

# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL 14, No. 6

MAY, 1953



*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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DUNEDIN CONVENTION

The Notice appearing in this Journal  
under Notice Board re Dunedin Con-  
vention should read:—

WEDNESDAY, 3rd JUNE, 1953,

at 10 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

And not as printed.

# The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

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by the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand (Incorporated).

J. McFadzien, Editor.

Subscription, 8/- per annum, post free. Members 3/- per annum.

VOL 14, No. 6

MAY, 1953

## A YEAR PASSES

Another season's honey crop has now been harvested and with the Dominion Conference set down for July producers will again be concentrating their attention upon the general welfare of the industry. The population of New Zealand is now over two millions, large enough to eat more honey than ever before. At the same time our beekeepers are becoming more efficient and new land is being developed each year, so it seems likely that a part of the honey crop will need to be despatched to overseas markets for many years to come.

A matter of some concern to beekeepers, and one which may affect the future of honey production, is the increasing use of poisonous materials as insecticides and weedkillers, not only in orchards and gardens, but also in the wider sphere of general farming. Fortunately it has been shown that the danger to bees is not serious when the poisons are used properly and we have the assistance of the Department of Agriculture in formulating the correct procedure in making applications. It is to be hoped that this danger will be avoided, as it can be avoided, by a reasonable spirit of co-operation within the farming community.

During the past year a sound basis for the Honey Price Order has been established with the completion of the Cost of Production Survey and the price of honey sold in New Zealand is now comparable with that obtained for other primary products. The overseas market, however, is less satisfactory, and it appears to be essential that the returns from exported honey should be raised to cover the cost of production if the industry is to perform its proper function in New Zealand agriculture.

At the present time certain changes are pending in the marketing structure. The seal levy is to be increased to one penny per pound, which is considered to be in line with to-day's values, and it is to be extended to the logical point where it includes all honey sold in retail containers. But there is one disturbing feature of the marketing situation—the failure of the industry to constitute a Marketing Committee which is acceptable to all producers. It is now fifteen years since the present system was introduced but the administration has never enjoyed the full confidence of the industry—surely an essential requirement, especially if marketing is ever to be placed wholly under producer control. The Dominion Conference requested last year that both purchasers of seals and suppliers of honey should be eligible to serve on the Committee and the principle of representation for seals purchasers has now been recognised, at least in part. It is evident that the Minister of Marketing desires to satisfy the wishes of the industry, and if the 1953 Conference will confirm last year's decision it should remove any doubts about the validity of their request.

The past season has reminded us that the greatest hazard in producing honey is one which will always be with us—the uncertainty of the elements. Conditions have been poor, even disheartening, in many parts of the country and yields have suffered accordingly. Every beekeeper knows that he must face this uncertainty and it therefore behoves one and all to ensure that the remaining factors governing production and distribution are as favourable as it is possible by joint effort to make them.

## NOTICE BOARD

### DOMINION CONFERENCE

The 1953 Conference is to be held in Wellington on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th July. Remits for consideration at this meeting are to be in the hands of the General Secretary by the 27th May and will be circulated to Branches as soon as possible thereafter.

### BRANCH RETURNS

Branch officials are reminded of the requirements of Rule 35 (a), which determines the voting strength of Branches at Conference. Any remittances received by the General Secretary after the 31st May cannot be included in the funds from Branches for the current year.

### JOURNAL FEE

Members who wish to receive "The N.Z. Beekeeper" are reminded that they are required to pay the Journal fee of 3/- per annum in addition to their ordinary membership subscriptions.

### DUNEDIN CONVENTION

The Annual Convention of Otago and Southland Beekeepers will be held in the Pioneer Women's Memorial Hall, 302 Moray Place, Dunedin, on Tuesday, 2nd June, 1953, at 1.30 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

An invitation is extended to all interested in beekeeping and any visitors from north of the Waitaki will receive a cordial welcome.

"Father, can my boy friend take the place of your business partner who died this morning?"

"It's okay with me, daughter—speak to the undertaker."

## OBITUARY

### MR A. W. OGILVY

We record with regret the death of Mr A. W. Ogilvy, of Romahapa, South Otago, on April 29th at the age of 58 years. Mr Ogilvy had undergone a major operation some months ago but had failed to make a recovery although he remained alert and cheerful until the end.

Mr Ogilvy's family were among the early settlers in South Otago; his father operated a flaxmill at Romahapa for some time and his mother tended a few hives of bees, probably some of the first bees in the district. After serving in the first World War Mr Ogilvy took up beekeeping commercially. In the ensuing years he witnessed many changes in the industry but he faced them with fortitude and a progressive outlook and gradually built up a sound and efficient honey-producing business.

In the affairs of the National Beekeepers' Association he took an active part and at the time of his death was Secretary of the Clutha Branch. His work in this connection was done quietly, but his interest never failed. His generous disposition and his personal character gained him a wide circle of friends, and for many years the name Alex. Ogilvy has held a place of the highest esteem in the beekeeping community.

To Mrs Ogilvy and the family of one son and two daughters we extend sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

### PERSONAL

Mr George Beard, one of the Government nominees on the Honey Marketing Committee, has recently resigned from this office in order to take up an appointment as superintendent and chief technical officer of the New Zealand Pig Producers' Council. The Council is a new organisation through which the pig industry in the Dominion will be completely producer controlled.

Mr Beard was associated with the dairying industry for many years. He obtained his dairy factory manager's certificate and was for

nine years with the Marketing Department. In recent years he has become well known in the honey industry, particularly through his contacts with the Dominion Conference and Executive meetings. We express our appreciation for the work he has done in connection with honey marketing and we wish him every success in his new appointment.

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## MARKETING POLICY

WELLINGTON, March 26.

As a further step in the implementation of its policy extending the principle of producer control of marketing, the Government is to relinquish its half-share in Farm Products Co-operative (Wellington) Ltd., for the sum of £60,400 (£48,000 for land and buildings, £12,400 shareholdings).

The Minister of Marketing, Mr Holyoake, said that a Cabinet sub-committee comprising the Minister of Industries and Commerce, Mr Watts, the Minister of Health, Mr Marshall, and himself, had been set up to determine a price and a suitable method of sale of the Government's shares.

The sub-committee's recommendations had been approved.—Press Association.

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## LAND DEVELOPMENT

A milestone in land development was reached this year with the 1,000,000th acre being developed and settled since the inauguration of the Government's rehabilitation policy, said the Minister for Lands, Mr Corbett.

"The sole objective has been to strengthen the base of New Zealand's economy and provide the opportunity for more men and more families to be established on the farm lands of the country," said Mr Corbett.

