later than normal, began about January 19th.

Average crops of good quality honey are now expected.

Hastings: Cold unseasonable weather was experienced during October and November with little rainfall from Waipukurau north to Poverty Bay, while south of these districts there was much rain. A very dry spell was experienced in Central Hawkes Bay and Poverty Bay during December. At the end of January prospects were for fair honey crops in Wairarapa and light surplus crops in Hawkes Bay and Poverty Bay.

Christchurch: Colony strength generally was not up to normal during January, despite the amount of brood-rearing developed early in December, due largely to excessive swarming and in some instances severe spring dwindling. Weather conditions improved during January, and the amount of sunshine was above average.

In North Canterbury steady winds and warm days dried out the pastures, while south of Christchurch an abundance of clover bloom, catsear, and thistle was worked by the bees.

Prospects are for average crops in southern areas, moderate elsewhere. The honey stored to the end of January was darker in colour than usual.

Dunedin-Invercargill: Weather conditions were unfavourable until mid-January, when a spell of good honey-gathering weather began. Late frosts and drought conditions were experienced in Central Otago. At the end of January pastures were in excellent condition with an exceptionally good showing of white clover bloom in most districts except non-irrigated areas of Central Otago.

Prospects are for good honey crops in all areas except Central Otago, where below average to light crops are expected.

Greymouth: In Westland white clover and blackberry were the main source of nectar to the end of January, when rata was beginning to bloom and bees commenced to gather from this source. During the latter half of the month weather conditions have been favourable for nectar secretion. Prospects are for average to good crops.

Nelson and Marlborough: Fair crops of section honey have been harvested from manuka. The season has been too dry for nectar secretion from white clover, and prospects from this source are poor. Some honey is being produced from blue borridge and lucerne in Marlborough. Fortunately manuka yielded well, and colonies generally are assured of sufficient winter stores.

Yours faithfully,
W. K. DALLAS,

Director of Horticulture Division.

SULPHATHIAZOLE.

Horticulture Division,
P.O. Box 3004,
Wellington, C.1.
16th August, 1946.

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z.,
(Inc.), P.O. Box 19,
Foxton.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 8th instant in regard to the use of sulphathiazole for the control of American foul-brood (*Bacillus larvae*).

According to reports from overseas (March, 1946), where this substance has been tried, half a grain of sulphathiazole to a gallon of syrup fed to bees appears to build up the morale of the bees, so that they are able to clean out diseased matter from the cells, and may continue to do so provided medicated syrup is again fed to them.

There is no evidence to show that sulphathiazole is a germicide. On the contrary, Jas. I. Hambleton, of the United States Bee Culture Laboratories, reports that results from the application of the above substance to the causative organism of American foul-brood in a test tube are negative. It would appear, therefore, that so long as a medicated

syrup (mentioned above) is fed to bees, American foul-brood in an infected hive may be controlled, but when feeding ceases the disease is likely to break out again in the brood nest.

It would be disastrous to the beekeeping industry in New Zealand if beekeepers applied any method of control which tends to cover up rather than eradicate a disease of this description.

Further enquiries will be made to ascertain whether any new facts have been discovered in connection with this subject, and whether it is desirable at this stage to arrange for an investigation to be carried out at Wallaceville.

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

An extract from the 1945 report of the Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, England, relating to Sulphonamide Treatment for A.F.B. After referring to certain limited experimenting, the following paragraph appears in the report:

"It is clear from the above experiment, and other similar experiments, that the outlook is very promising, but that it would be most unwise to attempt to draw any very definite conclusions from the data so far available. It is proposed during 1946 to carry out further trials with sulphonamides on the largest scale practicable. It should be pointed out, however, that even if a sulphonamide should prove fully effective for the treatment of A.F.B., there will still remain a lot of work to be done before its general application can be recommended. The possibility of developing resistant strains of *B. Larva* should too small doses of sulphonamide be given, or should treatment once started be discontinued prematurely for some reason, deserves very careful consideration. There is also, of course, the further possibility that quantities of sulphonamide dangerous to human beings may find their way into the honey from treated colonies. Further work alone can provide the answers to these questions."

INTERNAL MARKETING DIVISION (HONEY SECTION)

In connection with the recent application from the Executive of the Honey Suppliers' Association for an alteration in the payout, also the right to pay out up to a set maximum price, advice has just been received from the Minister of Marketing, the Hon. E. Cullen, that this has his approval.

