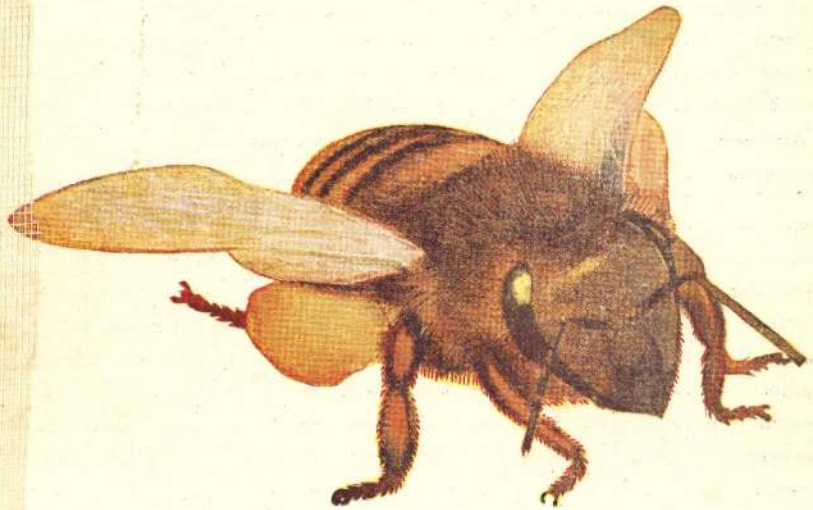
THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL. 11, No. 1 FEBRUARY, 1949



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

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

Better Beekeeping | Better Marketing

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The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

Published Quarterly in February, May, August and November,
by the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Incorporated).

J. McFadzien, Editor. Subscription, 5/- per annum, post free.

VOL. 11, No. 1 FEBRUARY, 1949

THE AMATEUR BEEKEEPER.

About fifty per cent of the New Zealand honey crop is produced by part-time beekeepers. This is a fact which might well be remembered by everyone who keeps bees, because it shows that the part played by small producers is an important one, and their interests must be recognised by any organisation which represents the industry.

Actually the interests of large and small beekeepers are in many respects the same. The study of the life-history and habits of the honey bee, research in bee diseases, the improvement of beekeeping practice, and the promotion of legislation affecting the beekeeping industry are all matters which concern the amateur as well as the commercial beekeeper. And the amateur in many cases is able to make a unique contribution towards these ends. He has the time and the interest and the enthusiasm which enable him to observe closely the behaviour of the bees and to test their response to various manipulations. Like the pioneers in the industry, he sets out with an open mind; he seeks the reasons for his failures and carefully plans the remedies; he grows plants and trees which furnish nectar and pollen for the bees. Many advances in the beekeeping craft have resulted from individual fforts, but in large apiaries the spirit of research is very often quenched in the somewhat mechanical process of commercial production.

Occasionally there is a movement to form a separate body to cater for the smaller beekeepers, or an organisation to serve the interests of large-scale producers. Such movements usually occur in districts where the one section predominates and is inclined to overlook the importance of the other. It is significant that in Branches of our Association where there is a balanced representation of producers both large and small, the members see the work of the organisation from a broader viewpoint and they pursue it in a spirit of harmony and co-operation.

The National Beekeepers' Association is one of the most soundly organised bodies representing primary producers in this country. Its constitution is designed to serve large and small producers alike, and its effectiveness depends on the support it receives from all sections of the industry.

THE ROBBING SEASON.

At this time of the year robber bees are active, seeking out the weak hives and plundering the precious stores. In some apiaries another robber will be abroad about the same time. Armed to the teeth, it moves from hive to hive, a menace to every colony in the yard. It is the beekeeper himself.

We are inclined to forget that bees store honey in order to provide food for their colony during the winter. It is true that the beekeeper renders a service to the bees—he protects them from their enemies and from the elements, and he provides conditions which are conducive to rapid honey gathering; but this does not entitle him to take the entire crop for himself. The requirements of the bees come first, and the beekeeper may take the **surplus** honey. Any beekeeper worthy of the name will surely

have enough compassion for his bees, let alone enough business acumen, to admit this principle.

Leaving sufficient honey for the bees is the first and simplest lesson in beecraft, yet it is one of the most difficult to learn. Everything seems so prosperous in the autumn, every frame and every piece of burr comb seems to be jammed with honey, and probably a little is still coming in from the fields. It is hard to visualise the following spring—unsettled weather, colonies forging ahead in bees and brood, and stores disappearing rapidly.

Some producers, after careful planning and long experience, have developed a system of providing for their bees, involving perhaps the feeding of sugar or the setting aside of combs of honey. In the absence of such a system or a thorough knowledge of the district, it is wise to leave a full depth super well filled with honey—about 50lbs.—for each colony. Your bees are your most valuable asset. Do not forget them during the robbing season.

THE RETIRING EDITOR.

AN APPRECIATION.

During the last six years Mr. W. J. Lennon has wielded the Editorial pen for "The N.Z. Beekeeper". With this issue it is taken up by the timorous hand of his successor.

Mr. Lennon's resignation leaves a gap which is not easily filled. He approached his task with enthusiasm and sincerity of purpose and he performed it with a characteristic confidence and ability. His deep concern for the welfare of the beekeeping industry and his infinite patience in matters of detail were features of his work, and he developed in the Journal a character and a reputation which have made it a focal point in New Zealand beekeeping. Yet nothing ever eclipsed his unfailing sense of humour, an attribute well known both to readers of the Journal and to those who know him personally.

Apart from the restrictions and dislocations occasioned by the war, the past decade has witnessed two important movements within the honey industry. The first has been the rise in the strength and prestige of the National Beekeepers' Association, and the second has been the effort to establish an organised system of honey marketing. Mr. Lennon was more than a mere observer of these trends. He took an active and strenuous part in the planning and the negotiations which their promotion involved, and as Editor he felt a keen responsibility in presenting the issues to the industry. Although a strong advocate of producer co-operaton he clung tenaciously to the basic principles of individual freedom — principles which are sacrificed only too readily in the present day search for security.

In relinquishing the position of Editor, Mr. Lennon hopes to have more time for his own apiary work and in his home. But we earnestly hope that he will continue to take an active part in the beekeeping scene. The National Beekeepers' Association, or any democratic body, needs members who are energetic and alert to the problems of the day.

HORTICULTURE DIVISION.

THE NEW DIRECTOR.

The appointment of Mr. A. M. W. Greig as Director of the Horticulture Division has been announced, following the retirement of Mr. W. K. Dallas on November 30, 1948.

Before joining the Department of Agriculture Mr. Greig had 8 years' experience of the growing of citrus and sub-tropical fruits at Kerikeri, Bay of Islands. On joining the Department's staff in 1937 he was appointed Orchard Instructor, Auckland, later transferred to Tauranga, and from 1939 to 1943 was Citriculturist attached to the Auckland Office.

Mr. Greig was next transferred to Wellington for special work on vege-

table production for war purposes. In the following year he was appointed advisory officer attached to the office of the Minister of Agriculture, and 4 years later he returned to the Horticulture Division as Executive Officer.

The new director is aged 42. He was educated at Wellington College and at Victoria and Auckland University Colleges. He holds the degree of Bachelor of Science and the National Diploma of Horticulture (New Zealand).

Mr. Greig is the author of several bulletins on sub-tropical fruits, and he has been interested in economic and marketing problems affecting the various horticultural products.

The beekeeping industry in New Zealand owes much to the work of the Horticulture Division over a long period, and the appointment of a new Director is a matter of considerable interest among honey producers. We extend to Mr. Greig the sincere congratulations of the beekeeping fraternity and we assure him of their goodwill and co-operation in his new position.

CURRANTS AND GOOSEBERRIES.

Although currants, as well as gooseberries, can be pollinated by means of wind, maximum fruit production cannot be secured in this way as the pollen is sticky or glutinous. In the absence of Honey Bees, little or no setting of fruit occurs in the centre of currant bushes, and even on the outside, berries are often present at the base and tip of individual trusses.

—Welsh Bee Journal.

STRAWBERRIES.

Strawberries are adapted for wind pollination, but a perfect berry is only obtained when the 200 to 300 individual florets are fertilised. Honey bees are imperative and ideal for the production of large and perfectly shaped fruit of the strawberry plant. In the absence of a sufficient population of Honey bees, the fruits in general are dwarfed and deformed due to a high proportion of the florets remaining unpollinated.

—Welsh Bee Journal.

NOTICE BOARD

THE 1949 CONFERENCE.

The Annual Dominion Conference will be held in Rotorua on the 24th, 25th and 26th August, 1949. These dates coincide with the School holidays, and it will be advisable for members intending to be present to make arrangements for accommodation as early as possible.

* * *

HONEY MARKETING COMMITTEE.

The election of producers' representatives on the Honey Marketing Committee was held towards the end of 1948. Only three nominations were received and these were elected unopposed. The personnel of the Committee is as follows:—Mr. A. C. Bridle (Govt. nominee), Chairman; Mr. C. R. Ridding (Govt. Nominee), and Messrs. E. A. Field, F. D. Holt, and W. Nelson, producers' representatives. The Secretary of the Committee is Mr. H. F. Stoupe.

