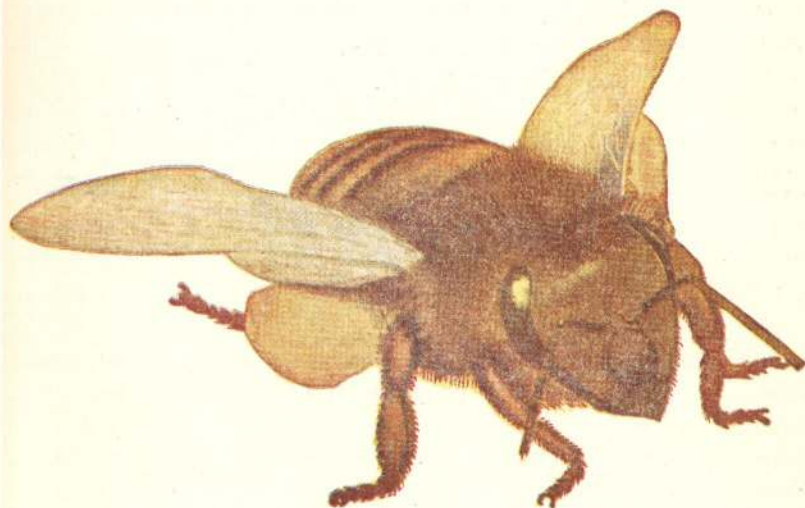


THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL. 13, No. 2.

May, 1951



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

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J. McFadzien, Editor.

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VOL. 13, No. 1.

MAY, 1951

HONEY PRICES.

The present state of international tension is a disturbing influence in the economic life of practically every country and one of its most unfortunate effects is found in fluctuating price levels. Price movements, whether upwards or downwards, have an unsettling effect on trade and the beekeeping industry, like many others, would gladly accept a constant monetary return if it could rely on stability in its costs of production and marketing. But recent evidence of further currency depreciation means that a price adjustment is absolutely necessary if the industry is to survive.

It is in order to meet this situation that the General Executive and the Marketing Committee have taken steps to secure a price increase. The task is neither an easy nor a palatable one but it is certainly necessary—the beekeeper faces numerous hazards in the course of his work and his existence is precarious enough without the burden of an unfair ceiling price. It might appear that the present figure is fairly high when compared with the returns of pre-war years, but it is by no means sufficient when set against 1951 costs of production. If the price were to be frozen at a level which does not adequately cover operating expenses, or if producers fail to maintain a fair price by careful and responsible marketing, then the industry must be relegated to the haphazard part-time occupation of half a century ago. In such a state it would be of little use either as an aid to agriculture or as a direct contributor to the nations food-basket.

BEEKEEPING IN INDIA.

Our attention is directed to beekeeping in other countries, and particularly in India, by the recent visit of Mr. H. Viswanathan, who has been observing beekeeping methods in Australia and New Zealand. Mr. Viswanathan's charming personality and his humanitarian ideals ensured the success of his tour as a mission of goodwill even apart from his study of apiculture.

Beekeeping is carried on to a very limited extent in India. There are four species of bees native to the country which store honey in significant quantities and two of these offer distinct possibilities in organised honey production. The possible introduction of new races, or the development of a suitable hybrid, and the adoption of a hive best suited to the conditions are questions which require very careful consideration.

There are two dominating thoughts, however, which readily emerge from a consideration of beekeeping in India. The first is the large amount of flora which is available to bees for honey production; the second is the vast human population calling for the maximum quantity of home-grown foodstuffs. So it is evident that there is a very wide scope for an increase in honey production and the efforts of those who are endeavouring to develop the industry cannot be too highly commended. We hope that Mr. Viswanathan's visit to Australia and New Zealand may prove of value in his work in India.

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XIV INTERNATIONAL BEEKEEPING CONGRESS

PRELIMINARY NOTICE

The Congress will meet at Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, England, from Monday, 3rd September, to Saturday, 8th September, 1951.

Scientists from many different countries have been invited to read papers and there will be sessions on

- (i) Pollination and Spraying Problems.
- (ii) Nectar, Pollen, Honey.
- (iii) Bee Behaviour—Physiology.
- (iv) Bee Breeding.
- (v) Bee Diseases.
- (vi) Scientific Colony Management.
- (vii) General.

Forms of application to attend the Congress and a provisional list of lectures are now ready. All beekeepers who intend to come to the Congress should now send for application forms. Requests for accommodation must be received by me before 31st May, 1951, and, if possible, much earlier as Leamington Spa is a popular holiday resort and accommodation is rapidly booked up.

Delegates and others attending the Congress will be asked to pay a registration fee of £3.

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Hon. Organising Secretary.

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Untested	8/6	16/6	24/9	32/-	38/9	75/-	7/3 each
Tested	13/6	26/-	37/6	48/-	57/6	110/-	
Select Tested	16/-	30/-	Breeders 35/-				

Also good stocks of Nuclei from 1st November at 30/- each F.O.R. or transport Nelson.

DELIVERY: Tested, as from September 20th; Untested, from October 20th (as weather permits) to April 30th.

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GENERAL EXECUTIVE

MEETING IN WELLINGTON

A recent circular to Branches contains news of a meeting of the Executive held in Wellington on the 23rd and 24th February. All members were in attendance and consideration was given to some aspects of the Marketing Regulations, and particularly to the Seals Levy, with a view to eliminating certain weaknesses. Taxation as assessed for beekeepers was among the other matters receiving attention.

The most important question to be dealt with, however, was that of seeking a general increase in the prices for honey. After a discussion with the Honey Marketing Committee general agreement was reached as to the basis upon which an application should be made.