For the benefit of suppliers, the following is a copy of the suggestion put forward to the Minister:

"The Internal Marketing Division's pay out to suppliers to be 7d. per lb. pro rata according to grade, and the bonus to be paid to be up to 3½d per lb. pro rata according to grade and depending on the amount of honey received by the Internal Marketing Division and the amount of seals revenue collected in the same year.

"In the event of seals revenue being in excess of the amount of bonus payable, the surplus to be carried forward to the following year."

It will be seen that the new payout scheme will be on a sliding scale basis according to the quantity of honey received and the amount of seals revenue received during each season.

Just what financial benefit it will give each producer individually is difficult to estimate until it has been in operation for a year.

It is certain however that this new procedure will give a good deal of satisfaction to the majority of producers.

The Executive of the Honey Suppliers' Association, at their recent

meeting, also recommended that members should forward at least a portion of their crop to the I.M.D., and it is hoped that suppliers will take notice of this recommendation and thus show appreciation to their Executive for their good work.

SEALS STAMPS.

The Honey Marketing Regulations 1938 are still in operation, these regulations govern the stamping of honey containers with seals stamps. For the information of beekeepers, the only honey sales exempt from seal stamps are as follows:

- (a) Any honey sold by way of retail or wholesale intended for consumption in the bee comb in which the honey was produced.
- (b) Any honey sold by a producer by way of sale by retail at his apiary and delivered to the purchaser at the apiary without soliciting orders for sale of honey by way of an advertisement, placard, or circular.
- (c) The sale by a producer to a packer of honey packed in bulk container.
- (d) The delivery in any container of honey accepted by the Internal Marketing Division of the Primary Products Department at Auckland for disposal by the said Division.

(H. F. Stoupe, Manager, Honey Section.)



**REHABILITATION BEGINS WITH SOMEWHERE TO
LIVE. IF YOU ARE SELLING YOUR BEEKEEPING
BUSINESS, SELL TO A SERVICEMAN.**

PLANT DISEASES DIVISION.

REPORT ON D.D.T.

(By Dr. W. Cottier.)

"The D.D.T. experiments described in the N.Z. Beekeeper, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Aug. 20, 1946), p. 21, have been continued this season (1946-47). They consist essentially of observations on bee colonies in and adjacent to sprayed orchard blocks.

The trees at Oratia in the Gravenstein apple block were sprayed as soon as all blossom had fallen and this operation has been repeated approximately every 14 days since. In this test the ground beneath the trees was kept thoroughly clean so that no weed flowers would grow to become contaminated by D.D.T. drips from the sprayed trees above them.

In the other experiment at Owairaka it will probably be remembered (cf. previous article referred to above) that the object was to allow the weeds beneath the trees to grow as vigorously as possible in order to reproduce the conditions obtaining in a typical uncultivated orchard. So that any disturbing influence might be ruled out, apple trees in this block were not sprayed with D.D.T. but this material was applied to the weed flowers from a spraying outfit in quantities thought to be comparable to the amount of D.D.T. the weed flowers might receive in drippings from sprayed trees. In the 1945-46 season weed flowers in this block were not as plentiful as could be desired so for the 1946-47 season white clover and *Lotus angustissimus* were sown fairly heavily and a very good crop of flowers of these and other species resulted. Sprayings of these weeds have been repeated approximately every 14 days.

Tests have not yet been finalised because the season has some time still to run, but indications definitely support the conclusions we reached after the 1945-46 season's work, viz., that provided D.D.T. is applied to orchard trees after all blossom has fallen and in the quantities required to control insect pests there is absolutely no cause for alarm among beekeepers. Even the contamination of weed

flowers in uncultivated or imperfectly cultivated orchards with D.D.T. drippings from sprayed trees does not appear to cause trouble in bee colonies.

In Hawke's Bay no work has been carried out to ascertain the effect of D.D.T. on bees as it is thought the position will be covered by the Oratia and Owairaka experiments. One of the most important phases of our work in Hastings this year, however, is of vital interest to beekeepers. It is concerned with how soon in the season it is necessary to apply the first lead arsenate spray to control the codling moth in pip fruits. There is no need for me to remind readers of the wholesale destruction of bees caused by the application of lead arsenate to fruit blossoms in Hawkes Bay during the 1945-46 season. These present experiments are designed to test how necessary even the 75% petal fall spray is—our blocks of trees have had the first application of lead arsenate made at 50%, 75% or 100% petal fall and in one test the first arsenate was applied ten days after all blossom had fallen. We are hopeful that it may be possible, without loss of fruit to the grower, to be able to recommend that the first spray can be delayed until 100% of the petals have fallen. If this hope is realised there is no need to emphasise that this should mean the end of arsenical poisoning trouble. As yet, however, it is too soon to see the results of our season's work; these will not be available until harvesting time. However, beekeepers will probably be greatly interested in this account of our test programme."