* * *

PRICE OF BEESWAX.

After a considerable amount of negotiation the General Secretary has now received advice from the Director of Price Control that the application of the General Executive for an increase in the price of beeswax from 2/- to 3/6 per lb. has been granted. The increase will take effect as from the 7th February.

* * *

INSTRUCTOR AT OAMARU.

The new apiary inspection district comprising South Canterbury, North Otago and Central Otago has now been established with headquarters at Oamaru. The instructor is Mr. I. W. Forster, formerly of Invercargill. The Otago-Southland area has been taken over by Mr. S. Line.

HIVE MATS.

The General Secretary advises that cloth for Hive Mats can now be made available in lengths of 70 yards by a width of 20 inches, the price being 1/3 per running yard, nett, F.O.R. FOXTON.

For an extra charge of 7/6 per roll, the cloth will be cut into any lengths desired.

Orders for quantities of not less than 1 roll, accompanied by cash, should be sent to the General Secretary, P.O. Box 19, Foxton.

* * *

NATIONAL GARDENS SHOW.

Information has been received from the High Commissioner that a National Gardens Show will be held at Olympia from July 27 to August 5, 1949. A Honey Section for amateurs is included.

Particulars and entry forms may be obtained from the Organisers, National Gardens Show, 1949, Pembroke Lodge, Edwardes Square, London, W.8.

CARBOLIC SCREENS.

HOW THE ACID GETS INTO THE HONEY.

By R. Davidson.

First let us consider how the fumes from the pure carbolic crystals drive the bees from the supers of honey. The heat from the sun's rays changes the crystalline or liquid carbolic into a gas, and this gas drifts downward through the super driving the bees (but not the queen) out of the top super downward. If you wait long enough and the sun is hot enough the colony will be outside on the grass. The main thing is that the honey is free from bees and can be lifted and loaded in record time.

Unfortunately for beekeepers the carbolic acid method of removing honey is rather like treating a hive with American Foul Brood, in that sometimes everything is right and at other times things are not so good —as with the A.F.B. treatment the reason is difficult to find. The test with the carbolic acid is to taste the cappings, or better still get a non-smoker to taste them, because it is in the cappings that the acid taste can be picked up.

Let us follow the supers of honey as they come from the hives, remembering that each super of honey is also a super of warm carbolic gas, and that should a drop in temperature occur the gas will condense (change back into the liquid form) and will be found in minute drops, or if it is cold enough as needle-like crystals, on the surface of the honey comb.

Some days are hot and there is no drop in temperature or perhaps the gas is all blown away by a warm wind, while on other days the supers get cold with disastrous results to the flavour of the honey. This accounts for the carbolic method being a success on odd occasions. If you doubt the above explanation try shutting the warm gas trays up in a box and letting the box cool down overnight in a cold shed. How is it that, although they have never been in direct contact with the acid cloth, the inside of the box and the metal covers of the trays themselves are covered with fine carbolic acid crystals? There is only one explanation; and as the air spaces in a super of honey are very confined, it is reasonable to suppose that the same thing occurs here, and that with a drop in the temperature, the air, which was warm and moisture laden, literally rains carbolic acid.

The foregoing deals only with the more indirect way in which the carbolic acid can get into the honey. There is the chance of accidental contact between the acid saturated cloth and any part of the honey comb, but the resultant flavour in the honey is quite easily detected if an accident like this has occurred.

OPPORTUNITY.

When Mrs. Gorm (Aunty Eloise)
Was stung to death by savage bees,
Her husband (Prebendary Gorm),
Put on his veil and took the swarm.
He's publishing a book next May
On "How to Make Beekeeping Pay".

—Harry Graham.

MARKETING DEPARTMENT
(HONEY SECTION)

In the last issue of the "N.Z. Beekeeper", full particulars were given for packing the honey to be forwarded to your packing plant in Auckland. In the main, these arrangements are working very smoothly, but there are still one or two small points which some producers are overlooking, thus causing unnecessary work and delay in the handling at the depot.

ADVICE NOTES.

Advice notes in duplicate should be forwarded to the Marketing Department, P.O. Box 1293, Auckland, to reach the office not later than the time the honey is received, and should contain the following information:

(a) When forwarded.
(b) How forwarded.
(c) Where consigned from.
(d) Net weight, brand and marks.
(e) Producer's name, address and number.

Supplies of Advice Notes are available at the Marketing Department.

ADVANCE PAYMENTS.

Bulk honey is graded as soon as possible after receipt, but in many instances delays occur in transit, and to assist producers advance payments can be made when requested. When making a request for an advance **a receipt copy of the railway consignment note** must be forwarded to the Department.

GENERAL.

With a view to assisting the producers in the various districts—particularly the South Island, all Marketing Department offices are being advised on matters relating to your marketing problems, and producers can rest assured that the officers in the various branches will do their best to assist them with any information.

For the guidance of producers, the Marketing Department's Head Office is in Wellington, and there are branches at Dunedin, Christchurch, Nelson, Hastings, Gisborne and Auckland.

A SICK BUMBLE BEE.

In the course of a discussion on Acarine disease at a meeting of the Otago Branch, Mr. A. J. Simon described an interesting experience with bumble bees.

While mowing grass at his apiary in South Otago Mr. Simon noticed a bumble bee apparently in distress, and on observing it closely he saw with the naked eye that it was infested with numerous small organisms similar to lice or mites. Having read a little about Acarine disease, he was immediately interested in this discovery, and a more detailed investigation showed a marked similarity to the disease in many respects.

Although Acarine disease has not so far been identified in New Zealand, Mr. Simon was able to procure from the Otago University a prepared slide showing an actual specimen of **Acarapis Woodi** which is the organism responsible for the disease. A study of this slide and the bumble bee specimens under a powerful microscope, and a comparison with mites secured from numerous other sources, confirmed the suspicion that **Acarapis Woodi** had really been found in a bumble bee.

However, no more suspicious specimens of either bumble bees or honey bees have yet been found. Mr. Simon forwarded his "patient" to the Department of Agriculture and the report which has now ben received suggests that there are no grounds for supposing that Acarine disease was actually present in this case. It appears that the "mite" belongs to the family **Uropoda** and is an organism which does not feed upon its host, but merely finds in it a convenient place of abode.

HONEY MARKETING COMMITTEE

COPY OF CIRCULAR TO COMMERCIAL HONEY PRODUCERS.

The purpose of this circular is to direct the attention of honey producers to the arrangements made by the Marketing Committee with our Marketing Organisation for the receipt of this season's honey at the grade store. The price to be paid and the necessity for producers to support this Organisation in order to ensure for the Industry, marketing stability, a payable return to the producer, and an equitable distribution to the consuming public.

THE PAY-OUT.

A similar procedure to that of last season will be followed. An initial payout of 7d per lb. pro rata according to grade and 2¼d per lb. flat rate, plus a bonus of 1/16d per pound for extractions of 20 cases increased to 1/12d per pound for extractions of 21 cases and over, will be paid to suppliers immediately the honey is graded at Auckland.

A distribution of any surplus up to, but not exceeding the maximum allowed under Stabilisation for the season, i.e. 1/- per pound, will be arranged by your Committee on completion of the year's trading when accounts are finalised.

It is impossible at this stage to state what the final payout will be, but suppliers may be assured that every effort will be made to operate the packing plant and dispose of the honey to the best possible advantage.

EXISTING MARKETING CONDITIONS.

It is clear that many manufacturing concerns who were glad to have honey to replace sugar when it was in short supply are no longer in the market for our product and it is obvious that ample supplies of fruit, tinned fruits, jams etc. will have an adverse effect on the demand for honey. Reports to hand indicated that many merchants and retailers are carrying considerable unsold stocks of last season's honey. In certain areas where the crop was above normal last season beekeepers have resorted to price cutting in an effort to clear stocks before the new season's honey comes forward.

A fairly heavy production in many of the principal areas is anticipated this season, and it is plain that if the market should become chaotic then returns to the producers must suffer.

THE SEALS LEVY.

It is generally recognised by producers that observance of the seal obligation is indispensable to the successful functioning of the Marketing Organisation. The Committee has discussed this matter very fully with the Minister and his officers. We have official assurance that the affixing of seal levy stamps on retail honey containers is a strictly legal requirement and that the Regulations in this respect will be enforced.

FUTURE OF THE HONEY SECTION OF THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT.

The Minister has made it clear to the Committee that if the Organisation fails to get sufficient honey to justify its existence as an economic unit he will feel impelled to accept that position as evidence that the producers do not want the Honey Section and he will, therefore, have to consider recommending to Cabinet the closing down of this Section. Those who wish the existing Organisation to continue operating should accept it as an obligation to supply a reasonable portion of their honey and ensure that the seal levy stamps are affixed on the containers of that which they decide to dispose of through the usual trade channels.

EARLY ADVICE FROM SUPPLIERS REQUESTED.