Subsequently a detailed statement showing increased costs in production was prepared and submitted to the Director of Price Control in support of the application. At the time of going to press a decision on this matter was still being awaited.

VISIT TO BRANCHES

Branch members in Otago and Southland were given the opportunity of seeing the Executive's view of current problems when one of its members, Mr. G. E. Gumbrell, of Geraldine, visited the south recently. Meetings were held at Dunedin on 9th April and later at Gore, Invercargill and Oamaru, and full discussions took place on the Honey Price Order, Marketing Regulations, taxation, and other matters at present receiving attention. Attendances were moderate and the meetings were of distinct value as a means of enlightening members at a time when remits are being prepared for the Dominion Conference. At each centre members expressed their appreciation to Mr. Gumbrell for the time and effort he had given to make the visit possible.

NOTICE BOARD

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 1951 Conference is to be held in the Provincial Council Buildings, Christchurch, on the 11th, 12th and 13th July.

Invitations are being extended to the Director of Horticulture and the Chairman of the Honey Marketing Committee to address the Conference immediately after the opening ceremony.

QUEEN BREEDERS' SOCIETY

A meeting of the Queen Breeders' Society will be held in Christchurch at the time of the Annual Conference. Details of this meeting will be announced later.

BEESWAX

In order that the amount of beeswax available within the Dominion may be known it is requested that producers notify the Marketing Department, P.O. Box 1500, Wellington, concerning the quantities which they hold. It is necessary, of course, to advise the Department when such stocks have been sold.

DUNEDIN CONVENTION

The Annual Convention of Otago and Southland Beekeepers will be held in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Building, Moray Place, Dunedin, on Tuesday, 5th June, at 7.30 p.m., and on Wednesday, 6th June, at 9.30 a.m.

An interesting programme has been arranged and a cordial invitation is extended to visitors from other districts and to all who are interested in beekeeping.

ENGLISH HONEY

An advertisement appearing in "The Countryman" winter and summer issues, 1950, is of interest. It offers for sale Devonshire honey: 2lb. 8/-, 4lb. 15/-, 6lb. 21/6; post free, c.w.o.

BEE SUPPLIES

Special Reduction for Commercial Beekeepers Buying in Bulk.

SUPERS in flat, 4/1 each per 100. Including metal rebates, 4/3 per 100

In flat, 5/- each under 100. Including metal rebates, 5/3 each under 100

LIDS. Complete for use, tin plate cover. 6/- each per 100. 7/6 under 100

BOTTOM BOARDS. Reversible, 4/6 each.

FRAMES. Hoffman, 30/6 per 100.

Simplicity 1 1-16in. T.B., 27/- per 100; 1000's, 26/- per 100

Simplicity 26/- per 100; 1000's 25/- per 100.

METAL REBATES. 1/3 per dozen.

HONEY AGITATOR with 3 blades. Can be moved from one tank to the next.

Driven by Reynolds chain drive.

PRICE: £22/10/- F.O.E.

HONEY CASES: Export Case 3/2 each in flat; Case to hold 4 doz. 1lb. cartons, 2/10; to hold 2 doz. 2lb. cartons, 2/7. Other Cases quoted for on specifications.

ALL SUPPLIES CARRY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE.

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All inquiries to—

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HILLTOP APIARIES

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MARKETING DEPARTMENT (HONEY SECTION)

Contract honey is coming forward rather slowly, due, in some instances at least, to congestion on the railways which has caused priority to be given to the movement of more urgently needed foodstuffs and other goods. Receipts into store have been proportionately better in the South Island than the North, but the problems of transferring stocks from the South to the North imposed by the Water-front dispute have not yet been overcome. At the time of going to press the approximate stock figures are:—Christchurch, 130 tons; Dunedin, 120 tons; Greymouth, 75 tons.

Grading depots were successfully established in the premises of the Marketing Department at Christchurch and Dunedin and most of the honey in both centres has just recently been graded. A further grading will be carried out during the latter part of May.

Supplementary contracts have been entered into by North Island producers for approximately 45 tons and by South Island producers for 120 tons, a total of approximately 165 tons. The North suffered more heavily than the South from a sudden cessation of the honey flow following adverse weather conditions experienced early in January.

District quotas for contracts in total are:—

	cwts.	cwts.
Auckland	2,208	
Hamilton	7,617	
Tauranga	2,302	
Hastings	260	
Palmerston North	360	
Taranaki	1,243	
	13,990	
Nelson-Greymouth	1,375	
Christchurch	1,595	
Oamaru	3,229	
Invercargill	3,986	
	10,185	
	24,175	

Prospects of disposing of the embarrassingly large quantities of low-grade honey held by producers this

season are now brighter, although the net return may not be encouraging. Owing to a combination of circumstances, the ever-present problem of finding a market for manuka honey is this year brought into the limelight and given its true perspective, and producers who are situated in manuka country should take careful stock of their position in view of the extremely doubtful future.

SEALS REVENUE.

For six months ended 31st March, 1951—\$5,800.

For six months ended 31st March, 1950—\$4,093.

SEALS INSPECTION.

Two prosecutions for infringements of the Regulations by retailers have been brought in Palmerston North, the offenders being fined, while evidence of similar offences in Auckland have been placed before the Crown Solicitor and prosecutions are now pending against several retailers.

CONTAINERS .

South Island producers, cut off by the waterfront dispute from their normal source of supply, have been in serious difficulties through the lack of tins and cartons. This Department was instrumental in obtaining space for 10 tons of tinplate to Lyttelton and a substantial quantity of cartons to various southern ports, thereby relieving the situation. Further space has been applied for and should be available shortly.

BEEKEEPING IN AUSTRALIA

"THE AUSTRALASIAN BEEKEEPER"

Illustrated Monthly Magazine,
published by Messrs. Pender Bros.
Pty., Ltd.