The present land development programme required the expenditure of £9,000,000 a year—£6,000,000 for Crown land, £2,500,000 for Maori land, and about £350,000 for advances to individual settlers. There

had, however, been substantial recoveries.

Mr Corbett announced that 300 new farms would be created this year, including 50 which had been developed from Maori-owned land. — "Otago Daily Times," 11/4/53.

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## QUEEN'S PRIZE BEEKEEPER'S SUCCESS

The 26-year-old Hastings beekeeper M. G. (Maurice) Gordon, a son of Mr G. F. Gordon, won the Queen's Prize and the Ballinger Belt for the second time at the 1953 National Rifle Championship Meeting held at Trentham in February. Although two points behind the leader when he went to the mound for the final shoot he was steadiness personified and returned a score of 47 to give him a winning aggregate of 520. Incidentally, this score of 520 out of a possible 550 equals the record score for the Belt series.

Over 500 riflemen competed this year. The procedure is that each competitor shoots twice at each range of 300, 500, 600, 800 and 900 yards, making ten 10-shot matches, and the leading 50 become "The Queen's Fifty" and fire a final match at 900 yards, the man then having the highest aggregate being the winner.

Maurice Gordon was successful previously in 1951. Since the Belt series commenced in 1874 very few have won it more than once, a notable exception being Major Masefield, who won it five times between 1914 and 1948.

It is worthy of mention that another well-known Hawkes Bay beekeeper, Percy Berry, won the King's Prize in 1930 at the age of 21, his nearest rival being Major Masefield.

In 1948 the Australian King's Prize was won by a beekeeper. Is it possible that there is something about the bees or the honey which produces a keen eye and a steady hand?

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You probably wouldn't worry about what people think of you if you could know how seldom they do.

## GENERAL EXECUTIVE

A meeting of the General Executive was held in Wellington from the 24th to 26th February, and a report of the business transacted has been circulated to Branches. The following are some of the items dealt with either at the meeting or subsequently.

### Joint Meeting

On the 24th February a joint meeting with the Honey Marketing Committee took place in the Minister's office, those present in addition to the Committee and Executive being: The Hon. K. J. Holyoake, Messrs E. J. Fawcett (Director-General of Agriculture), A. M. W. Greig (Director of Horticulture), T. S. Winter (Superintendent, Beekeeping Industry), and K. B. Longmore (Acting Director of Marketing).

This meeting had been called by the Minister because of the fact that the Honey Marketing Committee had refused to agree to the implementation of the 1952 Conference resolution dealing with the right of nomination to the Honey Marketing Committee of Producer Purchasers of Seals. Statements regarding the deadlock which had arisen through the action of the Committee were made by Mr Williams for the Executive and by Messrs Bridle and Nelson for the Committee.

The Minister asked a number of questions relating to the industry in general and to the marketing situation in particular, and expressed the hope that a solution to the problem would be arrived at. At the end of an hour, however, it was apparent that little progress had been made in that direction, and the Minister intimated that in view of the fact that Mr Beard had resigned from the Committee because he was leaving the Government service, he felt inclined to use his authority in filling the vacancy by appointing a Seals Purchaser as a Government representative on the Committee.

The Minister asked Mr Nelson whether the Committee would be happy to accept such a compromise. Mr Nelson informed the Minister that

the Committee would not agree to such a proposal. The meeting then terminated.

At 2 p.m. on the following day the Executive again met the Minister in his office. On this occasion Messrs Barber and Gumbrell were not present as they had been granted leave of absence in order to return to their homes the night before.

The Minister informed the Executive that since the joint meeting of the Executive and the Marketing Committee the previous afternoon he had received a letter from Mr Nelson stating that the producer members of the Committee had given further consideration to the Minister's suggestion that he should appoint a Seals Purchaser member of the N.B.A. as a Government representative on the Committee, and that they were now agreeable to this course being adopted.

The Minister explained to the Executive that he considered his action in the matter at least established the right of the Seals Purchasers to representation on the Committee and he appealed to the Executive to approve of his action, and if they felt they could not do that, at least to support him in the action he proposed to take in an honest endeavour to resolve the difficulty which had arisen.

At the conclusion of the discussions with the Minister, which lasted over an hour, the Executive again met and resolved that in the event of the Minister putting his proposal into effect and asking the Executive to nominate a Seals Purchaser from their ranks to serve on the Committee as a Government representative, that the names of Messrs Williams and Field be submitted to the Minister for his consideration.

### Committee Appointment

As indicated in the correspondence published in this issue, the Minister has proceeded with the proposal to appoint a nominee from the Association to the Honey Marketing Committee and Mr E. A. Field has been chosen to fill this position.

### Seal Levy

Following the decision regarding membership of the Honey Marketing Committee the Minister has announced that the seal levy is to be increased to one penny per pound as soon as practicable and that the incidence of the levy is to be extended as recommended by the 1952 Conference.

### Producers Need Assistance

The serious position of a number of beekeepers in the Taranaki district following a succession of poor seasons has been brought to the attention of the Executive. This matter has been discussed with the Minister of Marketing with a view to securing some form of financial assistance to help those members who are in difficulties.

### Export Returns

The importance of the honey industry in relation to the national economy and the danger which threatens it due to the low returns from honey exports have now been placed before the Minister in the form of a comprehensive statement. It is urged that the Government should subsidise the seals revenue (which is contributed by producers) in order that suppliers to the Department may be assured of receiving a payment at least equal to the cost of production.

Authorities in all agricultural countries state that the pollination service provided by bees is essential to their economy, especially as other insects are to-day of little consequence in this work. Indeed one overseas writer, in discussing food production and the propagation of plants, goes so far as to say that the process of pollination by honey bees is the most important single phenomenon in the world to-day.

In a country like New Zealand the matter is certainly a vital one.

### Price Order

The question of having 60lb. honey containers included in the schedule of retail prices in the Price Order was also discussed. In this regard it was recalled that the Executive had previously applied to the Price Tribunal to have 60's recognised as being retail containers. However, in December,

1951, when negotiations for the new price order were first commenced, the Marketing Committee had strongly objected to the proposal, and it appeared likely that the issue of the new price would be held up pending some sort of agreement on the point. In order to avoid such a delay at that particular time, the President and General Secretary agreed not to force the issue at that stage, but had reserved the right to bring the matter before the Tribunal at a later date.

As further requests had been received to have 60's included in the retail schedule the Executive passed the following resolution to be sent forward: "That this Executive desires to have 60lb. tins included as retail containers, to sell by producers at 1/3 $\frac{1}{4}$  per pound."