Intending suppliers should ADVISE URGENTLY information regarding the quantity of honey they intend to send forward. This information is essential in order that the quantity to be marketed may be assessed and arrangements made in advance to dispose of it to the best possible advantage.

CO-OPERATION AND SUPPORT ESSENTIAL.

It is obvious that the Marketing Organisation cannot function successfully or provide the service expected from it without the full support and co-operation of the producers.

It is for the producers by their actions this season to decide whether this organisation and the service it provides shall continue.

E. A. Field,
F. D. Holt,
W. W. Nelson,
Producers' Representatives.
Honey Marketing Committee.

IS IT A DANDELION?

By I. W. Forster, Apiary Instructor, Oamaru.

The daisy family with its 10,000 odd plant species contains a wealth of nectar and pollen bearers. To this order of plants belongs the dandelion group with their yellow flowers of a typical daisy-like construction. A compact mass of tiny florets surrounded by a fringe of petals.

All of this dandelion group supply nectar in great or small quantities according to location and climate. Such nectar is usually of a bright yellow colour and produces a good flavoured light ember honey.

Bees also gather large quantities of bright yellow or orange pollen from this plant group. While it has been suggested that the low nitrogen content of catsear pollen makes it unsuitable for brood rearing, the writer does not know of any case where this has been apparent.

All members of the dandelion group being similar as to flower type and colour, foliage and growing habits, difficulty is often experienced in sorting out the different individual plant types. Further confusion is caused by the fact that catsear is commonly called cape-weed in the south, where actually cape-weed is seldom seen.

While the flowering time is very variable according to location and climate and cannot be entirely depended on when identifying the plants, other characteristics are clearly defined. These are given here to assist those who may not be clear as to which plant is which.

CATSEAR (Hypochaeris radicata).

Leaves moderately lobed and hairy. Flower stalks are branched and grow up to a height of about one foot. Sometimes has odd stem leaves.

Catsear is a perennial that enjoys a wide distribution throughout New Zealand, flourishing under conditions that range from low lying damp plains to the high dry tussock clad hills.

It flowers from November to March and is particularly valuable in late summer and autumn when it is capable of supplying the bees with much surplus nectar and pollen.

CAPE-WEED.

(Cryptostemma calendulacium).

Much lobed club shaped leaves. A heavy angled stem about one foot high carries stem leaves and flowers on its several branches.

The flowers have a black centre surrounded by a ring of yellow petals which are fairly large; but not numerous.

While cape-weed grows freely in many North Island districts, it is seldom seen in the South. Flowering from late October to late January, cape-weed can supply worthwhile quantities of honey and pollen in those localities where it abounds.

DANDELION.

(Taraxacum officinale).

Leaves smooth and sharply serrated. Each flower on a single unbranched hollow flower stalk six to eight inches long.

This perennial weed although common in all parts of New Zealand is not generally abundant. It prefers fairly rich soil and moist conditions, will not survive if closely grazed and thrives mainly in waste corners.

Dandelions main flowering period is from October to December; but plants in favoured positions will sometimes continue blooming until early March. Bees work dandelion freely and it provides valuable nectar and pollen for the build up period.

HAWKSBEARD. (Crepis capillaris).

Leaves smooth and deeply lobed. The flower stalks grow up to eighteen inches high, are heavier than the dandelion, are branched and have stem leaves.

Hawksbeard is an annual that appears throughout New Zealand, mainly in gardens and waste places.

It flowers from early November to early February when it is worked by the bees; but is not generally considered to be of major importance as a honey plant.

HAWKBIT (Leontodon hispidus).

Leaves hairy and only slightly lobed. Flowers carried singly on unbranched flower stalks.

A biennial distributed throughout New Zealand. Hawkbit flowers from November to January, supplying some nectar and pollen but is of only limited value to apiculture.

HAWKWEED (Hieracium boreale).

A tall upright plant often growing over three feet high. It has a branched flower stalk with stem leaves. It favours waste places and although widely distributed is not plentiful.

Flowering from early November to late January when it supplies some nectar and pollen, Hawkweed is of only minor importance to the beekeeping industry.

TRANSFERRING BEES.

A Simple and Practical Method of Installing Bees in Standard Hives.

Secure and have ready hive body, top, bottom board, queen excluder, super, ten frames, and nine sheets of foundation. Insert the nine sheets of foundation in nine of the frames. Remove the old hive and in its exact former position place the bottom board and new hive body. Open the old hive wide enough to get sufficient comb containing eggs and brood to fill the empty frame. (Tie in with string, if necessary.) Now put this frame in the centre of the new hive body and insert the nine frames of foundation, filling the hive. Next place the queen excluder on top of the new hive body and place super on top of excluder. Wreck old hive completely and cut out all old comb. Shake bees from comb in front of new hive. Place all old comb containing brood and honey in the super in such a position as to permit the brood to hatch and to give the bees access to the honey. The use of plenty of smoke is advisable.

The entire operation should require only a few minutes and may be lessened still further if you have other bees in standard equipment. In that case, take two or three frames containing eggs and brood from another hive for the transfer, thus eliminating the sticky job of placing old comb in one of the new frames as directed. These frames of brood hold the bees in their new home and supply the larvae from which to raise a new queen should the old one be lost in the transfer.

This can be done successfully at the beginning of the spring honey flow and with fewer stings. If a queen excluder is not used the queen will likely go into the comb in the super for depositing her eggs. To permit this is bad beekeeping since the cleaning up of the old comb in the super could not be accomplished without the loss of brood.

If the queen was not found during the transfer, make a close inspection in about four days. If no queen cells have been started the queen is present. By the way, this is a good time to give the bees a good Italian queen. If nectar source is not available, feed sugar syrup until a honey flow starts.

After 21 days all old comb should be removed from the super as worker brood contained therein will have hatched.

—From Arkansas State Bulletin.

LISTEN TO THIS, BOYS!

On the whole I would say that bee men are kind, generous and pleasant fellows, but I think they all exaggerate somewhat.

—W.P.B. in the S.A. Bee Journal.

WINTERING BEES IN 1873.

By J. M. Marshall.

At the first signs of winter, all the hives were "pitted" and brought out again when the first settled spring weather came.

A suitable site was chosen for the pit, not too close to shelter, and it required to be on a slight rise to turn all rain. The turf was taken off in even-sized sods, and each one carefully laid aside. An oblong area was thus prepared to take the hives in two close rows. Some lengths of timber were laid along the prepared area. In the evening, the hives were placed on these in two rows and the entrances turned inwards. The hives were close in the rows and the rows were about a foot apart. Straw was loosely built on top bringing it to a peak like a stack. The sides were then thatched with good straight straw. Over this again were placed, tile fashion, the turfs with the grass inwards. (About as many more were needed as came off the site.) In the middle at the top, an air vent was left about a foot square into which loose straw was dropped. This vent was kept free from sods. Such was the winter quarters of the bees in those bygone days. It was claimed that each year the bees were "pitted" there were no winter losses.

—From "Bees in their Bonnetts"

FOR WOMEN ONLY.

Women who will argue about food prices will buy cosmetics at much higher relative prices without protest. If suggestions in some recent magazine articles become popular, it may serve to provide new markets for honey. It is said that a coating of honey left on for about 15 minutes firms the facial muscles and has a beneficial effect.

—American Bee Journal.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
HORTICULTURE DIVISION

HONEY CROP PROSPECTS.

The following is a summary of reports covering honey crop prospects received from Apiary Instructors at the end of January:—

AUCKLAND.

Hives in most areas possess great strength and are ahead of average years in this respect.

Weather conditions were most unusual. The rainfall was 1.85 inches, 89 points less than average for January. Temperatures ranged between 52 degrees F. and 79 degrees F, the average reading being low for this month. A strong S.W. wind blew almost continually and coupled with low temperatures, resulted in the clover failing to secrete nectar. There is ample moisture in the soil and clover bloom is prolific. Such a complete failure of clover nectar secretion has not occurred in the past twenty years. Buttercup, lotus major and other pasture sources have yielded well, and the flow from penny royal is likely to be heavy. Half crops are assured. It is still possible for a clover crop to be gathered however, although this would constitute a record in this district for late nectar secretion. Given two weeks of calm weather and temperatures in the vicinity of 80 degrees F., average crops are still possible, but a three-fourths average crop of darker honey than usual now appear likely.

NORTH AUCKLAND.

Colonies are in splendid condtion. Rainfall was slightly above average but fell mostly in the early part of the month, and was offset by strong drying winds. Pastures are rapidly drying up and yields from clover have proved negligible.

Honey crops will be above average, equal to last season, but the quality of the honey which was gathered mainly from early sources will not be comparable.

HAMILTON.

The weather was most changeable during January and colonies lost considerable strength.

Several wet days were experienced with rainfall at 1.79 inches for the month. Temperatures dropped to freezing point at times and other days were very humid with overcast skies. There is good clover growth but yields from this source will be light. Apiaries situated near bush appear to have secured crops above average, but the honey will be stronger in flavour and darker in colour than usual. Prospects generally are for below average crops this season.