Subscription 10/- per year, posted.
Sample copy free on application to—
The Editor, P.O. Box 20, West
Maitland, N.S.W., Australia.

HONEY MARKETING COMMITTEE

Receipts of honey, to date, lead us to believe that the original contract tonnages may not be received in the North Island but may be exceeded in the South Island.

The conditions of our initial contract were designed to discourage optimism when contracting as the early information of intention to support the Pool by way of supply under ordinary production conditions is most essential.

It is recognised that the Beekeeping Industry, under ordinary production conditions, can maintain local market stability only by removal of surplus quantities from the local market by way of export. At the same time, regularity of supply is essential in order to satisfactorily establish and maintain suitable export markets.

The receipt of honey in the North Island includes much dark honey, but unfortunately depot operations have been affected by our inability to get the lighter honey up from the South Island due to shipping conditions. Sales of honey are not brisk and unblendable lines have been most difficult to quit, particularly does this refer to manuka honey. This type of honey has been in heavy supply and your Committee has made strenuous endeavours to find outlets.

We have packed a manuka mix but the sale of this pack within New Zealand is slow. We have, however, placed parcels of this pack overseas and the relative low prices may be compensated, to a degree, by the heavier yield per hive which is obtained with this type of honey. The ordinary local sales outlets are restricted and individual beekeepers have cut local market prices with the ultimate result of lowering local returns for this line.

Other investigations have been made in order to find an answer to this problem and the D.S.I.R. have lent their assistance and have put up an experimental comb honey pack which may ultimately assist beekeepers.

There appears to be a misunderstanding of the position in the North

as it affects the blending depot and it is advisable to set out the following points:—

- (1) The present Marketing Department plant was designed to handle blended honey and was not designed to handle manuka honey.
- (2) Manuka honey in the past was not used in packing of Red, Blue or Green Seal Honeyco, but sold as manufacturing lines.
- (3) Lighter honeys from the South Island were not in the past mixed with the darker manuka lines. The suggestion to do so appears impractical at this stage.
- (4) Seals Regulations specifically exempted the sale of honey in the comb as it was considered, even at that time, that this method of sale was the most likely outlet for disposal of manuka honey.
- (5) Local prices received for the sale of manuka honey depend on the availability of other types of honey and the removal of a surplus to export makes the disposal of manuka honey more probable than otherwise would be the case.
- (6) Reports on a comb honey consignment to the United Kingdom are not promising.
- (7) The effects of your Committee, to date, leave little room for optimism in obtaining profitable markets for this type of honey.

BEESWAX:

In our last notes we asked that beekeepers advise the Marketing Department, P.O. Box 1500, Wellington, of surplus beeswax held for disposal, and no doubt the request may have been a little early. We cannot too strongly stress the urgency of this request. Exports and imports of beeswax depend on the result of information supplied by beekeepers, but the effect of cheap imports on the local market sales of this product needs little further comment.

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If you have pure, clean Beeswax take this opportunity of cashing in on to-day's top market price. Don't delay — write to us NOW stating the quantity available.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

HORTICULTURE DIVISION

The trend in commercial beekeeping at present is for more caution in the selection of new apiary sites to avoid areas where dark coloured honey only is produced, and the installation of more labour saving devices to meet changing conditions and for greater efficiency in operating commercial apiaries.

The latest available beekeeping statistics show an increase of 196 beekeepers, 752 apiaries and 9596 hives since 31st March, 1949.

HONEY PRODUCTION (Season 1950-51).

Seasonal conditions in spring and early summer were favourable for beekeeping in most parts of New Zealand during the past year and indications generally were very encouraging to the majority of producers. However, beekeepers in some important honey producing areas, notably the Waikato and Thames Valley, experienced difficulty in maintaining colony strength later at critical periods owing to erratic weather conditions. A feature of this year's production in the North Island was the failure of white clover to yield nectar in normal quantity and heavy crops of dark coloured honey produced from bush sources and manuka. Exceptionally heavy crops of white clover honey were produced in areas between the Rangitata and Clarence Rivers in the South Island.

The estimate of production in commercial and domestic apiaries for the 1950-51 season is 6035 tons of honey and 181,050lbs. of beeswax, an increase of 1518 tons of honey on last year's estimate.

The final estimate of honey production this year (1950-51 season) in semi-commercial and commercial apiaries is 5740 tons.

HONEY-MARKETING CONDITIONS.

Retail sales of new season's honey, packed in good condition, appear to be steady in the main marketing

centres of New Zealand, but bulk sales are much slower, and disposal of the darker grades, particularly manuka, is becoming a problem to some beekeepers.

Marketing conditions in New Zealand at present call for much greater care in production generally, as the days are gone when the bulk of the honey produced went straight into local consumption, after harvesting.

There is evidence of much honey in poor condition on the local market, which could be avoided if the producers concerned would take ordinary precautions at harvesting time.

Though the keeping quality of honey varies slightly according to its floral source and seasonal conditions when it was produced, no honey should be removed from the hives for extracting from the combs during a honey flow before it is thoroughly ripened by the bees. If this rule is not adhered to, there is danger of taking honey from which the normal amount of moisture has not been removed, resulting in a low-grade product which may ferment quickly when placed in storage for long.

Another bad feature is the amount of honey spoiled by chemical taints which could be completely avoided.

The use of creosote for preservation of hive parts should be discontinued and greater care taken in the use of disinfectants of any kind in or near the apiary and honey house.

Several lines of bulk honey which cost much labour and money to produce have had to be rejected at the Grade Store this season because of objectionable and possibly dangerous chemical taints.