### Preferential Voting

The Association's rules having been duly amended by the Registrar of Incorporated Societies to provide for preferential voting in the election of officers, the General Secretary reported that the new system would operate at the forthcoming Conference. Special voting slips would have to be prepared, owing to the fact that nominations did not close until the Conference was actually in progress and the voting papers could not be fully prepared beforehand. Members, in casting their votes, would need to write the names of the various candidates in the spaces provided and to indicate against each name the order of their preference.

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### Honey Nuggets

Four ounces butter, 4oz. honey, 1 dessertspoon sugar,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vinegar, 1 egg, 6oz. flour, 1oz. best cornflour, 1 cake dark chocolate, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1oz. cashew (or other) nuts, vanilla essence to taste. Cream butter, sugar and honey very well. Add vinegar, beat in egg, add flour and cornflour, baking powder. Lastly add the nuts and the chocolate cut small. Put spoonfuls on greased tray. Bake in moderate oven.





# HONEY CARTONS

in  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb, 1 lb, & 2 lb sizes

**STOCK PRINTS** available for immediate delivery.

**STOCK DESIGNS**  
to which your own  
name can be added,  
or your own

**SPECIAL DESIGN**  
in quantities of 3000  
or more.

**STAMPED**  
LIDS can be  
arranged for  
through the  
Marketing  
Department



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AUCKLAND.

## MARKETING REGULATIONS

Office of Minister of Marketing,  
Wellington, N.Z., 10th March, 1953.

Mr G. V. Fraser,  
Secretary, National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z., Inc.,  
P.O. Box 19, Foxton.

Dear Mr Fraser,

Decisions taken after meeting your executive and the Honey Marketing Committee are, first, to appoint a nominee of your Association to the Honey Marketing Committee to fill the vacancy due to Mr Baird's retirement; and, second, to recommend to Cabinet that the seals levy be increased to 1d. per lb., and that amendments to the Honey Marketing Regulations be made as recommended by the 1952 Conference in regard to the incidence of the levy.

The first decision meets the desire of conference that seals buyers be represented on the committee though the manner of appointment is not that outlined by the conference. Your executive, however, can claim rightly that the principle has been recognised and I believe that a workable arrangement has been made. I remind you also of my request that the members of your executive support this decision, not merely for the period intervening until the 1953 conference, but until 1954, which will enable the proposal to be fully tested over a full season. I believe that your members will regard this request as reasonable and I am convinced that they will meet me in this matter.

The second point, namely an increase in the levy from  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. to 1d. per lb., together with a wider application, will be put into effect as soon as practicable. I have already made enquiries as to what steps are necessary to do this and I will let you know the final result as soon as possible. The effective date will be made as soon as possible without causing difficulty to the industry or trade generally.

Our discussions were in a spirit that all points were put forward for the benefit of the industry generally, but as complete unanimity on the disputed issues was obviously impossible these decisions have been made in the belief that they offer a practicable solution. Universal approval of them is naturally not expected but I do ask again that the influence of your executive members be exerted in favour of a reasonable trial of the experiment.

Before actually proceeding with my decisions, I should be glad to know whether you agree that the foregoing represents a fair record of the discussions. If you do agree I should be glad to have with your confirmation the name of the person whom you desire to appoint. As an alternative to putting one name before me, you may care to consider the desirability, as is done in some other industries, of preparing a panel of two or three names from which I will be responsible for selecting one. This matter, however, I leave to your discretion.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) K. J. HOLYOAKE,  
Minister of Marketing.

Foxton, 23rd March, 1953.

The Hon. K. J. Holyoake, M.P.,  
Minister of Marketing,  
Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Dear Sir,

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 10th March, a copy of which was immediately forwarded to each member of the Dominion Executive, and on whose behalf I wish to express thanks for the amount of time and consideration given by you in dealing with their representations.

The decisions you have made subsequent to your meeting with the Executive and the Honey Marketing Committee are noted, and while, as previously indicated, the Executive is not entirely in agreement with these decisions, they have accepted your rulings and will co-operate to the fullest extent possible.

It is also noted that it is your desire in filling the vacancy on the Marketing Committee caused by Mr Beard's retirement, that the appointment be made effective to the date of the 1954 Conference, and this has been agreed to.

However, members of the Executive are far from happy over your request that the Executive should nominate a Producer Seals Purchaser for appointment to the Committee as Government representative, but in view of your expressed wish that they do so for the trial period named, it has been decided to adopt your suggestion that a member of the Executive be nominated, and for the trial period only, the names of Messrs E. D. Williams and E. A. Field are hereby put forward for your consideration.

You ask for my confirmation of the fact that your letter represents a fair record of your discussions with the Executive, and I agree that it does.

Yours faithfully,

G. V. FRASER,

General Secretary.

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Office of Minister of Marketing,

Wellington, 7th April, 1953.

Mr G. V. Fraser,  
General Secretary,  
National Beekeepers' Assn. of N.Z., Inc.,  
P.O. Box 19, Foxton.

I acknowledge your letter of the 23rd March in which you confirm that the facts as set out in my letter of the 10th March represented a fair record of the discussions I held with your executive.

I thank you for submitting the names of Messrs E. D. Williams and E. A. Field as your executive nominees for the vacancy on the Honey Marketing Committee, and steps are being taken to have Mr Field appointed to this position. I should like to make it clear that there is no reflection on Mr Williams that I have decided to appoint Mr Field. I feel, however, that in view of the fact that Mr Williams is the President

of your Association and that Mr Field has had previous experience on the Committee that the latter appointment would be preferable.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking your executive for their co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) K. J. HOLYOAKE,

Minister of Marketing.

## MARKETING INVESTIGATION

Office of Minister of Marketing,

Wellington, 2nd April, 1953.

The Secretary,

National Beekeepers' Association of N.Z., Inc.,

P.O. Box 19, Foxton.

Dear Mr Fraser,

Further to my letter of 19th March regarding honey marketing, it has recently been decided not to proceed further at this stage with a Caucus Committee investigation on marketing, and, as a consequence, I will need to examine your submission on a somewhat different basis to that originally intended.

In view of the changes occurring in personnel and Departmental re-organisation, it would be more satisfactory if the Honey Marketing structure was reviewed a little later when the effect of these changes can be more accurately assessed.

In the meantime, thank you for letting me have your opinions on some of the problems being encountered which will serve as a useful background for any future examination undertaken.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) S. W. SMITH,

Parliamentary Under-Secretary to  
the Minister of Marketing.

## ITALIAN QUEENS

Reared under ideal conditions and of Highest Quality. Guaranteed free from all disease and bred from Pure Stocks which have been carefully selected for good working and non-swarmling qualities.