HASTINGS.

January was a difficult month for beekeepers. In many cases the strength of colonies fell considerably. White clover, dandelion and cape weed bloomed well, but in consequence of cold days and nights little nectar secretion occurred until late in the month, when weather conditions improved. Prospects now are for heavier crops than last season's low production if favourable weather is experienced during February.

PALMERSTON NORTH.

Temperatures fluctuated considerably, and swarming was troublesome. White clover has been maintained and it is possible to get a late flow of nectar from this source if warm settled weather conditions continue into February.

The main sources of nectar in addition to clover include yellow flowering ground flora, while much manuka honey has also been stored. Clovers on the light soils along the coast have yielded up to and above average according to location, but inland the yield is well below average.

CHRISTCHURCH.

The season will close much earlier than usual. Stores are short in some apiaries but in general equalisation

will adjust this factor in commercial apiaries. Robbing by the bees has been a feature during January.

In isolated areas on the plains, also along the foothills, average to better than average crops have been gathered but in general the crops are below average to very poor, with no better prospects for this season.

INVERCARGILL.

Honey extracting operations are in full swing inland but in areas exposed to chilly coastal winds this work is just beginning.

White clover and other sources of nectar have bloomed steadily and growth has been good to 50 or 60 miles inland, but towards Central Otago rainfall has been insufficient to prevent the pastures drying up.

In South Otago and north from Gore prospects are for average to good crops. Inclement weather experienced south of Gore will reduce crops there if similar weather continues.

Half to less than half crops are expected in parts of Central Otago due to dry conditions.

NOTES FOR BEGINNERS.

By "Skep".

With the honey flow we see the culmination of our efforts with the bees, and are disappointed or elated according to the degree of success we have attained. This success depends largely on a favourable season, but a mistake to be guarded against is to blame the season when poor beekeeping methods are largely responsible. It is therefore necessary to estimate when the main flow is likely to occur, and to concentrate all one's energies towards having the bees in the best possible condtion at that time, as explained in the last issue. The degree of success in the achievement of this aim is what largely determines the amount of the honey crop.

In many districts this year the flow will have been a very short one. In my own district conditions were ideal for only about six days, a neighbour's scale hive having registered as much as sixteen pounds gain on one of these days. It will therefore be seen that unless hives were strong at that time only a poor crop could be obtained. Since then cold nights and a chill wind have made conditions poor for a honey flow, although conditions of pasturage have been excellent.

I hope all of you have secured a reasonable crop of honey, of which you are proud. Beginners should be ambassadors for the use of honey, but they should make a point of seeing that their product is as well packed and processed as that of the best commercial producers, otherwise the product, of which they were proud, will possibly finish by driving people from the use of honey. It is not sufficient to extract and strain honey then to put it into cartons or tins for sale. Having extracted the first lot it should be allowed to settle, skimmed well to ensure freedom from froth and specks, and then a fine grained starter should be stirred in. The honey should be well stirred for several days till it is cloudy throughout, and a reasonable job at seeing that the honey is acceptable to the consumer will have been done. Most grades of honey are palatable if clear, well ripened on the hives, and smooth in grain. For succeeding extractions reserve some of the first lot to act as starter.

Skep would like to believe that bees were provided for the use of man, and that their natural function is to provide surplus honey for him. Unfortunately many years of honey getting have dispelled such idealistic notions, and shown that the obvious desire of bees to gather surplus honey is firstly that they should have sufficient themselves to winter on, and secondly that any to spare above this, is for use to breed and multiply on the face of the earth. The object of a beekeeper must then be to see that they have sufficient to winter on, and this amount varies with the different districts, and to control their breeding to suit his own ends from then on, the objective being many bees in each hive during the following honey flow. To this end a young queen is essential in every hive, and in most districts the autumn is an ideal time to see to this matter.

Having secured a honey crop, disregard it, in the meantime, and concentrate during February and March on seeing to the requeening of the hives. Dequeening of the hives during these months and introducing a cell or young queen causes a break in brood rearing that is actually an advantage, as many bees bred at this time are only consumers. Users of queen excluders are now at an immense advantage, as queens are so much more readily found, and hives without excluders must have the surplus quickly removed or the bees will use it to continue breeding.

I cannot use space to describe methods of rearing queens, but most keen enthusiasts will have a work of reference on this subject. The main thing is to adopt a simple and sure method; find one that gives satisfaction, and stick to it, without indulging in complicated gadgets or devices.

If you desire increase, just after the honey flow is a good time to make it. Your strong hives can be divided in two, using a dividing board between the brood nest and first super, with an entrance to the rear, giving the queenless portion a cell or young queen, and trying to divide brood and bees about evenly. Until the end of March there will be plenty of bees and plenty of drones to mate the young queens. In the Spring, conditions are often cold, wet and windy, and although Spring seems a natural time for increase, it is often less advantageous than early autumn. It is entirely a natural thing for requeening to occur during the autumn, you will find some hives doing it of their own accord.

The final operations are to see that all hives are closed down for winter with a laying queen, and sufficient stores to leave them undisturbed till September. It is also advisable to reserve three frames of honey per hive, well stored in the shed, to see the hives through a possible bad spring. Equipment also should be thoroughly cleaned and safely stored.

Having attended all those matters one can give a sigh of relief and settle to a winter's rest, ready to meet the new season with renewed vigour.

BRANCH NOTES

AUCKLAND CENTRAL.

The weather in this area during October and November has been exceptionally bad, with a high rainfall and strong winds. Up-to-date in December it has been uncertain or unreliable. Colony strength has suffered accordingly and the season is late although hopeful.

At our Branch meeting held at the end of November, we were honoured by a visit from Mr. Holdaway, the Northland Secretary, and the two Branches are endeavouring to cooperate by way of visits, and it is hoped to arrange an oversized Field Day at Whangarei during late summer.

For some time at our Branch meetings we have had an open discussion period when those present mix to tell their bee stories and during which supper is served. Everyone has the freedom of the meeting for fifteen to twenty minutes and this break has proved very popular. We were able to arrange for the delivery of over 3cwt. of foundation to our members, also for a supply of frame nails, frame wire, and other necessities including a free supply of virgin queens. We have an excellent team spirit in a very contented atmosphere and we welcome visitors.

L. Riesterer.

SOUTHLAND.

A highly successful Field Day for beekeepers was held in ideal weather on Saturday, 22nd January, at the home apiary of Mr. P. H. Barber, Hedgehope, about fifty apiarists from Southland and Otago attending. The morning was spent in inspecting the appliances in the honeyhouse. After lunch the apiary instructor, Mr. S. Line, opened a hive and explained the interior economy. Mr. L. K. Griffin demonstrated a method of formation of nuclei for the care of young queens, and the use of a special screen for the care of weak hives or for requeening. Mr. W. Herron demonstrated his method of swarm control. In the honeyhouse Mr. Barber showed his new semi-radial extractor in operation, the first occasion our members have been able to see one. A trolley for moving heavy tiers of supers of honey was shown, a child being called upon to move a 3cwt. stack, which it managed with ease.

Mr. S. Line exhibited in diagramatic form the science of removing stray hives of bees from buildings, a sheaf of large posters witnessing to his versatility in dealing with awkward situations.

Mr. A. A. Lennie explained the highlights of the previous Dominion Conference and the reaction of the Government to various recommendations which had been put forth. An appeal was made to assure orderly marketing by giving some measure of support to the Honey Section of the I.M.D., the retention of which was vital to the industry. The meeting closed with the usual votes of thanks.

L. K. Griffin.

FAR NORTH.

At the December meeting of the Far North Branch a good muster of members, including three visitors, were presided over by Mr. W. Haines.

Mr. W. J. Fix, apiary inspector, was present and cordially welcomed by Mr. Haines. Most of the members took the opportunity to ask Mr. Fix questions relative to beekeeping, and state their problems and difficulties.

With his inimitable manner, Mr. Fix clearly and thoroughly dealt with a wide range of subjects, answering and directing members.

Before closing the meeting, Mr. Haines called upon Mr. Graham to make a presentation to Mr. Fix as a token of the esteem and appreciation with which all members of the Far North Association regard him.

In a happy and eulogistic vein, Mr. Graham referred to the "habit" developing among members of looking forward to Mr. Fix's visits with keen interest and pleasure, as all enthus-

iastic members, without exception, owe much of their practical knowledge and progress to direction from Mr. Fix.

Mr. Fix thanked Mr. Graham and the members, and said that he received much pleasure in carrying out what was only his duty.

He said he was always delighted to visit Kaitaia because of the personal contact, reception and co-operation given him by one and all in the Far North.

With exchange of the season's felicitations and hearty hand-shakes the meeting concluded.

On the following day beekeepers from all over the district motored out to " St. Leonard's ", the home of Mr. H. A. Bagley at Ahipara, Ninety Mile Beach. The occasion was one of combined picnic and field day for members of the Far North Branch of the National Beekeepers' Association and their families.