An endeavour will be made to contact all producers who send honey in poor condition to the Grade Store this season with a view to assisting them to improve their honey harvesting and honey packing methods.

STAFF (Apiary Section).

Mr. L. A. M. Griffin has been appointed to the position of Apiary

Instructor at Hastings vice Mr. D. S. Robinson, who now retires from the Service of the Department at the end of June, 1951.

Mr. Robinson was due to retire in December, 1950, but generously agreed to continue in the service until a suitable replacement could be found. He will leave the service with our best wishes, and appreciation of his assistance to the Beekeeping Industry and to the Department.

WASPS.

It is clear from evidence available as a result of enquiries made overseas by the Department and from experience gained over the last five years in a close study of the wasp (*Vespula germanica*) that it is practically impossible to eradicate it once it becomes established in a district, also that their spread cannot be prevented owing to their nesting habits in inaccessible places and by the movement of all kinds of merchandise in which hibernating queen wasps may be resting. There is evidence of their spread over the greater part of the North Island particularly in the central bush areas, but so far comparatively few wasps have been seen in the southern portion of the Island. Control of wasps by the employment of Government officers is impracticable.

To assist the public and particularly occupiers of property where wasps are located, the Department continued the free distribution of chemical powder (10 per cent DDT) this season and also issued a free pamphlet describing the life history of wasps and methods of control. In addition an insectary has been established at Soil Research Station, Rukuhia, where Research Officers of the Plant Diseases Division, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Auckland, are continuing their investigations to find some satisfactory attractant for killing foraging wasps and if possible better methods of destroying their nests.

T. S. WINTER,

Superintendent, Beekeeping
Industry.

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1950-51

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2	17/6	25/-	30/-
3	25/6	36/-	
4	33/-	47/-	
5	40/-	58/-	
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20 and over—150/- per 20.

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Cheques to have exchange added.

Telegrams, 1/- extra.

Orders over 20 Airmailed free on request.

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The development of these Queens extends over a period of 20 years, resulting in the creation of a hard working, high producing and non-swarmling strain of gentle temperament.

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KAMO, NORTH AUCKLAND.

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WRITE FOR OUR PRICE LIST

VISITOR FROM INDIA

During the month of March New Zealand received a notable visitor in the person of Mr. H. Viswanathan, Vice-President of the All-India Beekeepers' Association. Mr. Viswanathan, who has made a close study of the bees of India, is the Bee Expert of the All-India Village Industries Association and he hopes to improve honey production in that country by the introduction of improved methods and perhaps by cross breeding to develop bees of a more suitable type.

In the course of his tour of Australia and New Zealand Mr. Viswanathan has visited the main producing districts and observed the latest developments in commercial honey production. In New Zealand he travelled between Northland and Dunedin and with the assistance of officers of the Department of Agriculture he was able to see some of the main honey producing and queen breeding units in this country. He was met by the Dominion President, Mr. E. D. Williams, the Vice-President, Mr. E. A. Field, and the General Secretary, Mr. G. V. Fraser; and a few days were spent at the Animal Research Station at Wallaceville where the various lines of



Mr. Viswanathan with Mrs. W. McFadzien and the Editor, Mr. J. McFadzien.

research work, and particularly the procedure of artificial insemination of queen bees, were of special interest to the visitor.

On leaving New Zealand Mr. Viswanathan travelled to Sydney to continue his tour of Australia.

Mr. Viswanathan is to be the Indian delegate to the International Beekeeping Congress in England next September.

In a letter written on his return to Sydney (enclosing a photo for the Journal) Mr. Viswanathan states that his tour in New Zealand has been most successful and he expresses his appreciation for the assistance rendered by the Department of Agriculture and members of the National Beekeepers' Association during his visit to this country.

GADGETS AND IDEAS

GETTING GRANULATED HONEY OUT OF COMBS

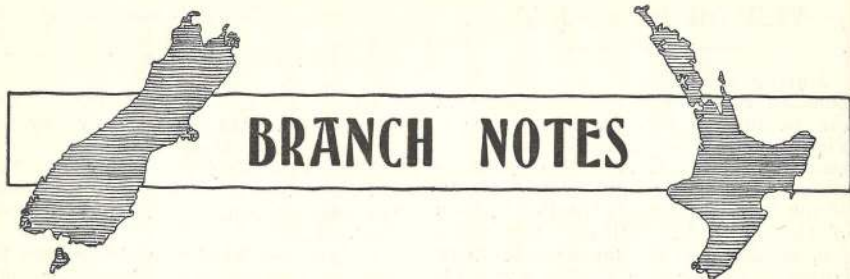
Upcap the combs. If it is thought worthwhile, run the combs in the extractor slowly. Then set the frames containing combs in a square can, the top of which has been removed and then filled with water. Put in seven or eight frames on end at a time. Put a weight on them to keep them submerged. At the end of three hours immerse the other end of the combs. The honey is dissolved and the combs are salvaged. A lot of combs can be handled with a dozen cans in a few days.

—Albert Judge, in *Gleanings*.

MOVING HIVES

We use a simple device—two six-foot lengths of parachute webbing with a 2½ inch iron ring strongly attached at each end. They are placed underneath the floor-board of the hive at right angles. A pole through the four rings is carried on the shoulders of two men. The tension adjusts itself so that no fixing together of the hive parts seems necessary. Hives can be quietly moved and let down on to a new position.

—C. Wentworth-Levy, in *American Bee Journal*.



SOUTH CANTERBURY

During the present year the Branch has held six meetings and three field days. As in the previous year the main field day was a full day with visitors from other Branches and a guest speaker. The other two field days were held in the afternoon, being more practical, less formal, and not organised in any way.