Ninety-five per cent. of Untested Queens guaranteed purely mated.

	1	2	3	4	5	10	20
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.

Orders filled in rotation as received.

TERMS: Cash with order. Cheques to have exchange added.

**C. A. GREIG** POSTAL ADDRESS &  
P.O. ORDER OFFICE **Brightwater, Nelson**

## MARKETING DEPARTMENT (HONEY SECTION)

The period of good weather experienced in January proved to be too brief and too local to be of value to producers and the season generally has been a disappointing one, except in Southland and on the West Coast.

Original—	Tons.	Cwt.
Auckland .....	67	15
Hamilton .....	194	6
Tauranga .....	79	—
Hastings .....	1	10
Taranaki .....	17	—
	359	11
Nelson-Greymouth .....	53	17
Christchurch .....	145	—
Oamaru .....	219	—
Invercargill .....	170	10
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>947</b>	<b>18</b>

Total signed contracts, therefore, amount to 1072 tons 2cwt., but reductions and cancellations to original contracts bring this figure back to 1025 tons 14cwt.

Seals revenue from 1st September,

The feeling of confidence and optimism that prevailed is reflected in the following figures showing the actual signed contracts received from all districts:—

Supplementary—	Tons.	Cwt.
Auckland .....	—	—
Hamilton .....	3	—
Tauranga .....	—	—
Hastings .....	—	—
Taranaki .....	—	—
	15	16
Nelson-Greymouth .....	5	—
Christchurch .....	16	8
Oamaru .....	84	—
Invercargill .....		
<b>Total</b> .....	<b>124</b>	<b>4</b>

1952, to the 31st March, 1953, was £4241/19/10, and for the corresponding period last year £4632/7/3.

J. A. TARLETON,  
Manager Honey Section.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HORTICULTURE DIVISION

Beekeeping statistics to the end of June, 1952 show a decrease in the number of domestic beekeepers but a substantial increase in the number of apiaries and hives kept by commercial producers.

Many domestic beekeepers appear to be losing interest in their hives following poor seasons, and field officers are now finding some very neglected domestic apiaries. A few commercial beekeepers also have neglected some of their outlying apiaries, particularly in the North Island, where two bad seasons in suc-

cession have been experienced in some areas.

### Honey Production for 1952-53 Season

Seasonal conditions throughout New Zealand varied to a considerable degree during the past year.

Early supplies of nectar and pollen available to the bees encouraged brood rearing much earlier than usual, particularly in the North Island; resulting in a quick build-up of colony strength which could not be maintained later at critical periods

owing to unsuitable conditions for the secretion of nectar and production of honey.

A feature of last season's operations was the comparatively low overall production of dark coloured honey and a heavier crop of white honey in some districts.

In Mid and North Canterbury crops were good on light land and very poor on heavy land areas.

Some record crops of white clover honey were produced in Southland.

On the West Coast of the South Island those beekeepers who maintained their apiaries and bee stocks at near full strength, following two comparatively bad seasons, harvested exceptionally heavy crops of rata honey this year.

Production in the North Island was much lower than usual. In mid and south Taranaki beekeepers received a severe setback owing to exceptionally bad seasonal conditions resulting in crop failures and heavy loss of bee stocks.

Overall production from commercial and domestic apiaries for the year ended 31st March, 1953, is estimated at 3900 tons of honey and 136,500lb. of commercial beeswax, which is approximately 2000 tons below overall normal production based on present holdings.

### Honey Grading

Technical advice on honey and a grading service covering all honey handled by the Marketing Department on behalf of producers has been provided.

A disturbing feature last year, ended 28th February, 1953, taking in part of two seasons' production, was the large quantity of honey below the standard required for specific gravity sent to the depot for grading, and which could not be allowed to go to export in its original condition.

### Marketing Conditions

Honey prices have been frozen since 1942. However, some of the larger producers, particularly in the South Island, where crops were exceptionally heavy the previous year, found it expedient to sell their honey at

prices below the current Price Order.

The local market is now steady, however, and surplus stocks are being cleared.

The market for the beeswax has been very quiet and comparatively low prices are being offered at present.

### Apiary Inspection

A number of competent beekeepers were employed as usual during the past season to assist in seasonal apiary inspection work for control of bee diseases.

Foulbrood was down to less than 1 per cent. of the colonies inspected in two districts, but more disease than usual was found in isolated cases in areas where beekeeping conditions have been difficult and where the hives have been neglected by the owners. However, the overall incidence of bee diseases is lower than in the previous year and is expected to improve gradually with a continuance of control methods now being practised.

### Trials and Experiments

Experimental work on beekeeping has been concentrated mainly on technical problems relating to honey house equipment, over-moisture in honey, and methods of packing honey by beekeepers to improve their product. It is hoped to assist producers who are having difficulty in producing honey up to the required standard by their present methods. More work will be required in this direction.

Arrangements made last October for experiments in the Marton district during the season to determine whether the use of D.D.T. for control of grass grub is dangerous to honey bees if applied to clover pastures when in bloom had to be abandoned owing to unsuitable seasonal conditions and other factors in that area.

It is now proposed to proceed with the experiment next season in a more favourable locality near Levin.

Field officers of the Extension Division warned farmers against the use of D.D.T. super compound on pasture land during the critical

period when it would be dangerous to honey bees. Reports received from Apiary Instructors state that no signs of excessive adult bee mortality has been noticed in areas where the mixture was extensively used last year.

Investigations to determine reasons for failure of nectar secretion in white clover in old pastures in certain areas have been continued at Rukuhia Soil Research Station.

### Registration of Apiaries

All beekeepers are reminded that the next expiry date for apiary registrations is 30th October, 1953, when it will be necessary for beekeepers to apply for re-registration of their apiaries.

Decentralisation of apiary registration to simplify procedure as far as possible will be put into effect this

year, particulars of which will be sent to all beekeepers at the appropriate time.

Yours faithfully,

T. S. WINTER, Superintendent,  
Beekeeping Industry.

### Honey Spice Cake

One cup butter, 2 cups honey, 2 eggs (beaten), 1 cup sour milk, 4 cups flour,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons soda, 1 teaspoon baking powder, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 1 teaspoon ginger,  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt. Cream butter and honey; add eggs and sour milk and beat well. Sift flour once, measure, and sift with soda, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger and salt. Gradually add to honey mixture; mix well. Pour into two 9in. square layer cake pans and bake in a moderate oven (350 degrees) 45 minutes. Cool and frost.

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## BRANCH NOTES



### AUCKLAND CENTRAL

The season in this district has been adverse, with a resulting poor yield of honey for most beekeepers. Excess moisture content has also been a problem again though flavour and quality compare favourably with last year's crop.