Cars came from Waipapakauri, Kaingaroa, Takahue, Fairburns, Diggers Valley, Kaitaia and Dargaville.

It was a good sight to see enthusiastic bee-men and bee-women well armoured against uncourteous flying insects and moving fearlessly among the white City of Bees. Some of the lady beekeepers were not thoroughly protected, but notwithstanding this, they followed all demonstrations and were close up to the hives throughout the day.

There were a few stings, no doubt; but good beekeepers do not make a song and dance about them though a bee-man present recounted an experience of getting 250 stings on one occasion somewhere near Double Crossing.

Before luncheon, Messrs. Bagley and Greensmith showed the novices how to find and catch queen bees with escort, and their method of caging them. The queen is not handled by the fingers but is caught in an ordinary safety match box. Mr. Bagley uses a transparent slide which permits the queen to be under observation all the time; this reduces the risk of injuring the royal insect, and at the same time captures any number of escort bees up to the capacity of the slide.

During lunch time, the bees themselves staged a show and went on holiday. A good sized swarm settled on a plum tree conveniently low for an easy take. After lunch the beemen took a comb of brood in a swarm box and shook the swarm. This was left under the plum tree for Mr. Bagley to hive after the bees' bedtime.

Mr. W. J. Fix, apiary inspector from Auckland, arrived in the early afternoon and immediately proceeded to deal with a reputed vicious hive; his able explanations of all manipulations and methods were keenly listened to. The use of the smoker, filtering bees through an excluder to catch the queen, and intrducing a new queen was of great interest to many. Then he demonstrated the newspaper method of uniting two hives. After this, Mr. Fix called on Mr. Bagley to explain and show the Snelgrove method of swarm control, an excellent idea which has a number of relative uses; of breaking up the swarm fever, of raising queen cells, of securing capped honey without brood, and of working two queens.

Mr. Fix then showed a quick method —admittedly less reliable—but suitable for the busy commercial beekeeper. He then explained reducing a hive and concentrating the bees so that section honey combs can be more readily worked. There were other lesser demonstrations, and many questions asked by members present.

Mr. Fix undoubtedly proved himself a capable bee-master and satisfied all present. Mr. Bagley thanked Mr. Fix for his attendance and instruction.

CANTERBURY.

Members of the Canterbury and South Canterbury Branches combined to hold a very enjoyable Field Day at the home apiary of Mr. E. B. F. Hight, Thompson St., Tinwald, on the 27th November, 1948.

Mr. Pearson, President of the Canterbury Branch extended a welcome to all those present and introduced Mr. Winter, Senior Apiary Instructor who gave a short address.

" The Art of Handling Bees, Tools and Equipment " was ably dealt with by Mr. Smellie, and was followed with keen interest, especially by the beginners.

Mr. Pearson then gave a talk on the " Use and Abuse of Queen Excluders

for Maximum Production and Swarm Control", after which the luncheon adjournment was taken.

The afternoon proceedings were handed over to the South Canterbury Branch and Mr. Jennings, the President, introduced Mr. Pearson, who gave a practical demonstration on the preparation of cell cups and raising queen cells by the grafting method. Mr. Pearson gave a very full account of his methods and illustrated his plans on a blackboard, so that everyone could follow fully the raising of the queens in the nuclei, and this was of especial interest to commercial beekeepers.

On the visitors' return to the honey house they were shown through by Mr. Hight, who explained the arrangement and working of his equipment.

"The Construction and Heating of Warming Rooms" was the subject of Mr. R. Davidson's address and as this was interspersed with little bits of humour, was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Mr. Robins next dealt with "Apiary Management in Relation to Foul Brood Control", and this was followed by a demonstration of gadgets as used by beekeepers.

At this stage afternoon tea was served and a very hearty vote of thanks was passed with musical honours to Mr. and Mrs. Hight for their hospitality.

R. R. Bushby.

GADGETS AND IDEAS.

CATCHING A QUEEN.

A method of catching a queen without hurt. Rest the comb on which you have spotted her (queen) firmly, with one hand hold the lug of the bar. Wet the thumb and second finger of the disengaged hand; touch the wings with these two moistened digits, and without applying any pressure you will find that you have secured the queen without fear of injury, by the wings. You may practice on a few drones or a few tardy workers. It's easy.

—From The Irish Beekeeper.

REPAIRING A FRAME.

Sometimes a lug is broken off the top-bar of a frame, making it decidedly awkward to manipulate. Mr. P. H. Barber, of Hedgehope, Southland, uses a very simple but effective method of repairing the frame. Take a two-inch rose head nail, preferably of not too heavy a gauge; bend about half an inch of the top end at a right angle, and bend the pointed end (say half an inch), at a right angle in the opposite direction. Drive the point into the end bar about one inch below the broken lug, and clinch the nail with a small staple at the top bend. The head of the nail acts as the lug and the weight is taken by the end bar, making a strong repair.

REINFORCED FOUNDATIONS.

After Mr. Root had perfected his comb foundation rolls, he saw that wax sheets would be stretched in the drawing out, especially in the midst of a honey flow. He likewise found that when foundation was drawn out into a nice comb and the honey was stored in it there would be a little sagging of the cells, so he conceived the idea of trying different forms of mid-rib made of paper, cloth, wood, and metal. Among the first he tried was cheesecloth. This was dipped in hot wax and when cool, run through a foundation machine. It made beautiful foundation and combs and Mr. Root was sure he had solved the problem. But he found that the bees, suspecting cocoons of the moth miller, would gnaw at the threads in the bottom of the foundation, carry it all out and utterly ruin the sheet.

—From Gleanings.

BEEKEEPING IN AUSTRALIA.

"The Australasian Beekeeper". Illustrated monthly magazine, published by Messrs. Pender Bros. Pty. Ltd.

Subscription, 8/- per year, posted.

Sample copy free on application to The Editor, P.O. Box 20, West Maitland, N.S.W., Australia.

NEWS FROM THE GENERAL EXECUTIVE.

THE DECEMBER MEETING.

A meeting of the General Executive was held in Wellington on the 7th and 8th of December, 1948, all of the members being present. Matters arising from Conference were reported upon at the meeting and the following is a summary of the business transacted:—

MARKETING OF HONEY.

Copy of letter from the Minister of Marketing:

Wellington, N.Z.
13th September, 1948.

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Association,
FOXTON.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 12th August conveying the texts of various resolutons adopted by your Association in relation to the marketing of honey.

The resolution which was adopted regarding vesting the Committee with administrative responsibility raises a legal principle which received very careful consideration when the regulations were drafted. You will be aware that the Marketing Act vests in the Minister all the powers of the Department, while Section 8 of the Marketing Amendment Act. 1937, gives the Minister power to appoint advisory committees to assist the Department in carrying out its functions. For this reason and also that the Minister must reserve the right to decide Government policy in marketing, and the Director is responsible to the Minister for the efficient management of the Department, there is no question that it is not within my powers to appoint a committee with administrative responsbility. At the same time I have already undertaken to interpret the word "advisory" in its widest possible sense. The producer members will be constantly advised of current operations, will meet regularly and will be fully informed of the work of the Honey Section. The Committee will anticipate production and marketing trends and will be expected to plan in advance of problems. Members will also be responsible for explaining and amplifying to producers generally the policy and aims of the Committee. The Committee so constituted will be able to exercise collectively for the benefit of the industry the specialised skill and knowledge of the individual members. Other industries are working satisfactorily with Advisory Committees of the type proposed for honey and I can assure you that my officers will cooperate in every possible way to make the Committee a success from the viewpoint of the producers as well as the Department.

The voting rights to be exercised by voters were considered by the representatives of the three major honey producer organisations prior to the drafting of the regulations and were fully explained to the National Beekeepers' Conference in July, 1948, and approved by that organisation. They are also supported by the Honey Control Board and the Honey Suppliers' Association. It will be appreciated that the Committee will be concerned primarily with the operation of the Department's blending plant at Auckland, and therefore a strong case exists for voting rights to be restricted to those producers who supply honey to the plant. In affording purchasers of seals some voting rights, full regard was had to any claims they might have to participate in the election of the Committee. At the same time, should circumstances alter, I shall be prepared to consider representations for extension of the franchise at a later date.

My comments in respect of the remainder of the resolution are as follows:—

1. I wish to express my appreciation of the resolution that beekeepers should be recommended to supply a minimum of 10% of their crops to the Department.

2. and 3. The texts of these resolutions have been conveyed to the Honey Marketing Committee for their comments. (2. Honey specially marked for England. 3. Reinstatement of full pro rata basis of payments).

4. It must be realised that the plant of the Honey Section is the property of the Government and in the event of the Section closing down the question of disposal of the plant would be a matter for the Government of the day. The reserve funds in the Honey Pool Account cannot be disbursed without legislation while the Honey Seals Reserve would be employed for the purposes for which the seals revenue was allocated when the regulations were introduced, namely, to secure better marketing conditions to the benefit of all producers and to conduct an advertising campaign on a national basis designed to increase the consumption of honey throughout the country.