A CORRECTION.

In an article on The Brand Cappings Melter, by W. J. C. Ashcroft, in the November issue, there was an error. On page 12, paragraph 2, quote, "the temperature of the honey ranges from one hundred to two hundred degrees." This should read, the temperature of the honey ranges from one hundred to one hundred and twenty degrees (100deg.-120deg.). We are pleased to make the correction.—Ed.

NOTES FOR BEGINNERS.

(By "Skep.")

There is one item of news that must be mentioned first and two good questions, that have had SKEP a bit puzzled, come later.

BULLETIN No. 267.

"Beekeeping in N.Z." by T. S. Winter

First of all, here is good news for beekeepers, and especially so for beginners. Mr. Winter's eagerly awaited booklet has now been published. It is booklet of 140 pages dealing with all important aspects of beekeeping in N.Z. There are plenty of illustrations that explain better than pages of words the subject under discussion. There are 22 chapters dealing with those practical matters on which we all need guidance.

As Chief Apiary Instructor, Mr. Winter speaks with authority, and all beginners should secure a copy from the publishers, the Dept. of Agriculture, Wellington. Later on, we understand that copies will be available through the local Apiary Instructors. The price is 2/6, and very well worth it. It will be one of your best investments in beekeeping.

Communism in the Bay of Plenty!

A Bay correspondent writes to say that two queens have several times been found in the one hive. He discredits this as being a case of mother and daughter both being tolerated because, again, it is after introducing a new queen that he has found the two. The correspondent wonders if the Bay bees are developing a spirit of tolerance or communism. The simplest definition of communism is to have things "in common." Bees have shared the product of their work "in common" for a million years, more or less. If this observation is true then the Bay of Plenty bees are only living true to their historical development. As for tolerance, there is a remarkable tolerance naturally displayed when supersedure takes place. In fact SKEP recently read somewhere of a case where a beekeeper reported grandmother, mother and daughter queens all at work in the same hive.

Some important facts are not reported by the correspondent. How long after introducing the new queen were the two noticed? If there was, say, a period of a month after the old queen was removed and the new one introduced, there could be a daughter of the new queen present. Then was the newly introduced queen marked in any way so that it was possible to say that it was not mother and daughter? It is very necessary to be sure of facts before making a generalisation. Then, are you sure that there was not already a superseded young queen in the hive when the old one was removed. Or again, was an old small queen left in the hive and a young supersedure one taken out in the belief that she was failing, when the new queen was introduced? SKEP is not trying to confuse you, so he will quote another case. Here it is:

A beekeeper was sending bees away to be examined for nosema. When the report came back on the bees from hive "X" a note was added by the scientist that a queen had been included with the dozen bees. It was interesting to know that she had nosema, but that was not the important point. The beekeeper did not realise that he had caged a queen when he was taking bees from the hive. He did it accidentally. When he received the report, he hurried to hive "X" to see how it was managing without a queen. To his surprise there was a young queen laying—ten days after—with no break in the brood laying. That hive had an old and a young queen together in the hive without the beekeeper knowing it, but the old queen had become small and in the concentration of counting bees for the cage she had also gone in because she had the appearance of a worker. This mother and daughter business may occur more frequently than we realise. In cases of nosema infection, supersedure seems to be one of the signs to watch for, but that is another story.

Here is the other problem:

"A beekeeper bought a new queen and introduced her into the hive in the usual manner. Evidently she was not accepted, for exactly three weeks later that hive swarmed out. On investigation a number of empty queen cells were found, but no trace of a queen. On hiving the swarm,

six young queens were found and three more in the parent hive, all alive." What does SKEP think of that?

Well, SKEP thinks it is a typical case of a hive refusing to accept the newly introduced queen. She was tolerated until she had laid a few eggs when the hive promptly raised a batch of cells to replace her. As in these cases, the eggs are all of the same age, the queens would hatch out together. They should not have swarmed, but some combination of circumstances made them do it. The important thing here is not to have a post mortem on the swarm but to seek the cause of superscedure.

In this case, it appears that a queen which had reduced her powers of laying, from confinement in a cage, was introduced to a hive that had been accustomed to a queen in fairly full laying power. When the hive discovered that the new queen was not in full lay, they decided she was no good. Of course she may have been damaged in travel or had some other impairment that was unknown. The principle to observe in introducing queens is to introduce her to a hive the size of which will match her laying power at the time of introduction. A queen received from a breeder by post is generally better introduced to a nucleus hive that has been made up to receive her. Mr. E. L. Sechrist, in his book on "Honey Getting," deals very well with this matter.

