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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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HONEY MARKETING

The course of honey marketing in New Zealand takes a new turn this year with the passing of the Primary Products Marketing Act. Under this Act the Government implements its policy of handing over to producers the marketing of primary products, and the honey industry, along with other similar industries, is enabled to set up its own marketing organisation. Already the Marketing Department has been abolished and the remnants of its work are being temporarily administered by the Department of Agriculture. It is intended that producers should have control of their own marketing activities by the end of this year.

The Primary Products Marketing Act empowers the honey industry to set up a marketing authority which will have the benefit of existing financial arrangements and which will be expected to have due regard to the general Government trade policy. There is to be at least one Government representative on such an authority and it will be his special duty to consider the interests of consumers.

Prior to the opening of the 1953 Dominion Conference the General Executive met the Director-General of Agriculture, Mr E. J. Fawcett, and discussed with him the provisions of the Act and the design of a marketing structure which would be suitable for the honey industry. The greater part of the Executive meeting was then devoted to this matter, and after consultations with the Honey Marketing Committee and officers of the Department a broad plan was prepared for submission to the industry. Subsequently this plan was approved by the Conference and it is now being explained to meetings of producers at convenient centres throughout the Dominion. Should the plan receive the substantial support of the industry it will be implemented forthwith.

The main features of the proposals are:—

(1) An organised honey market based on a central packing depot.

(2) A seals levy as a means of embracing all producers within the scheme.

(3) A marketing authority consisting of five producer and one Government representatives.

Of the five producer representatives it is suggested that four shall be elected and one be appointed by the Executive of the National Beekeepers' Association, and nomination qualifications for the elected representatives are to be on an equal basis of supply of honey and/or purchase of seals.

Details of the scheme are being supplied to producers and they are being explained as far as possible by Executive and Committee members at each of the meetings.

In his opening address at Conference the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. K. J. Holyoake, made it clear that by the end of this year the Government will have ceased carrying out physical marketing activities. and the present proposals are therefore the alternative to a complete cessation of organised marketing. The Primary Products Marketing Act offers a measure of protection to the honey industry and beekeepers will certainly be well advised to accept the offer. It is a degree of protection no greater than that enjoyed by every other organised group within the community.

ANNUAL REPORT — 1953

As was the case when the Annual Report was presented last year, positive results of concentrated efforts made during the year ended 31st May, 1953, have been disappointingly small.

Undoubtedly the most important matter affecting our Industry in recent times, and more particularly so at the present time, is the urgent and vital necessity of securing a sound and progressive marketing organisation capable of dealing resolutely and promptly with the disposal of the country's surplus production of honey at prices which will ensure that producers receive their full costs of production, plus a margin which will enable them to adequately maintain their establishments and at the same time provide them with a reasonable standard of living.

The task of such an organisation is by no means an easy one, and its efforts are doomed to failure unless it is served by men of undoubted business ability and integrity. For these very reasons it is absolutely essential that the Industry should be free to choose from all sections of producers the men most qualified to serve the interests of the Industry as a whole.

The answer to the marketing problem cannot be found by endeavouring to dispose of the surplus honey through a central organisation per medium of the local market.

The production of honey in New Zealand in a normal season is approximately 6,000 tons. Compared with most other countries, the consumption of honey per head of population in New Zealand is high, being estimated at almost 5lbs. per head per annum, as compared with little more than half that quantity in Australia. With its population of a little over two million, New Zealand's consumption would account for the disposal of approximately 4,500 tons, leaving an estimated surplus in an average production season of 1,500 tons.

It is obvious, therefore, that a marketing organisation capable of adequately serving and maintaining the Beekeeping Industry in this Dominion would need to be able to exploit overseas markets to the extent of exporting at least 1,000 tons of honey from New Zealand each year. There is no indication of this being possible under the existing arrangement.

It is an undisputed fact that the pollination service provided to agriculture generally by honey bees is of inestimable value to the national economy of all agricultural countries, and eminent authorities in the United Kingdom, the United States and other countries have proved through extended and extensive field tests that the monetary value of the pollination services provided free to agriculture by honey bees is very many times greater than the actual value of the honey produced.