The local Field Day was held on February 28th at Mr Ivan Muncaster's apiary at Panmure. Heavy rain all morning affected the attendance somewhat, but we were fortunate that in the afternoon the weather improved by the opening time, when Mr Stan. Broadhead as President welcomed visitors and members. A full programme of practical demonstration was given by various Branch members, also a most interesting address on a system of queen rearing on a large scale was presented by Mr E. Smellie, Apiary Instructor. An interlude for afternoon tea, during which a question box was opened and inquiries and problems answered, was followed by remarks from Mr Smellie on the general position of beekeeping in the district as found by the Department. Mr Ivan Muncaster later demonstrated the extraction of honey in his honey house. Members expressed their appreciation of Mr S. Broadhead's donation of two queens for raffling as a means to help the Branch funds, and to those who did the demonstration work, also to Mr and Mrs Muncaster at the conclusion of the day.

The April Branch meeting was the occasion of the honey show, which was judged by Mr Walsh, Honey Grader. His comments on the exhibits and remarks on the honey crop in general were helpful and informative.

—G. A. Lawson.

### SOUTH AUCKLAND

The most successful Field Day held for many years took place at the Opal Springs, Matamata, on March 28th, 1953. Sixty beekeepers, their wives and families, some from as far afield as Northland, Gisborne and Te Kuiti, attended. Provision was made to hold the function indoors in the event of wet weather, and visitors were treated to a severe storm followed by torrential rain, making conditions most unpleasant. A happy spirit nevertheless prevailed, and a most enjoyable and instructive session ensued.

President Jim Barber in his opening remarks introduced our Dominion President, Mr Williams, and Mr Tarleton, Manager of the Honey Section.

It was good to see men of experience and long association with the N.B.A. such as Wallace Nelson, Bill Bray, Percy Hillary, Frank Holt, Albert Pearson, Ray Clark, Alan Bates, Albert Deadman, and our Apiculturist, Roy Paterson — men only too happy to pass on their knowledge for the benefit of members and the industry.

The first item designed for member participation was "Methods Used in Re-queening."

Mr Mackisack, of Waitoa, demonstrated his method of operating a two-queen system, thereby controlling swarming and uniting without looking for queens. Mr Paterson dealt with the problem of reducing moisture content in honey, and the final item was on marketing.

Messrs Nelson and Holt dealt with policy matters and Mr Tarleton gave an informative account of the operations of the Honey Section.

During a break in proceedings Mr Bates, who invariably produces some



strange gadget, demonstrated the use of his somewhat decrepit smoke tin—fortunately for all concerned it was not going full blast! The day concluded with thanks to the speakers and organisers.

—J. D. Lorimer.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY

On Saturday, 14th March, the Branch held its second Field Day of the season at the home apiary of Mr R. L. Holland, Pleasant Point. Visiting beekeepers from Canterbury, North Otago and Otago were present, as well as a good muster of South Canterbury members—more than 60 beekeepers and their wives altogether.

During the afternoon the extracting and packing plant was in operation and visitors were given an opportunity to examine the many original labour and time-saving devices incorporated in the plant. Many beekeepers went homewards with the firm resolve to reconstruct, reorganise and generally bring their outfit to a better level of production and operation.

The morning and the earlier part of the afternoon were taken up with demonstrations. Mr I. W. Forster described how to prevent robbing; Mr T. Pearson, of Darfield, demonstrated how to clean chimneys and how to preserve supers; Mr G. Gumbrell queen rearing, and a report on the last Executive meeting; Mr T. Penrose added to Mr Gumbrell's report; and finally Mr Ecroyd demonstrated a device for securing cases.

This Field Day was well worth a visit from all South Island beekeepers, and the afternoon tea put on by Mrs Holland had to be seen, and eaten, to be believed.

A special feature of this Field Day was the number of demonstrations put on by visitors who were not on the programme. Mr Ecroyd, Mr Penrose and Mr Pearson, the Branch takes this opportunity of thanking you, and invites more of these additions to our Field Days.

—Robert Davidson.

### OTAGO

The Otago and Clutha Branches held their combined Field Day at the apiary of Mr J. McFadzien, Henley, on February 7th. The weather was ideal and about fifty beekeepers and friends were present. During the first hour or so extracting was in progress in the honey house, while Messrs J. M. Marshall and T. L. Jackson opened a hive and discussed the general principles of bee behaviour and hive management. A survey of the marketing situation was then given by Mr Gould of the Marketing Department and Mr W. T. Herron. Later Mr R. Davidson, Jun., gave a demonstration of introducing queens, and Mr S. Line, the Apiary Instructor, addressed the gathering on some aspects of honey harvesting.

At 3.30 p.m., the programme being finished, all the able-bodied members adjourned to the paddock for a game of rounders. After a keen contest the decision was given to the North team by one run, but we may yet hear more of the matter as we understand South are seeking legal advice on a technical point.

Mr A. J. Shaw, President of the Otago Branch, thanked those who had assisted with the programme and the ladies for dispensing lunch and afternoon tea.

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In the course of a recent address Mr R. Davidson, Timaru, suggested grafting on Wednesday and putting out the queen cells on the following Saturday week. A few members of the audience did some quick mental arithmetic and one of them asked, "What happens if the weather is bad on Saturday?" "If the weather is bad on Saturday," said Bob without batting an eye, "you should put them out on the Friday."

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Scowling woman to groceryman: "Did you say that cheese I bought yesterday was imported or deported from Switzerland?"

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Root Co., Medina, Ohio.

## NOTES FOR BEGINNERS.

By "SKEP"

### The Honey Crop

We hope beginners have had an enjoyable season among the bees and a profitable one—profitable from the experience gained if not from the actual weight of the honey crop. Extracting should now be finished for the year, but is it really finished, dear reader? Don't forget the final stages when you gather up the odds and ends of honey and wax for their proper disposal, dismantle the honey pump (if you use one) and other complicated gear, and thoroughly wash and dry the extractor, tanks and utensils. Give a light application of boiled linseed oil to any parts likely to rust, spring-clean the place from end to end and top to bottom, and hey presto! the honey extracting is finished.

Occasionally we hear the opinion that the extractor is best preserved by leaving it wet with honey from one season to the next. Possibly there is some technical explanation to support this view but it would never be tolerated in a hygienic honey house. The place for honey is in the sealed container or in the hive and you can be sure that in any other place it is crying out for the beekeeper's prompt attention.