This year the main field day was held in glorious sunshine at the home apiary of Mr. Walter Watson, Geraldine. In the morning Mr. Jack Watson and Mr. Harry Knibb demonstrated queen rearing, and our Branch President (Mr. G. Gumbrell) so arranged matters that Mr. Tom Pearson (the South Island's best lecturer and practical demonstrator) found himself showing us how to introduce queens in paper bags. In Canterbury, Mr. Winter is always worth a trip of 30 or 40 miles to hear, and on this occasion he did not disappoint us, while our Apiary Instructor (Mr. I. W. Forster) can always make the commercial men stop their idle chatter and listen for that beekeeping item they have not heard before. This time the subject was swarm control; everyone listened and those not too old to learn, learnt.

Of the two short field days, one is to be held on 19th May at the home apiary of Mr. Len Robins, Temuka, when we will be shown how the "Robins" outfit makes frames, hives, bottom boards and lids, how wax is rendered and foundation rolled; in fact, we will learn how a self-contained outfit operates. Tin and carton containers are about the only items not made on the premises.

The September field day was held at 190 Otupua Road, Timaru, this being centrally situated, having a concrete wall where members can sit in the

sun and either doze, listen or talk to other beekeepers. On this occasion Ivor Forster made American Foul Brood a really interesting subject and followed on, to fill the place of an absent member, with an address on the production of section comb honey. The day concluded with a general discussion (led and controlled by the Branch President, Mr. G. Gumbrell) on the spring rearing of queens. Every member present who had ever reared queens had something to say on this subject.

Our South Canterbury Branch has now 45 financial members, is largely held together by three field days being held each year, and the fact that the commercial interests are not forgotten. This year we failed to get a South Island beekeeper to stand for election to the Honey Marketing Committee, but claim that we succeeded in getting the closing date for South Island honey supply contracts set back to the 8th of January.

—Robert Davidson.

CANTERBURY

FIELD DAY

The Branch field day was held on 2nd December at Mr. T. W. Grieve's apiary, Hawarden, which is situated in the Waikari plain and surrounded by hills. This type of country was quite new to a good many whose apiaries are on the flat and seemingly endless Canterbury Plains. The district had a burnt off appearance for this time of the year and the prospects for a good honey crop did not appear promising. The attendance was quite good for a field day in an area where beekeepers are not numerous. Very heavy rain fell on the preceding day and this caused a number to cancel the trip. The President,

Mr. E. Smellie, opened the proceedings and extended a welcome to all.

A talk on section honey production was given by Mr. T. W. Grieve and by using numbered supers he demonstrated his method of removing the surplus brood and returning the flying bees to the original stand.

Mr. E. B. Diehl prepared a hive for transport and described several alternative methods and outlined the pitfalls to be guarded against.

After lunch the honey-house was inspected and Mr. Grieve explained the working of his plant and answered a number of questions.

The Apiary Instructor for Canterbury, Mr. F. Bartrum, gave a talk on swarm control and demonstrated the various methods that can be used.

Queen rearing and their introduction was dealt with by Mr. T. E. Pearson, who explained how to introduce a queen by using a perforated paper bag, which he had found most successful.

A very enjoyable day was brought to a close with the usual vote of thanks to the speakers and to Mr. and Mrs. Grieve for their hospitality.

THE SEASON.

Above average crops have been harvested in Canterbury this season, with some phenomenal crops on light land and average crops on heavy land.

A very dry spring made prospects anything but good and an exceptionally early flow from the clover in November did not make things look any better. However, the dry spell broke in early December and in the breaks of fine weather the nectar just rolled in with the result that many were extracting at Christmas to make room for more to come. At the end of January clover was still flowering but continual wet weather since then put finis to the bumper crop that looked imminent. A good crop has not been without its attendant troubles. Supplies of cartons were too small and merchants' stocks were soon exhausted, with not much prospect of getting any more on account of the waterfront strike. No sixty-pound tins have been available from the makers since before Easter and by the time stocks of tins arrive the cold weather will have stopped most extracting. It is probable that a good quantity that would have gone

to the Marketing Department had tins been available has either been left on the hives or disposed of in smaller sized tins which were available.

Further heavy rain with disastrous floods towards the end of April disrupted the electricity supply and added to our extracting troubles with power cut-offs. Over twenty inches of rain has fallen this year, which is our normal rainfall for the year. Canterbury beekeepers will remember the 1950-51 season for a long time.

—R. R. Bushby.

SOUTHLAND

The annual field day was held on Saturday, 10th February, 1951, at the home apiary of Fraser Bros., Ryal Bush, about 40 people being present, including visitors from Gore and Clutha Branches. After an address of welcome by the President, Mr. A. A. Lennie, Mr. J. Fraser demonstrated the method he uses for removing bees from a super of honey. The honey-house was then inspected where the maximum use of electricity was made, each appliance being shown in operation. A short address on his experiences during the Rehabilitation course at Hamilton was then given, and a reference made to the wasp menace in the North Island. Mr. S. Line, the Apiary Instructor, announced the official instructions he had received for his field work and Mr. W. Herron put forth a suggestion for a line of technical research which he considered should be undertaken by the Government Research Officer at Wallaceville. Mr. Line then gave a practical demonstration of the manufacture of concrete hive stands.

Mr. Gould, of the Marketing Department, Dunedin, gave the latest information of the amount of support promised by suppliers, showing that beekeepers realise the necessity for supporting this organisation, the figures promising to be an all time record. The opening of a receiving depot at Dunedin will fulfil a long-felt want, though we could wish for a much earlier date for grading than in April. In view of the latest wage increase order and the increased cost of every item required by the industry, including the cost of living, etc., it was decided to press the

General Executive to ask the Price Tribunal for an immediate increase in honey prices.