Because of the fact that the continued existence of the Beekeeping Industry is of vital importance to the national economy of this Dominion, with its highly developed agriculture, and because also of the fact that the financial returns from sales overseas are insufficient to enable producers in this country to receive their full costs of production—as recently established through a Dominion-wide survey of the Industry's cost structure by the Department of Agriculture—your Executive, following upon the decision of last year's Conference, placed facts and figures before the Government with a request for financial assistance by way of a subsidy on the seals levy already voluntarily paid by the producers themselves.

The amount required would be a very modest sum indeed, but as yet the Government has not seen its way clear to grant the assistance needed by the Industry. It is worthy of note here, that the United States Government has, for the past three years, operated a Honey Export Programme designed to dispose of domestic honey supplies which are surplus to domestic requirements in that country, and apparently is relying upon exports to maintain their Beekeeping Industry. The subsidy at present being paid to producers in America is 4½ cents per pound, which is roughly the equivalent of 4d in our currency.

Under the provisions of the Primary Products Marketing Act, 1953, the

New Zealand Government has now given notice that it is anxious to facilitate the transfer of responsibility for the marketing of honey from Government agency to the Industry itself, at the earliest possible date.

As this is part of the Government's declared policy, our Industry is now faced with the immediate and difficult problem of recommending to the Government the type and structure of an Industry Organisation which would be capable of assuming the responsibility of carrying into effect, surely and smoothly, the efficient marketing of honey and beeswax.

There has been much sectional strife in our Industry during the past 12 or 14 years, which has greatly hampered all efforts to secure and operate a worthwhile marketing policy.

There have been a number of reasons for this, not the least of which was the results which followed the introduction of the seals levy. The compulsory commandeer of honey at considerably less than market values during the war was another factor. These two factors alone had much to do with the marked differences of opinion which have been so evident between the voluntary suppliers to the Marketing Department on the one hand, and the producer-packers on the other hand.

The time has now arrived when it is of paramount importance to all beekeepers that sectional interests should be placed resolutely in the background and that all commercial producers should firmly unite in an all-out effort to build a new and lasting marketing structure on solid foundations.

It should be obvious to all that this will not be possible unless all commercial producers are placed upon an equal footing, both as regards responsibility and representation, and in this regard your Executive feels that the time has now arrived when our Constitution should be amended so as to provide that all matters affecting marketing may be decided in Conference by the vote of commercial producers only.

While dealing with the subject of unity, it is appropriate to re-state here quite firmly, a passage which appeared in the annual report presented to last year's Conference in Auckland.

The passage read as follows: "It is not a question of what did, or did not happen in 1938, it is a question of squarely facing up to the actual realities of the present day. Unless the whole of the marketing and administrative structure is reviewed at once, and brought up to date with adequate finance to meet the changed conditions, then the future prospects for our Industry are grim indeed.

"This is the sole responsibility of the Beekeepers themselves, and it behoves our Association to take a truly realistic view of the situation as it exists. The time has surely arrived for all members of this Association to adopt, and practise, the motto of 'Each for All'."

That extract from last year's annual report contains an appeal which is even more pressing to-day in view of the Government's intention to place the full responsibility for marketing in the hands of producers themselves.

There is no need in this report to refer in detail to the various decisions of last year's Conference. Your Executive has taken all possible action to secure the implementation of those decisions, and the results of the negotiations which subsequently took place have already been made known to members in the usual manner.

During the year Executive members met in Wellington on two separate occasions—once in November and once in February. All members were present on both occasions and the meetings occupied seven days in all.

Dealing with the Association's domestic affairs, it is pleasing to be able to report an increase in the membership of commercial and semi-commercial producers. Time has not permitted for a full analysis to be taken out, but in one hobbyist branch alone there were 52 less financial members than was the case last year. The overall number of financial members at the 31st May was 49 less than a year ago.

The increased number of members with larger hive-holdings is reflected

in the details of receipts shown in the Balance Sheet. The total amount received from subscriptions during the year just ended was £478/8/11, as compared with £398/18/5 for the previous year, an increase of £79/10/6.