### The Bees

In the final check of the apiary make sure that the hives are dry above and below because equipment lasts no time if it is allowed to remain damp. The bees, too, suffer when exposed to damp conditions, but they can withstand the coldest weather likely to be experienced in this country provided they are able to keep dry.

The humble mouse is one of the most persistent enemies of bees and beekeepers during the winter time. Where do mice come from? Surely they are among the most widely distributed creatures in the New Zealand fauna. They are recognised pests even in remote alpine huts and

anyone camping away back in the never-never is liable to find mice among the provisions within an hour or so. A beehive is an ideal haven for a mouse in the colder months—a warm dry place with plenty of pollen and honey to eat. Sometimes the cluster of bees will allow a mouse to nest quietly in an unoccupied corner of the hive, where it eats out a convenient space and lines it with pieces of hive mat. In other instances it nests under the floor board and raids the hive for food as required; but in either case it damages a great many combs by making access tunnels and eating out pollen and honey.

The hive entrance should be reduced to 5-16ths of an inch to keep mice out;  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. seems to be hardly small enough. Besides, when the going is not too tough the mouse will enlarge the opening to suit its requirements. If a queen-excluder is placed on the floor board under the brood chamber it will foil the cleverest mouse, but it should not be so placed until the drones have been discarded and it should be removed when the bees become active in the spring, say by the end of September. From October onwards a hive of bees is rather too hot for even the bravest mouse.

The width of the hive entrance in winter is a matter of judgment. It may be left at full width or reduced to as little as two inches, according to the degree of shelter from the weather.

### Winter Work

Even the backyard beekeeper probably desires to effect some improvements or repairs to his outfit before next season. Before you make a start it is wise to take a broad survey of the situation and make an inventory of the matters requiring attention. Then if your enthusiasm is lagging somewhat dispose of the simple items first and in short time the work will be half done.

### Outyards

Some beginners may be setting out an outyard or perhaps a series of outyards in the coming season, so a word or two in this connection may be appropriate.

From a commercial point of view the first requirement in an apiary site is that it should provide honey of satisfactory quality and quantity. To the amateur this may be of less importance, but when the apiary is likely to be developed into a commercial unit it is well to ensure that the area offers a sound economic proposition.

The site should be dry, sheltered and sunny. Such a position is not always available, but an exposed, airy situation is better than a damp, shady and overgrown corner. The latter may keep the bees cold during winter and in a humid summer it will interfere with the ripening of honey within the hives.

It is important to have access to the apiary by motor car or truck, but equally important to be remote from roads, gates or buildings where the bees may become a nuisance.

Beekeepers who are establishing a commercial business are advised to develop one compact area, if possible, in preference to reaching out in all directions. Expenses will be smaller and the vagaries of the territory are more quickly learned. In addition to this the beekeeper is soon accepted as a part of the farming community, so that sites are given to him more readily than to a stranger, and if his district is fully occupied it will be respected by other beekeepers.

### Weather

A new hazard faces the beekeeper when he establishes an apiary five, ten or twenty miles from home. What will the weather be when he arrives at the yard to start work? The radio forecasts are useful at times, especially when a broad front is crossing the country, but usually the practised eye of the local inhabitant is a more reliable guide. Anyone who has lived in a district for a few years and examined the sky and the horizon as often as a beekeeper does will not be far astray in his predictions. Of

course there is always the moment of uncertainty because the weather symptoms are infinitely variable. When this moment of uncertainty arises my advice is to take the bull by the horns. Have a light rainproof jacket; a lot of work can be done on a showery day, and in any case it is better to make a fruitless trip occasionally than to waste good time at home for fear of the weather.

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## WORLD NEWS

### France

One of the most marvellous nectar-secreting regions in the world is situated in the extreme south-eastern fringe of France. In this hilly, rocky and seemingly barren region Rosemary thrives at its best. The world-famous Narbonne honey is derived from the Rosemary of the Corbiers.

Bees of an extremely hardy type, endowed with exceptional stamina and wing power, are found in the Corbies, for only a bee of that type could brave the fierce wind of this region and have any chance of gathering a worthwhile crop.—Bro. Adam, in "British Bee Journal."

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### Britain

A National Beekeeping Museum has been established by British beekeepers and the opening ceremony of the first exhibition was held recently. Already sufficient material has been collected to make a very fine display. The permanent home of the Museum has not yet been decided but for the next few years at any rate it will be housed in the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading.

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### United States

In January, 1953, "Gleanings in Bee Culture" celebrated its eightieth Anniversary. Founded in 1873 by A. I. Root, a name known to beekeepers the world over, it has appeared without interruption until the present day and is still in the hands of the Root family. Early issues of the magazine were printed on a press turned by a windmill.

The A. I. Root Company also publishes "ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture" and operates the bee supplies factory at Medina, Ohio.

The small town of Paducan, Kentucky, has been caught up in a billion dollar atomic plant and other industrial developments and has gained 20,000 in population in the past year, with over 10,000 "house-trailers" parked in the county. Dismayed by the chaotic conditions in the town, the Walter T. Kelley Company, bee supplies manufacturers and publishers of "Modern Beekeeping," decided to move. Accordingly Mr Kelley bought a 110-acre farm at Clarkson, 160 miles away, where he has erected a larger and better plant and is now resuming business far from the madding crowd.

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## GADGETS AND IDEAS

### Colour Scheme

If queen excluders, division boards or bee escapes are used in the apiary it is a good plan to paint the rims or edges in a contrasting colour. They are then very easily identified and one can see the situation at a glance on arriving at the bee yard.

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### Floor Boards

When inspecting or renewing bottom boards it is not necessary to lift the hive bodily. Place a spare bottom board at the back of the hive to make the correct level, then give a puff of smoke and then gently tilt the hive over until it is resting on its back on the spare board. Afterwards it can be gently tipped over into place again. In this operation there is no danger of a two-storey hive coming apart, especially if it has not been disturbed for a few days. By the way, do not try to tip the hive sideways because the combs may lean together and crush the bees.

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### Marking Drone Comb

Nothing is more obnoxious to the eye when manipulating colonies than combs with too many drone cells. Placing a thumb tack in the top bars of these frames marks them immedi-

ately as junk and they can be worked upstairs into the extracting supers or to the outside of the brood nest.

To keep the tacks at hand buy the thumb tacks that are sold by the card. Use two small tacks to hold the card to the back of the smoker. It eliminates the job of placing the tacks in the smoker individually and it also makes the tacks available instantly.—H. Stricker in "American Bee Journal."

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## MANUKA BLIGHT

### SLOW ACTION IN TARANAKI

Where manuka blight has been introduced in Taranaki it does not appear to be spreading as rapidly as it did in the South Island. It is about six years since blight-infected plants were brought to Taranaki.