Votes of thanks were passed to all who had contributed to the success of the day, especially to the ladies for attending to the distribution of the refreshments.

—L. K. Griffin

OTAGO

At the Annual Meeting of the Otago Branch held on 30th April the following officers were elected:—President, Mr. A. J. H. Shaw; Vice-President, Mr. A. F. Lindsay; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. A. J. Simon; Committee, Messrs. W. R. Paterson, I. Smith, T. L. Jackson and A. J. Simon.

NORTH OTAGO

Our roving correspondent reports that he attended the field day of the North Otago Branch at the apiary of Mr. D. G. Hamilton on a beautiful February day. With genial Doug. Hamilton as the host and with President Sprckett and Secretary MacKinnon carrying the programme along in easy style, the event proved most enjoyable.

The honey-house, which was previously the district school, has been remodelled to suit the needs of a commercial beekeeper, but a few of the old furnishings and decorations are still in evidence and some interesting facts and sound advice are likely to catch the eye of the visitor.

Lunch and afternoon tea were taken in the sheltered grounds and the picnic spirit prevailed. The main part of the programme was a demonstration by the Apiary Instructor, Mr. I. W. Forster, of various methods of removing honey from the hives, followed by an inspection of the extracting plant in action. Steam plane, steam cappings melter, semi-radial extractor and gravity flow to the tanks. Mr. Forster then produced a steam-heated pricker pad—a fearsome instrument—and as somebody had brought two combs which purported to contain manuka honey, a demonstration was given forthwith. The combs, after the required treatment, were placed one on each side of the extractor and the honey, for better

or worse, was absorbed into the Hamilton honey crop. The combs emerged from the ordeal in rather sorry shape and by no means denuded of their honey content and altogether the spectacle aroused considerable interest but very little enthusiasm.

A few further items added interest and variety to the programme and so concluded a successful field day. A party from Dunedin under the care of Mr. S. V. Johnston was seen heading for home with quantities of mushrooms, pottles of honey, sunburned faces and, believe it or not, a record of the day's events in movie colour film.

The sequel to this report is that the film has been duly prepared and screened by Mr. Johnson and it is a beautiful and truthful account of the proceedings. It is rumoured that some well-known bee men, having viewed themselves in glorious technicolor, are seeking passports for America with the purpose of continuing their careers in Hollywood!

NORTH ISLAND BRANCHES

Aren't there any concrete walls in the North Island where members can sit in the sun and either doze, listen, or talk to other beekeepers? If so we would be glad to hear about them.
—Editor.

WORLD NEWS

SOUTH AFRICA

What is rather amazing in South Africa is the comparative smallness of our progress in apiculture. Here we have probably the easiest conditions in the world from a beekeeper's point of view, practically no bee diseases, in some parts there is a 12-month honey season per year, we can boast of one of our members obtaining 2,000lbs. surplus honey from a multi-queen colony in 12 months, we enjoy the benefit of no outside competition through the importation of honey, as this was prohibited over 40 years ago, we need larger numbers of bees to pollinate the blossoms in vast orchards and for large seed production, we have

thousands of square miles of territory suffering from terrific soil erosion only waiting for suitable vegetation to be planted which will hold the soil and which could be beneficial for bee pasture, yet, beekeeping has not progressed as it should and yes, I must say it, beekeepers do not seem to be alive to their potential interest. One hears a grumble here and there about the beekeepers' associations trying to encourage the production of honey which will ultimately force the price to an uneconomical level. This is not the experience in other parts of the British Empire and the criticism need not be taken seriously in South Africa.

—S.A. Bee Journal.

BEE DISEASES.

There are several bee diseases and some of them have already been found in South Africa, but others fortunately do not occur here, and for many years steps have been taken by the Department of Agriculture to prevent their introduction. The importation of live bees, except by the Department, is prohibited, also the importation of honey and second-hand bee hives and other used apiary appliances and containers of honey and beeswax. Beeswax must have

been heated to 112 degrees Fahrenheit before it can be admitted, or must be otherwise treated on arrival.

The danger with honey is that bees might be attracted to honey that has been spilt or has leaked out, or that bees might get to containers that have been thrown out in which there is still a little honey.

Amongst the bee diseases we have not yet got the most important one known as American foul brood, which is widely distributed also in Europe and many other beekeeping countries.

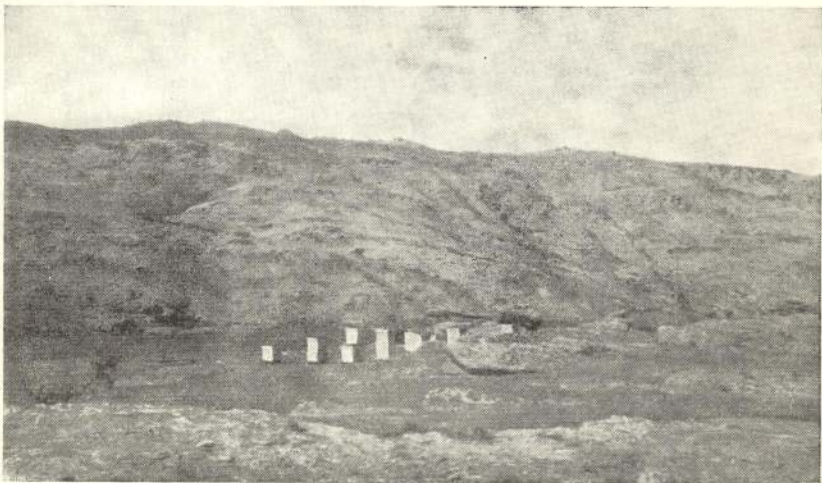
—From an article by A. E. Lundie, Ph.D., in the S.A. Bee Journal.