The Association's finances are not too healthy, however. In the General Fund, the year closed with a credit bank balance of £77/6/2, as compared with a credit bank balance of £158/2/4 at the 31st May, 1952.

Opposed to the credit bank balance of £77/6/2 are cash liabilities amounting to £97/15/9 as at the date of balance, which means, in effect, that the General Account has operated at a loss during the year of £20/9/7.

In the Trust Fund a decided improvement is evident. No less than 300 additional apiaries were insured during the period under review, and the total amount received by way of premiums was £110/9/9, which sum is only 12/3 less than the highest previous figure recorded in 1950.

Despite the transfer of £20 from the Trust Account to the General Account during the year, the credit balance in the Trust Fund at the 31st May this year was £301/6/-, compared with £284/18/9 at the 31st May, 1952, an increase of £16/7/3.

In this report it is appropriate to place on record a sincere acknowledgment of the courteous and painstaking manner in which the Hon. K. J. Holyoake, Minister of Agriculture, received the several representations made to him by your Executive during the year, and of the time he has made available for the purpose of personal discussions.

To the Parliamentary Under-Secretary to the Minister, Mr S. W. Smith, M.P., to the Director-General of Agriculture, Mr E. J. Fawcett, and to the Director of the Horticulture Division, Mr A. M. W. Greig, we extend thanks for the interest they have shown, and for the consideration they have given to the problems affecting the Industry.

It is our pleasure once more to express a special word of thanks to Mr T. S. Winter, Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry, for his most helpful advice and co-operation so willingly given at all times on matters affecting beekeeping, and also to restate our appreciation of the services rendered by the Field Officers of the Department.

Mr T. Palmer-Jones, of the Wallaceville Research Station, continues to carry out his investigational programme in an unobtrusive manner, and our Industry is indebted to him for his valuable work.

Mr J. McFadzien, Editor of "The New Zealand Beekeeper," has carried on his work in a highly satisfactory manner, despite an enforced spell in hospital, and we are grateful to him for the conscientious manner in which he performs his duties.

All members will have learned with regret that Messrs A. C. Bridle and G. A. Beard, Government members of the Honey Marketing Committee, have resigned from Government service and each has entered into new and separate spheres of primary production activities. We extend to these two gentlemen our thanks for the very useful work they performed during their term of office, and we are pleased to extend to them our very best wishes for the future.

The work of our Branch Secretaries is always appreciated, and in concluding this report it is desired to convey to them a hearty vote of thanks.

BEES EXPORTED

We have learned with regret that a charge of exporting bees without a permit has been levelled against the Dominion President. During the recent Waikato floods Des. set out in a boat to inspect a certain apiary but found that the bees had sailed down the river on the previous tide. When last seen they were heading for Australia.

WAR ON OPOSSUMS

According to a recent statement, at least 815,000 opossums were killed last year in New Zealand. Skins sold direct to importers might bring the total near 1,000,000. "The figures are most satisfactory," said the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr Bodkin.

NOTICE BOARD

JOURNAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members who wish to receive the Journal are reminded of the Journal Fee of 3/- per annum in addition to their Membership Subscriptions. The November issue of the Journal will not be sent to members whose Journal Fees are unpaid at the 15th October.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Under the Honey Marketing Regulations an election of one producer representative to the Honey Marketing Committee is to take place during September, the retiring member being Mr Wallace Nelson. Nominations were to close on the 12th August.

On this occasion the election is of limited significance as it is expected that a new marketing authority will shortly take over the work of the Committee.

NATIONAL HONEY SHOW

The National Honey Show is to be held in Britain on October 15th, 16th and 17th, when a special effort is being made to stage a show worthy of Coronation Year. There are two classes for overseas exhibitors: Open to the whole world, or the British Empire and Commonwealth.

It is recorded that the Commonwealth Class was last won by Mr H. Pee of New Zealand with a most delightful honey.

Particulars of both classes mentioned may be obtained from the Entries Secretary, 3 St. Mark's Place, Wimbledon, London, S.W.19.