Established first about Eltham, the blight has spread fairly slowly there, but in the Uruti district of North Taranaki it has established itself over a wider area. It was through Mr W. O. Hardwick-Smith, now of Bell Block, that blighted manuka was planted among manuka-covered areas on his and other properties in the Eltham district. Though the blight is present on much manuka there, Mr Hardwick-Smith thinks it will be two or three years before the manuka begins to die.

The early progress of the blight when introduced to a locality appears slow. A farmer at Tongaporutu, north of Uruti, planted infected manuka from the South Island in the middle of a clump of manuka bushes on his property on Hutiwai Road three years ago. He was disappointed when later he found them shooting away strongly, showing no sign of the disease.

Concluding that he had invested his money unwisely, he and other farmers on the road forgot all about the venture until this year, when they were surprised to find that all the manuka bushes in the vicinity were covered with the sooty black scale. The infection appears worst nearest the introduced infected plants, and it seems that the blight is spreading slowly outwards, fanning out from the centre.—"N.Z. Farmer."

## DOUBLE-BROOD METHOD OF UNITING BEEHIVES

By J. E. RODIE, *Apiary Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Hawera.*

The double-brood system is an efficient method of boosting hive strength at the beginning of the honey flow. It has been carried out with success for many years in Taranaki, and beekeepers who have had trouble maintaining hive strength will find it helpful.

The nucleus is usually prepared from the parent hive in October, being made up of four frames of brood and bees (without the queen) and an appropriate amount of honey and pollen. The nucleus is placed in a full-width super on a division board, and the remaining space is filled with empty combs. As there must be sufficient bees to cover all the brood, a shake of bees from an extra comb is desirable. A mated queen or a queen cell can be introduced to the nucleus, but the decision on this point must be left to the discretion of the beekeeper, who should know which method will suit his district. It is advisable to introduce the new queen immediately and to block the entrance of the nucleus with loosely packed grass. A hive mat is used to cover all frames to retain warmth.

When this work has been done the lid of the hive which is going to accommodate the nucleus should be removed and all burr comb should be taken from the tops of the frames. The division board holding the nucleus should be fitted flush on top of the hive with the entrance facing the most favourable direction away from the entrance to the hive below. The nucleus and division board must be removed periodically for inspection and feeding purposes, so the division board should be attached to the nucleus super. Crate staples are best for this job, but they should be driven only a little more than half-way into the timber so that the division board can be readily removed later when the two colonies are to be united. The usual hive manipulations, such as feeding, inspection, and where necessary the placing of additional supers of combs on the parent hive and

nucleus before the main honey flow, may be carried out.

### Construction of Division Board

The division board should be of hardboard or other suitable material. Hardboard is slightly absorbent and will take up some warmth from the hive below. Strips of timber  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. x  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. deep are placed around the side of the division board, leaving a  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. gap for the entrance. This piece of  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. timber cut out may be left on the board with a nail through one end, thus allowing the entrance to be opened or closed. In cold districts a strip of gauze fitted down the centre of the board is an advantage, as it allows more warmth into the nucleus.

### Time for Uniting

The success of the operation from this stage on depends on the judgment of the beekeeper. It is imperative that the uniting be carried out just before or at the beginning of the main honey flow, and the whole procedure must be well timed. The nucleus should be up to full strength, otherwise no advantage will be gained. When the colonies have been united the queen will move down into the brood nest of the parent hive and all the brood will be covered by the bees.

Uniting should not be carried out during high winds, which may cause a heavy loss of field bees as well as a large amount of brood because of an insufficient number of bees to keep the brood warm. All of this will retard the potential of the double-brood system and nothing will be gained. If an unforeseen break in the weather occurs after uniting, it may be necessary to place the brood from the top chamber down next to the brood in the bottom chamber, thus ensuring that all the young brood is well covered by the bees. This manipulation is not usually necessary if the weather remains fine, although in some districts it may be found necessary regardless of the weather.

### Uniting Nucleus and Parent Hive

There are two methods of uniting the nucleus and parent hive which can be adapted to suit beekeepers. If the queen in the bottom hive needs to

be replaced, the two hives can be united by the paper method. Usually the queen in the top hive will remain alive, but the queen in the bottom hive will be done away with by the queen from above. Thus the newly united hive has a young queen. The main disadvantage in using this method is that the surviving queen may be injured in the battle for supremacy of the hive.

The other method recommended is to find and remove the old queen in the bottom hive and then unite. As soon as the bees have united the queen will move down. There is usually no need to place the brood in the upper chamber down into the body of the hive, provided the main honey flow is beginning, for as soon as the brood hatches the space is immediately filled with honey. It is advisable to place an extra super of combs on the hive, as the honey flow will be in full swing.

The double-brood system does not in any way interfere with the wintering of the bees, and this operation can be carried out as usual.

The double-brood method is in use in many parts of New Zealand and also in America. Because of different conditions in districts modifications are made on the system to suit local conditions. In the first year only a percentage of the hives should be adapted. If they are united successfully, the remainder should then be brought in. This will also give the opportunity of noting results, and the method can then be used with confidence.

—"N.Z. Journal of Agriculture."

### HONEY HOUSES

For the past few years Ontario Beekeepers' Association have been endeavouring to popularise honey as a staple food through direct advertising and other methods. Coinciding with this movement has been an effort to improve conditions under which honey is extracted, processed, and packed. I thought it might be interesting to tabulate the recommendations approved by the Association for construction and sanitation of honey

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1. Floors of all rooms in which honey is handled, extracted, processed and packed, and of storage rooms, shall be of impervious and easily cleaned material, and shall be smooth, in good repair, and kept clean.

2. Walls and ceilings shall have smooth washable surfaces, and shall be kept clean and in good repair.

3. All doors shall be bee and fly tight.

4. All openings to the outside in the extracting and bottling room shall be screened, and kept in good repair, so that they are bee and fly tight.

5. Water shall be supplied in sufficient quantity to meet the requirements outlined.

6. Outside toilet shall be at least 20 feet from the plant. Such building shall be screened and have a self-closing door. It shall be rodent proof. Where floors have a floor drain it shall drain underground into a septic tank or cesspool (for prevention of spread of A.F.B.).

7. There shall be an adequate supply of clean water available. Clean and sanitary towels shall be provided at all times the honey house is in use. There shall be plenty of clean water available for washing equipment. Floors, knife, drainage boards, and other small equipment shall be washed daily.

8. All extractors, tanks, and other equipment shall be stored in such a manner that they are properly protected from dust, dirt, rodents, insects and other contamination, and not used for any purpose other than holding food products. All extractors, tanks and other equipment shall be kept free from dust and must be kept free of rust with suitable paint.