OPOSSUMS AS PETS

WELLINGTON, April 27.

New Zealanders who keep opossums as pets will in future be committing an offence if they continue to do so without the written consent of the Secretary for Internal Affairs. This is provided for in the Opossum Regulations, which contain two new provisions, the other being that opossums may now be taken in any part of New Zealand by any means not involving unnecessary cruelty.

—Press Association.



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NOTES FOR BEGINNERS.

By SKEP.

This is the end of Skep's period of writing these notes, and it is his hope that some may have derived benefit from what has been written, and that none has been led astray. It is hard at times to explain things satisfactorily in writing, and often it takes several failures in practice before some methods can be used successfully. This is especially true of the Demaree method. Skep knows some particularly skilled beekeepers who fail to achieve success with it, but once it has been mastered the results are well worth while. It is nevertheless true that a much higher degree of skill at general hive manipulation is necessary to secure a satisfactory crop without its use.

THE PAST SEASON.

Skep understands a particularly good season has been enjoyed by South Island beekeepers, and this is heartening news. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of the Auckland Province in general, as although conditions appeared to be ideal, clover again failed to yield in many districts, and although fair crops of honey were secured, very much of it was of manuka flavour, which is unsatisfactory for blending purposes, and difficult to handle. It has been increasingly obvious how our industry benefits by sugar shortages in increased honey consumption, and it would seem possible that beekeepers should endeavour to be completely independent of sugar supplies by arranging to use manuka honey for feed wherever possible, and where there is no fear of disease manuka honey in bulk could be supplied at less than the present cost of sugar. If obtainable in combs there is no comparison in the benefit a hive receives or in the work of feeding.

SEASON FOR REST AND REFLECTION.

The work of the season should now be ended; this is a period for rest and reflection, learning, and preparation for the coming year. Beginners should try to make some sort of

contact with their more experienced commercial neighbours. In most cases they will be very ready to help with their experience and knowledge. The commercial men on the other hand are in the habit of communing together, and making some plans for the improvement of their industry. Unfortunately it is inclined to develop into a sort of "roaring season," and all do not realise that progress can only be made by a spirit of true co-operation.

NIGHTMARES.

Skep wonders at times if any beekeepers have a special sort of nightmare. The disasters that can occur must be guarded against with constant vigilance. First, the nightmare of disease. To open up an apiary and find traces of diseases through many or all of the hives is a most heart-breaking experience. Again, to have all the swarms lost through a series of out-apiaries in a bad swarming season, as the past one was in the Waikato, pass in revue before one's eyes, would be a harrying scene. Or to produce a fine crop of honey three and four supers per hive and to bring it in with delight only to find it is thick and difficult to extract is indeed a first-class disappointment. It is the fear of these tragedies that keep one on one's toes, and helps to maintain efficiency.

DAYDREAMS.

Daydreams are pleasant, but seldom are realised without the accompaniment of much toil. It does occasionally happen that we have an easy season when all goes according to plan. The bees make no attempt to swarm, the weather is kind and favourable, the honey of lovely quality and the nectar so plentiful in the fields that it sticks to one's boots when walking in the pastures. There are no industrial troubles and supplies arrive according to schedule. Impossible! Maybe, but such a season is a delight and remains in the memory as a pleasant experience for a lifetime.

GOODBYE AND ON TO BETTER THINGS.

A new "Skep" has been approached to continue these notes, another North Islander. He is of very wide experience and has many years successful beekeeping behind him, a natural teacher, and possessed of a ready pen. It is Skep's hope that he will agree to accept the task: it has a degree of pleasure in it. This Skep wishes you all farewell, the time has come for the hive to be requeneed. Good-bye.

SKEP.

(Editor's Note:—We wish to place on record our appreciation of the writings of Skep during the past three years. The practical advice which they contain and the sound philosophy which pervades them have made this column a valuable feature of the Journal. We hope that the retiring Skep will again take up his pen from time to time and supply further contributions, in one form or another, for these pages.)

OBITUARY

MR. G SWANSON

It is with regret that we record the death of Mr. George Swanson, of Waikaka Valley, Southland, on 10th May, at Dunedin. Mr. Swanson had been in failing health for some months and had entered Dunedin Hospital where he underwent an operation early in May.

Mr. Swanson was born in the extreme north of Scotland and his character seemed to derive some of its sterling qualities from the rigorous climate and the rugged terrain of those parts. He came to New Zealand shortly after the First World War equipped with few worldly possessions but with a stout heart and a zest for life. For some years he worked with farmers in the Waikaka district and later he was engaged in the butchery trade for about three years.

About the year 1925 he first became interested in bees after being shown a colony at work by Mr. W. T. Herron. During the next few years he established a small apiary of his own and eventually he purchased the property at Maitland where he gradually de-

veloped the present apiary business of 300 to 400 hives.

From his early days Mr. Swanson was interested in all branches of animal and plant breeding and after taking up beekeeping his attention was soon focussed on the breeding of better Italian bees. In this work he achieved considerable success and he earned a high reputation both in New Zealand and overseas, always concentrating on the quality of his product rather than on the quantity of his output. From time to time he imported stock from America but he attributed his success mainly to the foundation stock and the wise counsel of Mr. R. Stewart, for whom he had a great admiration. During the last two years he was instrumental in forming the N.Z. Queen Breeders' Society, a body of which he was the first President and which had the simple objective of improving the type of Italian bees in New Zealand.

Mr. Swanson took a keen interest in the affairs of the National Beekeepers' Association. His singleness of purpose and his forthright manner in debate were well known but no difference of opinion ever effected the sincerity and warmth of his friendship. With his passing the Association loses one of its most worthy members.