PERSONAL

Mr A. C. Bridle, well known in the honey industry as Chairman of the Honey Marketing Committee, was recently appointed General Manager to the New Zealand Poultry Board. Accordingly he was released at the beginning of May from his position as Auckland Manager of the Marketing Department, but at the request of the Minister of Marketing and with the permission of the Poultry Board he continued in office as Chairman of the Marketing Committee until after the Wellington Conference.

During the past several years Mr Bridle has been closely associated with the honey industry, especially since his appointment to the Honey Marketing Committee in 1948. He became Chairman of the Committee in 1949 and through his conscientious efforts to establish a sound marketing organisation he gained the respect and esteem of producers throughout the Dominion.

At the Wellington Conference appreciative references were made to the service Mr Bridle has given in the interests of the honey industry. Beekeepers will join in wishing him every success in his new appointment.

N.Z. BEES IN AUSTRALIA

News of the success at the Royal Agricultural Show in Sydney of the progeny of bees sent by him to Australia last year has been received by a St. Andrews apiarist, Mr B. T. Cloake.

In a letter to Mr Cloake, Colonel G. H. Pulling, of Turramurra, New South Wales, said he had entered a daughter of a queen bee received from Mr Cloake in a class for a bright three-banded Italian queen and her progeny. The queen was awarded first prize, and because she received the highest marks (91 per cent.) for any queen in any of the classes, she was also awarded the sash for the champion queen bee and progeny.—"Timaru Herald."

THE TOP OF MT. EVEREST

New Zealand Beekeeper Makes World History

SIR EDMUND HILLARY.

When members of the British Expedition reached the summit of Everest on the 29th May, 1953, they achieved a goal which had defied the human race for a hundred years, in fact ever since the mountain was identified as the highest peak on the planet. The physical difficulty of the climb, the sheer altitude of the peak and its breath-taking majesty, and the record of expeditions which have returned unsuccessfully from its slopes, had given Everest an almost legendary status as the one ultimate goal against which all the lesser problems of mankind might be measured.

So it was that Hillary, our own New Zealand beekeeper, and Tensing, his Sherpa companion, wrote their names in history as the first party to reach the summit. The story of their achievement, which has been told throughout the world, is one of daring and endurance and of unselfish co-operation from every member of the team. It is a deserving recognition that Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth has conferred a knighthood on bo Colonel John Hunt, the leader of t Expedition, and E. P. Hillary, wh Tensing has been awarded the hi honour of the George Medal.

World-wide Renown

The achievement of Sir Edmu Hillary and the prominent part pla by Mr George Lowe, the other N Zealand member of the party, ha brought honour to this country and flood of publicity to the beekeepi industry. Newspapers and magazin throughout the world have publish references to the famous New Zeala beekeeper, while readers and listene everywhere have discussed the a tributes of honey as never before. noteworthy comment came from M A. Lowe, father of George Lowe, a himself an orchardist-beekeeper Hawkes Bay. "I believe," he sa "that these boys' toughness can attributed to the fact that they bo eat honey. Honey is a great ener producer. It needs no digestion. goes straight into the blood strea where it produces energy."

Aspirations

Sir Edmund Hillary is a son of P. A. Hillary, a prominent commerc beekeeper of Auckland and w known both as a honey producer a as a queen breeder. He attended Auckland Grammar School; his fi taste of climbing came when as fourth-former he spent a week-end the Chateau, and as his mother p it, "he has been madly keen on cli ing ever since."

After leaving school he joined father's apiary business but career in beekeeping, as in climbi was interrupted by the war. Serv with the Royal New Zealand Force took him to the Pacific Islan and it was here that he almost his life in a petrol explosion. So d were his burns that doctors offe faint hope of his recovery, but af several long weeks in hospital tenacity pulled him through.

Returning home to his work am

the bees he found the mountains once again calling him at every available week-end or holiday. In New Zealand's Southern Alps he found conditions which made them an ideal training ground for the Everest attempt. Overseas expeditions took him to Switzerland in 1949 and to the Himalayas in 1951 and 1952. The last-named party did reconnaissance work in the Everest region and mapped out the route which was eventually to lead to the summit.