Wintering.

It is time to think of the brood nest in which the hive will winter. Let the hive go ahead now to pack in pollen and honey in its food chamber, which you should leave according to the needs of your district.

If we use more space the Editor will be using his blue pencil.

Hoping you have had a successful season. —SKEP.

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

HOW MANY BEES?

During the depression years when honey sold at extremely low prices many outfits were increased in size in an effort to maintain income through increased volume of production. Thousand colony outfits became common. Expansion has been the rule in recent years. The man who had a dozen colonies wanted a hundred; the man with a hundred colonies wanted a thousand. In many cases the net result has been more labour and expense with no corresponding increase in profit.

The larger the outfit the greater the problem of management and the more opportunities for loss. Just at what point the operator reaches the start of diminishing returns is hard to determine. With some it comes sooner than with others but there is evidence that many beekeepers are trying to manage more bees than they can care for efficiently. Smaller apiaries given better care yield greater net profit. The man who can give the best of care to 500 colonies must neglect some needed attention when he tries to look after double the number. Depreciation of the extra equipment, taxes, and losses from lack of care at the proper time may easily result in less net profit instead of more.

The story is told of a printer with a one-man shop who with the help of one boy turned out such high-grade work that he was urged to enlarge his shop. When he had done so and increased his overhead with more rent to pay, more equipment to keep in repair and several workmen to pay, he found after taxes had been paid that he had no more net income than before to compensate for the extra responsibility. It is the same with some of our big beekeeping outfits. Their owners are making no more profit than they might get from smaller apiaries with better care. Beekeeping is a business where attention to details at the right time may be very profitable and there is a limit to the individual capacity.

—"American Bee Journal."

NOSEMA APIS RECOGNISED AS THE CAUSE OF SPRING DWINDLING IN BEE COLONIES.

(By T. Palmer-Jones, Research Officer, Animal Research Station, Wallaceville.)

The symptoms of so-called "spring dwindling"—a rapid loss of field bees in the spring, when hives should be gaining strength—are familiar to most commercial beekeepers. Hives usually recover, but occasionally die out. Examination of such hives shows apparently normal bees and brood and adequate honey and pollen. The main cause of the trouble is "Nosema apis," a protozoan parasite which invades the bees' stomachs. This parasite has been recognised for the first time as a cause of spring dwindling in New Zealand.

During the spring of 1946 adult bees from cases of spring dwindling were examined at the Animal Research Station, Wallaceville. Samples were received from Hawke's Bay, Central Otago, and Auckland areas, and the laboratory apiary was included in the survey.

In all definite cases of spring dwindling investigated the hive was found to be infected with "Nosema apis," a parasite of which reports had not been published previously in New Zealand.

"Nosema apis" is a parasitic, spore-forming member of the protozoa—microscopic, single-celled animals. "Nosema" spores are more or less oval, about 2-10,000in. long and half as wide.

When spores reach the stomach of a bee they shed their coats and liberate the parasites, which enter the cells lining the stomach. There they grow and multiply rapidly, and finally produce numerous spores, which pass through the bee and can infect a fresh host.

Field bees become weakened by the enormous number of parasites in their stomachs and are unable to re-

turn to the hives when out foraging. In a badly-diseased hive all the adult bees may show some degree of infection. Queens are attacked, but brood is immune. The disease reaches its height in the spring, though it may persist throughout the year.

Symptoms of Infection.

A loss in strength without apparent cause is usually the first sign of infection, other symptoms being difficult to detect. Microscopic examination is the only means of accurate diagnosis. If "Nosema" is suspected, a queen cage of live field bees should be despatched through the local apiary instructor to the Animal Research Station, Wallaceville, for examination.

It has been shown in America that combs and equipment from infected colonies do not spread the disease. Isolation of infected colonies is not recommended in any country where "Nosema" occurs, as the disease is not considered serious enough to warrant such action. Contamination of drinking water and the robbing of diseased hives probably cause the spread of "Nosema."

No Cure Yet Known.

Many drugs have been fed in syrup to bees in an attempt to cure "Nosema," unfortunately without effect. Methods of treatment are being investigated at Wallaceville. If an infected colony loses its queen or is rapidly losing strength, building up with a nucleus is of value.