9. Unsold product shall be stored in a clean and sanitary manner. All tanks containing honey shall be kept covered except when extracting is in operation.

10. All containers shall be clean and sanitary before honey is packed in them.

11. No heating equipment which gives off any dust or odour may be used in the honey house unless properly vented.

12. Workers shall wear clean, washable outer clothing, and head cover at

all times during extracting, processing, or bottling, and shall keep hands clean at all times.

13. All vehicles used to transport supers shall be clean and sanitary. Supers shall be protected in transit.

14. All supers shall be stored in a clean, dust-free manner before extracting.

15. Honey house shall not be used for housing live stock at any time. No lavatory, cesspool, or buildings in which animals are housed shall be so situated or maintained as to permit any odours or fumes therefrom to pervade any room or building in which honey is being extracted, packed, handled or stored.

16. Portable extracting plants shall be kept in as sanitary condition as honey houses.

—A. T. Brown, in "Gleanings."

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## Reflections

... from the Editor's Desk

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### Glass Jars

A few instances have been noticed where honey is being offered for sale in jam jars or preserving jars, the idea apparently being that the container is a useful article to the housewife and it is therefore an additional selling point. This raises the question whether it would be possible to devise a regulation honey jar which could later be used satisfactorily for such purposes.

The standard one pound glass honey jar is attractive in appearance on the display shelf but we find it rather an awkward container in the kitchen. The small 1½-inch opening and the relative depth create a difficulty which is not easily overcome with the usual tools on hand. It seems that honey jars have not achieved any wide popularity and we doubt whether they are particularly suitable for honey itself, let alone for any other purposes.

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### Tussocks and Clover

A method of spreading clover seed on unploughable hill country is discussed in an article by R. Vine in the



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The article gives emphasis to the importance of clover in hill pastures. "It is not too sweeping a thing to say that any unploughable hill country on which clover is not, or cannot be, established and successfully maintained must eventually go out of production altogether as economical grazing land."

### A Miracle

Bees are certainly amazing creatures but one would not expect even a layman to be credulous enough to accept the following story which appeared recently in the "Wanganui Herald":—

"A miracle of nature occurred in Broadway, Marton, yesterday afternoon when a new queen bee was 'created' by bees that had been left behind by a swarm.

"Traffic was stopped for a time and a crowd watched wild Italian bees swarm around the tail of a car.

"A passer-by, Mr Joe Rueben, who had six years' experience in the handling of bees, worked the swarm into a box. Some time later Mr Rueben discovered that the few bees not caught were creating a new queen to form a second swarm, which in turn was removed.

"Mr Rueben explained that when a few bees are separated from the swarm one of nature's miracles can take place when they pick from the workers an 'heir,' changing his sex and making him into a new queen. This was accomplished before sunset as the bees must be in their hives before night.

"Mr Rueben, throughout the whole operation, received only three stings, but they were so bad that he had to receive attention first from a chemist and later a doctor."

### A Pair of Hands

Two strong brown hands were seen in action at a Field Day recently. They were unusually fascinating hands. The sensitive touch, the quiet power, the spread of the fingers, and the smooth deft movements showing perfect co-ordination of mind and muscle.

Some of the onlookers may have missed the poetry in these hands but there was one thing about them that everyone must have noticed, a quality very appropriate in a producer of honey. They were clean, the nails neatly manicured. Apparently the owner had recognised them for what they were—the most efficient and flexible instruments ever devised—and he had given them the care they deserved.

Somewhere there is a honey house supervised by this pair of hands. We can reasonably assume that the extracting and packing operations in that honey house are carried out in an exemplary manner, and that the honey produced there is like those guiding hands—a credit to the industry.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### WHEN AND WHY DOES BROOD REARING BEGIN?

Sir,—This question is a nice little conundrum for beekeepers to think over in the remainder of the long cold winter nights, says Mr Ed. Braun in "Canadian Beejournal," March, 1948.

I have done this and here is my opinion. As you know, honey bees do not hibernate. When the weather becomes cold the bees form a cluster and those in the centre of the cluster generate the heat necessary to keep the whole cluster warm. This activity necessitates the consumption of food in proportion to the amount of energy expended. The bees in the outside of

the cluster act as an insulating cover, expanding or contracting as required to regulate the internal heat of the cluster. As soon as the temperature drops below 57 degrees Fahrenheit a cluster is formed and heat is generated. The colder the hive gets, the greater the amount of heat necessary to keep the temperature of the cluster up to the required 57 degrees. Should the cluster be a small one there will be fewer bees for heat production and insulation of the cluster, therefore each individual bee will have to work harder to keep the cluster warm than would be necessary in a large cluster.

In a moderate colony there will be more heat production in the centre of the cluster when it gets cold than in a great colony, because in the latter the temperature will be more uniform.

In the moderate colony the bees take more food when it gets cold, the brood food glands of the younger bees set to work and the queen is fed.

These two factors—heat and food—result in brood rearing. The previous three or four months she has recovered herself and now in January or February by the contraction of the cluster conditions in the inside of the cluster became favourable for brood rearing.

Is this suggestion right? I know facts that can be explained with this theory. For example, excessive heat production is apt to cause premature brood rearing. Unusually populous colonies which have loose clustering do not have as early brood as you would expect. Moderate colonies in the spring often overshoot strong colonies, because the first have early brood. At a certain time the latter will have not enough young bees to replace the dying old bees. In mild winters with loose clustering brood rearing will not start as early as in strong winters. Cold winters appear to result in strong colonies in spring.

Dear readers, I have written this article with a special purpose, and that is to help my country. You all know what the floods have done. I am the cashier of the Farmers' Bank at Renkum and the secretary-treasurer of the Beekeepers' Association at Renkum. You can help the farmers and the beekeepers. Send your gift

to the Farmers' Bank, Dorpstraat 145 at Renkum, with the addition Disaster Fund.

Thank you in anticipation,

J. C. van Scherrenburg.

RENKUM (Holland).

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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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**CONTENTS**

	Page
A Year Passes	3
Notice Board	4
Obituary	4
Personal	4
Marketing Policy	5
Land Development	5
Queen's Prize	5
General Executive	6
Marketing Regulations	9
Marketing Investigation	11
Marketing Department	12
Department of Agriculture	12
Branch Notes	15
Notes for Beginners	18
World News	19
Gadgets and Ideas	20
Manuka Blight	20
Double Brood Method	
of Uniting Beehives	21
Honey Houses	22
Reflections	23
Correspondence	25
N.Z. Beekeeper	27

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