An episode which occurred in 1948 and which gripped the headlines throughout New Zealand is now recalled. On the snow-swept slopes of Mt. La Parouse a young medical student, Ruth Adams, lay injured and in grave danger. E. P. Hillary and a companion happened to be climbing in the vicinity and the girl's life was saved when they cared for her through three fearful nights while her guide went for help.

By 1953 Hillary's temperament and endurance had proved themselves under tough conditions and he was ready to tackle the big mountain. "Everything about Everest is big," says the London "Times," "and its long victory over successive expeditions is due principally to its stupendous size. The rarified atmosphere causes extreme difficulties. Even at 18,000 feet unacclimatised climbers suffer from headaches, vomiting, breathlessness and general weakness. A mountaineer must use sheer, slogging energy to reach Everest's upper slopes." It was under these conditions that Hillary passed the final test.

To-day Sir Edmund operates his own commercial apiary business at Papakura, near Auckland, alongside those of his father and his brother. He is a beekeeper in a family of beekeepers and in him the honey industry of New Zealand has a member of whom it may well be proud.

Milestones

The Everest exploit brings to mind some of the notable achievements of previous explorers into the unknown.

Robert Peary and his negro follower M. A. Hensen reached the North Pole on April 6, 1909. A year before that Dr F. A. Cook claimed to have reached the Pole, but his claims were not accepted, after a bitter controversy. The South Pole was reached on December 16, 1912, by Roald Amundsen, a month before Captain Scott. The last-named and his party perished on the return trip to their base.

In September, 1932, the American scientist Dr William Beebe went down 3028 feet into the sea off Nonsuch Island, Bermuda—still the greatest depth any man has ever reached. Dr Beebe was lowered in a huge steel ball known as a bathysphere, which was built to resist huge pressures and contained oxygen to enable him to breathe easily at the great depth.

Everest is the highest of the world's great mountains, but not the last to be climbed. Godwin-Austen (28,250 feet) and Kangchenjunga (28,146), Lhotse (27,890), and Makalu (27,790), the four next highest to Everest, are still unconquered, although Sir Edmund Hillary will lead a New Zealand expedition to the last-named next year.

A Challenge

The news of the conquest of Everest caught the imagination of the British peoples, especially as it came through on a memorable occasion—the day of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The period of British history which bears the name of the first Queen Elizabeth is rich in names of intrepid explorers and tales of stirring achievements, and it is an inspiration to us in this second Elizabethan age that it has been commenced with the dedication of a noble and gracious Sovereign and an example of the courage and fortitude of her people.

Honey for Tickly Throat

Take 2 tablespoons each of honey and glycerine, 1 tablespoon lemon juice with a dash of ginger. Keep the mixture warm and use a little as needed. A teaspoon of heated honey will often quickly stop a cough and seems especially effective at night.

N.Z. HONEY FOR PALACE TABLE

Pohutukawa honey, a New Zealand delicacy much sought after, has been chosen to grace the Royal table, says a recent news item.

The Government forwarded twelve 5lb. tins of the honey upon advice from the High Commissioner in London, Sir Frederick Doidge, that the Queen would be pleased to receive the gift.

The honey was presented by the Prime Minister, Mr Holland, and was suitably acknowledged. It is a matter for pride in the beekeeping industry that honey should have been given to Her Majesty as a token of esteem, on the occasion of the Coronation, from the people of New Zealand.

THE FIRE HAZARD

The danger of fire is a matter which crops up every now and again when somebody's honeyhouse goes up in flames, but what are we doing about it? The subject is given a timely reference in a recent letter from Mr L. Riesterer reporting a meeting of the Auckland Central Branch.

"Another matter," he writes, "was the loss by fire that has been experienced by various beekeepers during recent years. Mr Ballantyne—a one-time member—lost his honey house and contents a few weeks ago. Early in the year Mr Holdaway, Whangarei, suffered a loss of about £2000. In the course of a discussion it was suggested that some action might be taken through the Journal to impress upon beekeepers the need to take every precaution against fire hazards. It was mentioned that the Editor might request information about fires and their causes over a period of, say, ten years, with a view to performing a service to beekeepers generally."