"Nosema" has been reported from Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Germany, Switzerland, and the United States of America. Its presence in New Zealand is not surprising, as it was first reported in Australia as early as 1910. It is possible that "Nosema" was introduced in the early days of beekeeping, as it is probably the commonest and most widely distributed of bee diseases.

"Nosema" is a far less serious disease than American foul brood. Strong colonies with a mild infection soon throw it off and recover, as was the case at Wallaceville in some of the strongest colonies. A weak colony

with a heavy infection may die out, and occasionally a group of hives, perhaps with lowered resistance, becomes a total loss. The economic loss to the beekeeping industry as a whole is probably small.

There is little doubt from past accounts of spring dwindling in New Zealand that "Nosema" has been present for many years. Its recognition as a cause of spring dwindling does not suddenly bring to light a new disease, but indicates the cause of an old one. Methods of treatment can now be tried and checked.

(N.Z. Journal of Agriculture.)

BOOK REVIEW.

BEEKEEPING IN NEW ZEALAND

(By T. S. Winter).

Mr. Winter, who is the Senior Apiary Instructor, Wellington, is the author of this new Bulletin, No. 267,

which is issued by the Department of Agriculture. As the title page says, it sets out "UP-TO DATE METH-ODS best suited to conditions in New Zealand."

The booklet is profusely illustrated and covers 139 pages. The range of subjects is wide and yet the selection has been kept to those matters on which all beekeepers need authoritative guidance and information.

War-time delays and shortages have hindered its publication. Better paper was not available and the quality of some of the photographic reproductions has suffered. These things are minor and do not detract from the really informative value of the publication.

When future issues are made, we hope that the paper cover can be replaced by a stiff one which is what a booklet of this importance deserves

We recommend all our readers to secure copies which can be obtained from the Editor, Department of Agriculture, Box 3004, Wellington. The price per copy is 2/6.

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CIRCULAR TO MEMBERS CANTERBURY BRANCH.

24th April, 1946.

At a meeting of the Branch, held in Timaru on 12th April, 1946, the following resolution was carried:—

RESOLUTION:—"That this meeting recommends to its members that they should give first preference to priorities such as hospitals and overseas parcels and secondly to the retail trade, and use discretion in limiting sales direct to consumers."

The reason for calling this meeting and passing such a resolution was to appeal to members to discontinue the supply of honey to ice cream manufacturers, cake kitchens, and any other manufacturers who are only using honey because sugar is not available. If this unwise practice is continued the repercussions to the industry will be serious.

The Food Controller has allocated to the above named manufacturers as much sugar as the position will permit, and on behalf of the Apiarists the Dept. of Agriculture, assisted by your Executive, has placed before the Food Controller the necessity of sugar for bees to keep them alive and produce a crop which would otherwise be lost, and to this request he has in the past given favourable and generous consideration with the understanding that the honey when produced would go to the public hospitals and overseas to people who are in a real need.

Unfortunately some Apiarists have

been very short sighted and supplied these manufacturers and in effect defeated the Food Controller's rationing of sugar to those people, and at the same time possibly spoiled our chances of receiving sugar in future for bee feed.

The Food Controller, with all this knowledge, has given a stern warning to your Executive that unless this practice is stopped supplies of sugar will not be made available for feed purposes.

Apart from the above, by supplying manufacturers beekeepers are only helping these people to keep their product before the public at the expense of losing the identity of a large quantity of honey. When sugar is available, these people will not want your honey, and instead of beekeepers building and maintaining a market now, one will have to be built in competition with other foodstuffs where sugar is the main ingredient.

The resolution does not include supplying the I.M.D., but if as in the past some beekeepers choose to do so I know it will be much appreciated by them, as supplies so far for this season are exceedingly small.

I appeal to you one and all to see reason in this request and adhere as strictly as possible to the resolution carried.

T. F. PENROSE, President.

(We have had this circular for some time, but the present seems to be an opportune period to remind all members of the value of its contents.—Editor.)

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The ANNUAL CONVENTION of
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will be held in the Pioneer Women's
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the 3rd and 4th JUNE, 1947.

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Tuesday Evening: Addresses.

Wednesday Morning: Commer-
cial Beekeepers.

Wednesday Evening: Social.

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"THE N.Z. BEEKEEPER"

This Journal is issued free to all members of the National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z. (Inc.). Failure to renew subscriptions promptly results in automatic removal of names from Journal Mailing List.

Subscription rates for the Journal are 5/- per annum, post free. Please notify any irregularity in receipt of the Journal to the Editor.

Literary contributions and advertisements must be in the hands of the Editor, Mr. W. J. Lennon, Omakau, Central Otago, not later than the first of month of publication.

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

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