5. The question of securing greater supplies of honey for the Department will be referred for the consideration of the Honey Marketing Committee.

6. The position regarding this resolution has been fully covered in my reply to the resolution that the Committee should be vested with administrative responsibilty. I intend to give full support to the Committee to enable it to function successfully.

7. My Department is at present undergoing a process of re-organisation and due regard is being had to the question of providing a more rigid enforcement of the honey seals revenue.

8. The price of bulk honey is a matter for the Minister in Charge of Price Tribunal, but will be referred to the Committee for initial consideration.

9. This recommendation is being referred to the Minister in Charge of the Price Tribunal. (Price of Beeswax).

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) EDWARD CULLEN,
Minister of Marketing.

In response to requests from the General Secretary for additional information on certain points, the Minister wrote further as follows:

WELLINGTON, N.Z.
29th November, 1948.

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Association,
FOXTON.

Dear Sir,

The following is in reply to your letter of the 16th November in which further information is sought regarding various matters that have been referred to in previous correspondence.

As already intimated to you, the Honey Marketing Committee set up a sub-committee to report on a request that the Government revert to the pro-rata basis of paying for honey. The report from this Committee is not yet available but immediately the required information is to hand you will again be communicated with.

In my letter of 13th September I stated the condtions applying to the Reserve Fund held by the Government and in the meantime I am unable to vary this information, but the points raised by you will be replied to more fully at a later date.

It is regretted that a complete answer to your letter is not at present possible, but a further communication will go forward in the near future.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) EDWARD CULLEN,
Minister of Marketing.

OWNERSHIP OF PACKING PLANT (I.M.D.)

Concerning the reply from the Minister of Marketing to the effect that the packing plant at Auckland was the property of the Government, Mr. Barber said the Minister's statement was contrary to fact. Mr. Honeyfield and other responsible Government officials had always assured them that the plant was the property of the Beekeepers. Members agreed that this was so and following a general discussion it was moved by Mr. Barber seconded by Mr. Lennie, "that this Executive strongly resents the Minister's statement that the plant of the Honey Section of the I.M.D. is the property of the Government and maintain that the statement is contrary to fact. This conclusion is borne out by repeated assurances given by responsible officers of the Department over a period of years that the plant belonged to the Beekeepers and also by the fact that it appears as such in the Balance Sheet of the Honey Section of the Internal Marketing Division."

MARKETING COMMITTEE ELECTION.

The Secretary drew attention to the unsatisfactory manner in which the recent election of the Honey Marketing Committee was carried out and in doing so said that he had received no advice whatsoever from the Minister, the Secretary of the Committee or the Returning Officer regarding the calling of nominations, date of election or results. Also that he had not seen any announcements in the Press concerning the election and he felt that many Beekeepers throughout the Dominion would not know that an election had taken place.

The Chairman said that he had not seen anything in the daily papers about the election and that he would not have known anything definite about it if Mr. Williams had not telephoned him about the nominations. Messrs. Williams and Barber said that mention of the election appeared in the Auckland papers.

The Secretary said he thought a very bad effect would result from the fact that the only nominations received by the Returning Officer were those from the members of the previously appointed Committee and that as a result there had been no real election, the members being re-elected unopposed. At this stage it was decided to telephone the Returning Officer (Mr. Beard) and ask him to call and discuss the matter.

When Mr. Beard arrived he answered various questions from members and outlined the steps taken concerning the election in conformity with the Regulations already approved by the Marketing Committee. He said that it had never occurred to him to advise the General Secretary of the date on which nominations were to be received. In view of the result of the election however, he undertook to see that more publicity was given to the matter in future.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Beard for his courtesy in coming to the meeting and also for the frank explanations given.

Subsequently the matter was discussed at some length, after which the following resolution was carried: Moved by Mr. Pearson. seconded by Mr. Williams, "that this Executive is

greatly concerned at the result of the recent Honey Marketing Committee election, in that insufficient publicity was given to Beekeepers generally as to persons eligible for nomination, also the date on which nominations were to close an dthat a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Marketing and the Chairman of the Honey Marketing Committee."

It was also decided that in forwarding a copy of the resolution to the Minister, that he be requested to arrange on future occasions for notification to be given to the General Secretary at least six weeks prior to the calling of nominations, giving date on which nominations were to close and the names of those producers eligible for election, also that advertisements relating to the election be inserted at least twice in ALL papers published daily in the Dominion.

MARKETING COMMITTEE.

Mr. Field gave an outline of what had taken place at the two meetings which the Committee had held since Conference and said that the Producer members of the Committee were pressing the Minister for a definite statement concerning the application of the Seals Levy.

A general discussion on the Marketing policy of the Committee then ensued, following which it was resolved on the motion of Mr. Barber, seconded by Mr. Williams, "that the Executive fully supports the President in any effort he has made for action to ensure the continued successful operation of the I.M.D. with a special reference to the necessity for the collection of the Seals Levy."

It was decided that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Marketing.

The Secretary drew attention to the lack of information concerning the work of the Marketing Committee and urged that steps be taken to induce the Committee to publish full reports of its business in "The N.Z. Beekeeper" in order that Beekeepers generally be given the opportunity of knowing what was taking place in regard to the marketing problem. It was decided to request the Committee to adopt this suggestion.

PRICES OF BULK HONEY AND BEESWAX.

The Secretary was able to report that very favourable consideration was being given to the application for an increase in beeswax prices to 3/6 per lb. The Price Tribunal however sought additional information in regardo to the quantity of wax which would be available from an economic unit (450 hives).

This information was duly passed on to the Price Tribunal who promised a definite reply early in the New Year.

Concerning the application for an increase in the size of retail containers to 60lbs., Mr. R. J. Smith of the Price Tribunal staff waited upon the meeting and asked for and received clarification on several points relating to the retail sales of honey before controls were enforced. Particular emphasis was given to the fact that 60lb and 28lb containers were standard retail packs before controls were introduced. Mr. Smith said that the discussion he had had with the Executive was most helpful and would enable him to explain the position more fully to the Director. It was pointed out to Mr. Smith that the production season was fast approaching and he said that he would endeavour to have an announcement made as soon as possible.

LICENSING OF APIARY SITES.

Copy of letter from the Minister of Agriculture:

Office of the Minister of Agriculture,
WELLINGTON,
29th November, 1948.

The Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z. Inc.
P.O. Box 19,
FOXTON.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of 31st August in regard to a resolution passed at the last Annual Conference of your Association, concerning the licensing of apiary sites, you will appreciate my difficulty in agreeing to any proposals of ths nature until a substantial majority of all commercial beekeepers in New Zealand have signified their support of the proposed regulations. I would not agree to the introduction of regulations designed to give protection against encroachment of apiary sites in portions of New Zealand only.

Yours faithfully,
(Sgd.) EDWARD CULLEN,
Minister of Agriculture.

Following upon a discussion on this matter it was decided that the Secre-

tary should have copies of the draft legislation prepared and circulated to Branches in time for the matter to be discussed by members generally before the next conference.

TAXATION.

Following a general discussion on the question of taxation in relation to the matter of treating hives and bees as capital assets and not as stock in trade, it was decided to take no action in the matter as it was considered that the individual Beekeepers concerned should make the best arrangements possible with the Taxation Department in regard to their own particular business.

HONEY BEARING TREES.

Following the Conference resolution suggesting that honey bearing trees be used in tree planting programmes, the Chairman of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council wrote asking for a detailed list of tree species which are considered most suitable for the purpose.

Decided to mention the Basswood tree known also as the Linden tree and as the Lime tree. It was also decided to refer the matter to the Horticulture Division with a request that they supply the desired information direct to the Soil Conservation Council.

A reply on the same lines was sent to the Commissioner of State Forests.

THE OPOSSUM MENACE.

The Under-Secretary, Department of Internal Affairs, wrote stating that this problem is now a matter which affects large areas. It is hoped to evolve, as soon as possible, the best policy to meet the situation which has arisen throughout the country.

WEED HORMONES.

At this stage there was a discussion on the effect that the use of weed hormones was likely to have upon bees if used in spraying large areas, such as golf links, etc., and it was decided to ask that Apiary Instructors be requested to collect data on the subject.

EDITORSHIP OF JOURNAL.

The meeting confirmed the appointment of Mr. J. McFadzien as Editor of "The N.Z. Beekeeper."

Resolved on the motion of the President, seconded by Mr. Barber, "that a letter of thanks be sent to Mr. Lennon for his services as Editor of the Journal during the past six years."

JOURNAL TO NON-MEMBERS.

Following upon a discussion on the resolution passed at the last Conference, it was decided to adhere to the decision taken by the Executive just prior to the Conference.

RETIREMENT OF MR. DALLAS.

The Chairman read a letter he had received from Mr. W. K. Dallas on his retirement as Director of the Horticulture Division, in which Mr. Dallas expressed his appreciation of the friendly manner in which the Association had worked with him throughout the years. On the motion of the President, seconded by Mr. Pearson, it was decided to place on record the valuable service given to the Industry by Mr. Dallas.

VENUE OF CONFERENCE.