Our sympathy is extended to Mrs. Swanson and the family of seven children in their bereavement.

CORRESPONDENCE

THAT NEW PRICE ORDER.

To the Editor,

Sir,—I hope that the new price order, when and if it comes, will remove some of the anomalies that exist in the present order. For instance, a beekeeper should get a slightly greater price per pound for honey packed in twos than for that packed in fives, and the consumer should pay more for honey per pound the smaller the container it is packed in. The small part-time or the domestic beekeeper fills his fives or his tens by hand from an ordinary honey tank gate. This is an expensive way to fill. He also sells these tins of honey to individual customers. During rationing, when tin was scarce (and indications are that it is going to be very hard to buy next year) the part-time beekeeper developed a trade whereby the customer supplied the container. This trade was frowned on by the producer packer, but it resulted in a local distribution of honey, no tin was imported to get this honey distributed, no expensive machinery was used, and the distribution was

rather more than local. Why does the Price Tribunal, or rather those submitting the facts to the Price Tribunal, not realise that this honey takes time to pack, and because it is sold in small lots to consumers it takes time to sell. Why then class this honey as bulk honey and fix the price at 11½d. per pound, when the same honey, filled into the beekeeper's own containers, can be sold at 1/2½ per pound? Putting the above in simple form—if a beekeeper buys a 5lb. tin, fills it with honey, and sells it to a consumer, he can charge 7/0½ for it, whereas if the consumer supplies the 5lb. tin the beekeeper can only charge 4/9½ for the honey it contains. It is all very well to say "but does he charge the 4/9½," that is not the point at issue; 11½d. is the correct price for honey filled into a consumer's tin; by no stretch of imagination can these small sales of honey, filled into consumer's own containers, be called bulk sales, as the quantity is usually small, and the time taken to fill these orders is longer per pound of honey than that of any other method of sale. Why not recognise these sales in the price order? The net result would be of benefit to all concerned in the industry. Outside the industry the grocer, whose goodwill beekeepers should cultivate, is not at all pleased, if after he has sold a 5lb. tin of honey to a consumer for 7/0½ learns that the same consumer can get that tin filled by a domestic beekeeper for 4/9½, and that the beekeeper is, at that price, charging the maximum permitted by the price order. Do not forget that a large number of domestic and part-time beekeepers live quite close to grocers. Cannot something be done about this position? When a new part-time beekeeper asks what price he can charge for his honey let us be in a position to be able to say a price that is in keeping with that charged by the grocer across the street. There is no question of the cost of filling these customers containers being greater than the cost of filling standard packs. Why not recognise the service these small beekeepers are doing in distributing honey, in saving tin, and in saving manpower.

ROBERT DAVIDSON.

To the Editor,

Sir,—This season a position has arisen where a large proportion of the honey produced in the Auckland Province grades about 75. If this honey does not qualify for contracts the advance payment will be slightly over 6d., and calculated on a basis of 9 tons for the individual producer working without assistance, returns £500 gross, which amount will pay expenses. The amount of the bonus will therefore constitute the producer's wages—not a very encouraging prospect.

A few seasons ago the Marketing Committee requested supplies of honey for a second grade pack and then in the following season discounted certain lines and the Committee apparently can allot the bonus payments on a differential basis. Even on a pro rata basis of 11d. grade 75 would return only 8½d.—surely there is a case for something better than that, and a further payment equal to the advance payment would be acceptable. This would also bring the payment for grade 100 up to 1/4, which price can easily be obtained on the export market.

The present application for a price increase if granted may bring the figure for grade 100 from 9½d. to 1/-, which is not enough, because certain items were omitted from the original 1942 basis in order to keep the price down to the 7d. the I.M.D. was then paying. Actually the Export Board paid 6½d. in 1936 and an increase in honey prices comparable with dairy prices would bring the payment to 1/4 pro rata.

Also some of the smaller industries have suffered to a greater extent from inflated costs than have some of the better organised and established industries.

It must be understood that the honey industry has never previously had sufficient production to maintain both New Zealand and export markets, the export market suffering in times of low production. Now that hives have increased a greater proportion of production has to be exported and the importance of a payable price on the wholesale basis is emphasised.

In an attempt to return a payable price the levy has been spent, but the payout has not given satisfaction on that basis.

The purpose of a levy is to cover certain administrative expenses, the Marketing Committee should be capable of marketing honey at a payable price.

Unfortunately the Committee is compelled to work on a cost of production basis which is not in accordance with the terms of the Marketing Act—that is, adequate payment to producers. Members are very disappointed with the performance of the authorities in fixing the price for contracts on the 1947 basis, this without consulting Branches. There is also another very undesirable feature and that is in the sale of honey packed by the Department to production areas thereby depriving the local apiarists of their most profitable sales.

This letter has been contributed for the purpose of pointing the way to better organisation with a payable price for honey for export and the consequent relief for the New Zealand market from over-supply.

It is hoped that members will give urgent attention to the suggestions and enable the Association to make progress immediately after the next Conference.

ALEX MAWHINNEY.

HONEY FRUIT PIE

1½ cups of raisins, currants, and sultanas mixed, 1 tablespoon of orange and lemon peel, 4 tablespoons of lemon juice, ¾ cup of honey, 2 tablespoons of butter, 2 tablespoons of cornflour, 1 cup of cold water, pinch of salt.

Mix the cornflour with a little of the cold water until it is smooth, then add honey, fruits, butter, and the rest of the water. Bring the mixture to the boil and cook it for 3 or 4 minutes until it begins to thicken. Pour it into a pastry-lined deep plate, cover it with pastry, and bake the pie in a moderately-hot oven for 30 to 35 minutes.

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