It was agreed to adopt the recommendation of Conference that the 1949 Conference be held in Rotorua. In this connection Mr. Barber said that he had been approached by a number of Beekeepers, particularly in the South, to see whether it would be possible to hold the Conference during the School Holidays in August instead of in July. The suggestion was approved and it was left to the Secretary to fix the dates accordingly.

QUEEN BREEDERS' SOCIETY

PROPOSALS FOR CONSTITUTION.

After hearing an address by Mr. G. Swanson, the 1948 Conference approved the formation of an Italian Queen Breeders' Association within the framework of the National Association. We print herewith a letter from Mr. Swanson giving suggestions regarding the constitution of such a body. The objective, "to maintain and improve the type of Italian Bee we have in New Zealand", is worthy of support, and the movement should arouse the interest of Queen Breeders throughout New Zealand.

Strathwick Apiaries,
Maitland,
Gore-Waikaka, R.D.
30th January, 1949.

To the Editor.

Dear Sir,

During last Conference I was given the opportunity to speak on the forming of a Queen Breeders' Society. However, in the few minutes I was allowed to speak on the subject I felt I did not do justice to such an important question and I was glad to have Conference give its support. Such an organsation is for the good of all in the industry and only good can come from it if given the support it deserves.

The object of the proposed organisation is solely to maintain and improve the type of Italian Bee we have in New Zealand.

I hereby submit a set of proposals as a basis for the rules and constitution of such a body.

1. Annual Meeting of the proposed Society to be held during Conference each year.

2. All members joning the Society to have a report from the Department of Agriculture to show that the proposed member's stock are of a standard fit to breed from.

3. Members to agree to the Society investigating any complaint between breeder and client.

4. Any member who shall be guilty of conduct likely in the opinion of the Society to bring the Queen Breeders' Society into disrepute may be expelled by a unanimous vote of the rest of the members. The member concerned will be advised in writing by the Secretary of his alleged conduct at least twenty-eight days before the annual meeting of the Society, and will be entitled to attend same and speak in his own defence.

5. Members of the Society to be breeders of Italian bees.

6. Suggested entry fee, £5, thereafter an annual subscription of £1/1/-.

7. President and Secretary to be elected each year, and annual balance sheet audited and reported upon each year.

There are many reasons for the establishment of a Queen Breeders' Society. The proposals set down are only suggestions for the formation of such a body and for every beekeeper interested to read. During next Conference they can be discussed. During the intervening period I feel sure they will give some food for thought to those interested in the advancement of bees and beekeeping. Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for granting me space in the Journal.

Yours, etc.

GEO. SWANSON.

CONSUMER NEWS.

HONEY FOR COOKING.

To many people honey is merely a sweet substance to spread on bread or toast in place of jam or marmalade, but this oldest of natural foods can be used in innumerable ways. As well as sweetening foods, honey adds its own characteristic flavour and gives a greater variety of every-day meals. There are ways of using honey which are appropriate for every meal from breakfast to supper.

Honey is good for bread baking and for most types of cake, as the products have better keeping qualities, though for the lighter sponge type of cakes it is not so suitable, as it makes them a little too moist and not quite so light in texture.

For sweetening fruit, honey is used in much the same proportions as sugar, though, as it is not only a sweet but a sweet with a flavour, it frequently alters the characteristic taste of the fruit. Preserved fruits can also be put up with honey, or better still, with part honey and part sugar. The fruit flavours are altered slightly and the appearance of the finished bottles is darker and not quite so attractive when all honey is used.

All honey may be substituted in baking recipes in which the amount of sugar required is small—for instance in scones, breads, and some biscuits. In cakes and puddings for which more sweetening is necessary it is better to use part honey and part sugar, for the two substances differ in composition. Sugar is a sweet containing no acid and no moisture, but honey consists of several types of sugar in solution with water and has a slight degree of acidity. Therefore, when honey is used instead of sugar in a recipe the moisture and

acidity of the honey must be taken into consideration. It has been found that by observing the following rules practically any recipe may be adapted for the use of honey:—

1. Measure honey in the liquid form; if it is granulated, heat it over warm water until it is liquid before measuring it.
2. For each cup of honey used reduce the liquid asked for in the recipe by about one fifth so that the batter or dough is of the usual consistency.
3. Use a quarter teaspoon of baking soda to each cup of honey to counteract the acidity.

For most cake, bun, and biscuit recipes use half sugar and half honey, reducing the liquid content and adding baking soda in the proportions given. Fruit cakes are an exception; they may be made with all honey, which improves both keeping qualities and flavour.

In milk puddings, sauces, pie fillings, and the like add the honey with the thickening.

—N.Z. Journal of Agriculture.

THE WAX MOTH.

OR IS IT THE POLLEN MOTH? AN INTERESTING THEORY AND SOME SEARCHING QUESTIONS.

By Allen Latham.

The so-called wax moth never should have been given that name. The name bee moth is less inappropriate, but it also is not the proper name. I shall try to offer proof that the name of this insect should be the pollen moth.

I am backed by the best authorities when I uphold the teaching that all forms of life upon this earth toiled a long and adventuresome development from a very simple form to the complex form they now have. Such must have been the life of the bee moth, which I shall hereafter call the pollen moth.

Wax is almost perfectly indigestible even by the pollen moth. Many times I have seen sheets of foundation upon which the larvae of the pollen moth have tried to grow. In no case have I ever seen a caterpillar that grew thereby more than half an inch or so long, and never have I known them to become mature. They possibly get what little food they acquire from foundation because every sheet of foundation has a little soap or some other substance to keep it from clinging to the rolls as it is made. The larvae of the pollen moth can grow upon old combs, getting from them food in the way of cocoons, larval excrement, etc. But even these never reach a normal size. But let the same larvae start on combs in which there is much pollen stored and the result will be very fat and well-grown larvae.

Try a very simple experiment. Gather a few droppings of the pollen moth larvae and drop them upon a hot stove lid. At once a film of wax will melt out of them and spread out on the stove lid. Whether 100 percent of wax entering the stomach of the larva will produce the original 100 percent of wax, I cannot say, though I think little if any is digested.

The question arises: How did the pollen moth ever get into the bee hive? Having given much thought to this question I have arrived at what seems to me an indisputable fact. The insect got into the bee hive because a worker bee carried an egg into the hive. How could this happen?

I venture to say that somewhere in the world, possibly even to this day, there is a plant whose blossoms yield pollen over a period of time of more than just a day or two. The banana is of such a nature. The pollen moth, I feel sure, is native to such a plant. She lays her eggs in the blossoms of that plant and normally the eggs hatch and the larvae feed upon the abundant pollen, taking only a few days to mature by moving from an

aging blossom to a newly-opened one. This would be a very simple matter in such a plant as the banana.

Bees gather pollen from almost every variety of bloom and a bee going to, say, the banana plant, could easily gather up a newly laid egg with the pollen and take it home and this egg could be put into a cell and hatching, feed upon the bee bread there. This might happen again and again and often more than one such egg would find a home in a beehive. Assuming that normally the resulting moths would fly out and perhaps never accept the hive as a home, but if one of each sex matured and mated in or near the hive, I think it not unlikely that the female would lay her eggs in or about that hive.

Failure after failure would of course occur, just as the bee herself went through long years of painful development from its original solitary life to the profound development now seen in a colony of bees. The pollen moth eventually accepted the bee hive as its natural home and has been there for untold ages. This is not to deny that it is possible to this day to find the pollen moth at its original home—some plant rich in pollen. I can only wish that some day some explorer will find in some such plant fat worms which will be recognised as the larvae of the so-called bee moth.

The pollen moth is not the only insect which has a name not in keeping with its actual origin. The clothes moth did not get its start in woollen clothes, for it doubtless existed long before man made any woollen cloth. It probably fed upon hair and wool scratched off the bodies of animals shedding their hair or wool.

The study of insects and what they feed upon is fascinating and instructive. We can learn much from them and we can find interesting problems arising. For instance, the cabbage worm does not limit itself to cabbages and the butterfly will lay her eggs upon any plant of the mustard family. Likewise the caterpillar which gives the beautiful asterias butterfly will feed upon almost any plant of the umbelliferous family; carrot, celery, parsnip, anise, etc. The thinker who likes to solve problems will wonder which is older, the plant family or the insect family. Was there a time when all vegetables akin to the cabbage were one original plant and did the white butterfly feed upon that original plant and did her daughters recognise the daughters of the original plant as their natural home? I wish one of my readers would answer these questions.

—From "Gleanings".

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor.
Dear Sir,

Your Editorial, also your correspondent, W. Ashcroft, clearly point out weaknesses and injustce in the policy of a section of beekeepers and government as regards the honey industry.

One cannot but question the sincerity of most of those who so consistently support the continued operation of the I.M.D., for results speak louder than words, as the tonnage of honey sent forward the last few years amply demonstrates.

The restricted franchise now in operation practically deprives the majority of producers of any say in the affairs of their industry, and does nothing to restore harmony among producers.

That those who have contributed so little honey to the I.M.D. (150 tons out of Dominion estimate of 6,000 tons), should be given such an overwhelmingly large voting qualification makes any election of representatives of the industry a farce.

A recent "Press" report from Parliament dated November 17th, quotes the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Cullen, as having stated to a meeting of honey producers, "That unless the I.M.D. received the support of the industry he would be pleased to recommend the abolition of the Honey Marketing Regulations."

Sir, the chief support given the I.M.D. (Honey Section) over the last few years of voluntary supply has been lip service only, and it is high time that both it and the ½d per lb tax on honey for the retail trade be abolished.

Surely producers who manage the production of their honey are also competent to manage their own industry with a minimum of Government supervision. The lack of support accorded the I.M.D. forcibly demonstrates it is unwanted and it is to be hoped the Minister moves in the direction indicated in his reported remarks.

Yours truly,
C. HILL,
Commercial Beekeeper,
RANGIORA.

Branch Notes continued from page 17

GORE.

A very successful function took place on Saturday, 29th January, at the home apiary of Messrs. Glass Bros., Waikaka Valley, when the Gore Branch held its annual field day.

Present were representatives from the Southland, Clutha, West Otago, Central Otago, North Otago, and Dunedin Branches, and local beekeepers were well represented. All told about 100 were present.

The weather was favourable and the bees in quite a good humour—stings being few and far between.

Proceedings commenced with lunch at 12 o'clock and this was followed by a demonstration by Mr. S. Line, Apiary Instructor for Southland, on methods of taking honey from the hives.

Mr. W. T. Herron followed with a demonstration of the Demaree system of swarm control.

Mr. R. Stewart of Heriot spoke on hive management, and Mr. Geo. Swanson on breeding queens.

Short addresses were given by Mr. J. McFadzien, newly appointed editor of the "N.Z. Beekeeper" and Mr. Gould of the Internal Marketing Division, Dunedin.

All speakers were given an attentive hearing and a very enjoyable afternoon was brought to a close with afternoon tea and a vote of thanks being passed to Messrs. Norman and John Glass for their hospitality and to the ladies who had so ably catered for the needs of the "inner man".

C. J. Kellett.

MY METHOD OF MAKING MEAD.

By Lucy A. Trench, Merionethshire.

Having read about mead-making in the time of Hywel Dda in Mr. John Lloyd's interesting article in the "Welsh Bee Journal" for July, readers may like to compare notes on how it is done to-day. There is a great revival of interest in the subject at the present time and for a very good reason. Mead is honey-wine and like any other good wine it can bring a smile to the lips, gladness to the heart and that warm, comfortable feeling at the pit of the stomach, and all for less than twelve shillings a gallon!

You don't need to have a cask. I have made a little mead every year for a long time without any apparatus except clean bottles and corks, and though it didn't take a prize at the Welsh National Honey Show in Cardiff last year, I am not ashamed of it. A beekeeping friend in the Police Force sampled a glass of it last year after helping me to look through my hives and remarked: "Very nice. It reminds me of old days and drinking **vin blanc** at the **estaminet.**"

You can't buy mead because no one may sell it without a licence; and strictly speaking, you don't "make" it, you only provide the right conditions and Nature does the rest. It is a natural product. The first step is to make the "must," that is, honey and water solution. Adopting the recipe given in most text-books, I use 4 lbs. of honey to a gallon of soft or rain water and boil this gently for about half an hour with the rind of two lemons, or when these are not available, a good handful of the herb balm, or lemon-mint. Next time, however, I shall not boil it, but simply bring it to a temperature of about 130 deg. F. As soon as it has cooled to blood heat you are told to introduce a little yeast to start fermentation, and I did this at first, but later found that it was not necessary and that the flavour was better without it. There are natural yeast spores on the skins of fruits, but if you do not use the lemons there are always plenty floating about in country air. Best thing of all would be to add a little fermented honey, if any good beekeeper had such a thing! Anyhow, all I do is to pour the honey-water mixture into scalded bottles, leaving about an inch at the top, cover them with pieces of muslin or cheese-cloth to keep out dust and flies, and stand them on a sunny window-sill in a warm kitchen. In about three days it begins to ferment or "work," that is, the yeast plant feeds on the sugar and turns it into alcohol and carbon dioxide; and you see bubbles of this gas rising to the top and bursting into a froth. If you

fill the bottles to the brim at this stage, the froth dribbles over, makes a mess and it is wasted. The bottles look very pretty with the light shining through them, and the household always derives much innocent amusement from watching them fizz. This is called the **Primary Fermentation,** and it lasts some 10 to 21 days according to the temperature.

Then comes the **Secondary Fermentation.** When the "must" has nearly finished gassing, the bottle must be corked and the air excluded. This is essential because there are moulds and vinegar-yeasts as well as wine-yeasts present in the air. As long as carbon dioxide is being given off, it forms a layer on top of the liquid and prevents the entry of these harmful ferments and bacteria. As soon as the primary fermentation is over, these harmful agents will enter the mead if the bottles are left uncorked and turn the mead sour and flat. It is, therefore, most important to know when to fill up the bottles and put in the corks or the bung if a cask is used.

The first time I made mead I left the bottles uncorked too long after the bubbles had stopped coming up. The second time, using screw-top bottles, I screwed them down tight a little too soon. They were good bottles and they didn't burst. But shall I ever forget the scene when I opened one? After a day's spring-cleaning, I felt that I needed a drop of hard-earned "pick-me-up" and I brought a bottle to the supper-table. (I confess it had not been "racked" or matured.) Happily I turned the screw-top. With an evil hiss, what seemed like twenty gallons of foam, shot out and covered almost everything in the room, including my husband, who detests the smell of honey!

What I do now is to cork the bottles as soon as gassing has nearly finished and leave them in the kitchen for a few days. If the corks blow out I keep putting them back until they stay put. I leave screw-top bottles screwed loosely until the same time. Then I fill them brimful, cork tightly, tie down the corks and take them away to a cool dark place for six months. A cellar is the ideal, but the slate floor of a dairy or "gegin fach" does perfectly well.

At the end of six months, the mead looks bright and clear and very attractive, but it is not ready to drink until it has undergone the third process of maturing. First, it must be "**racked,**" that is, transferred or poured into clean bottles, taking care to leave behind the dregs. These bottles are filled to within half-an-inch of the bottom of the cork. It is a good plan to use half-pint bottles if available in order to avoid any wastage. Further, mead is too precious for anyone to have more than one glass at a time! If the secondary fermentation has been done in a cask without a tap, or in a stone jar, the mead can be "siphoned" off with a short length of surgical rubber tubing. Place one end of the tube low down in the jar or cask but not in the dregs, give a good suck at the other end, and the mead will continue to pour of its own accord into the bottle which must be held at a lower level.

The corks should be firmly tied down with string or wire and the bottles then laid on their sides. This prevents the corks from drying out and letting in air. Do not lay the bottles down, however, unless the corks are firmly fastened as the disturbance of bottling generally sets up a slight renewal of fermentation and they may blow out. Maturing should be allowed to continue for another six to eight months. This means that mead made in the September of one year will be ready in time for the Christmas of the next. It may seem a long time to wait but it is worth it. People who have tasted mead made in the old-fashioned way, from skep-honey, claim that no modern mead can compare with it. Apparently, the pollen, grubs, eggs, brood-food and perhaps a few dead bees, give it more "body"! Quite possibly there are advantages in the addition of these proteins. Anyhow, no one can say till they have "tried both." So I am looking forward, perhaps next year, to hiving an early swarm and leaving it in the skep till Autumn; then driving the bees and uniting them to a well-provided colony; pressing out the combs; and brewing some real "nectar of the gods."

—"The Welsh B.J."

OBITUARY.

MR. J. B. ADAMS.

Mr. James Boyle Adams, a resident of Gisborne for the past 64 years, died on November 14, within five days of his 94th birthday. The late Mr. Adams was well known as a pioneer in both fruitgrowing and beekeeping in the district.

Born in Dundee, Scotland, he came out to New Zealand as a sailor before the mast in the barquetine "May" in 1872. The youthful colonist proceeded to the Wairarapa and took up bush-felling for some years. Here misfortune befell him when he was caught by a falling tree and sustained a broken leg which later had to be amputated.

In 1884 he came to Gisborne to take up employment with the Native Land Company. He was subsequently employed by the late Mr. William Sievwright in clearing the site and laying out and planting the grounds of his well-known home on the hillside overlooking Gisborne.

Mr. Adams then acquired the adjacent property which he planted as an orchard, being an enthusiastic fruitgrower and beekeeper. He was instrumental in the formation of one of the first beekeepers' associations in New Zealand. He continued his association with Mr. Sievwright until the latter's death in 1910.

Meanwhile in 1901, Mr. Adams was joined by Mr. Bruce L. Scott and the partnership has been carried on ever since. In order to extend their beekeeping operations they acquired a property at Matawai in 1901.

Despite his advanced age, Mr. Adams led an active life, but his health had been failing of recent years. He left no relatives in New Zealand.

"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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