The cause of a fire is not always evident after the event. We know that beeswax is highly inflammable when it approaches boiling point, and this factor constitutes a danger in cappings, melters and wax rendering equipment, but there must be other features as well which deserve special precautions in honeyhouse design and management. Perhaps we have some beekeepers with experience in wax handling. or in building construction, or in electrical work, who would be good enough to explain some of the points which require special care on the part of the honey producer.

HONEY MEAD

Beekeepers swarmed on to the stage from all directions at the conclusion of an address by Mr T. Palmer-Jones, given at an evening session during the Wellington Conference. The subject of the address was "The Commercial Production of Honey Mead from Bush Honeys," and the speaker displayed an attractive array of wares to illustrate his subject.

Honey mead, freely drunk by the ancient Egyptians and Romans, could be produced in New Zealand from honey from manuka, rewarewa, kamahi and buttercup. The strong flavour and dark colour of these honeys made them difficult to sell on local and overseas markets, but their production could be expanded if the demand was greater.

Mr Palmer-Jones said that both sweet and dry meads, fortified meads, honey brandies and liqueurs could be prepared in New Zealand. Brandy samples treated with activated charcoal made an excellent potent spirit, considered ideal for gin production.

"One ton of manuka honey costing £72/6/8 would yield approximately 60 gallons of absolute alcohol," he said. "Half a million bottles of gin could be obtained from 555 tons of bush honey."

Although the present time might not be appropriate to commence mead production on a commercial scale, Mr Palmer-Jones said that its manufacture should be straightforward as the plant required was relatively inexpensive.

The meeting showed an enthusiastic interest in the cause of science and members gave their dutiful attention to the varied display of samples. Keeping the future of the honey industry steadily in mind, the possibilities of each mead were carefully weighed, and opinions flowed freely in the true spirit of research.

MINISTER'S ADDRESS

The Opening Address by the Minister of Agriculture (the Hon. K. J. Holyoake) at the 1953 Dominion Conference.

"Mr Williams and Gentlemen,—

"First of all, thank you very much again for the invitation to be here and the opportunity you give me to say a few words to you, to meet you once again, and at least to tell you what I and the Government are thinking about your problems. I would like to thank Mr Williams for the very kindly introduction and what he has said regarding me and my officers and what we may have been able to do over the years. Thank you for remembering that I had met you once before and that I did give you what might have been some humble advice on that occasion, I think I did speak straight to you, but I do not know that it was strong. I never speak strongly to anybody and like to meet everybody in a spirit of 'sweet reasonableness'. I will be talking to you, naturally, about your marketing problems and set-up, but that will come in due course. Mr Smith, my Parliamentary Under-Secretary, whom you may have met from time to time, sends his good wishes to you this morning. I am delighted to be with you, although we are having a busy time just now, with the Prime Minister and one or two other Ministers overseas. There are also one or two Ministers on the sick list, so that the Ministers who are left have been pretty busy.

"Your industry as a whole—beekeeping, and particularly New Zealand beekeeping, has achieved a good deal of publicity and fame of recent months, not only in New Zealand, but throughout the world. I refer to the fact that one of your members—Sir Edmund Hillary—was one of the first to climb Mount Everest and put his foot on the top of the world. This has given great fame to beekeeping generally, but New Zealand beekeeping in particular. Another thing, which has already received some publicity, but to which I want to give some added publicity, is this: I want to pay a tribute to the Departmental Officers who suggested that we might, on the occasion of the Coronation, make a special gift of some Pohutukawa honey to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. This was done on behalf of the people of New Zealand and was suitably acknowledged, and, I am sure from the correspondence we have had, much appreciated by Her Majesty. You have had a lot of publicity and achieved a lot of fame of recent months.

"Yours is not a major primary industry, but it is a most important one. It is important from the point of view that you do produce a clean, vitalising, health-giving food. It was claimed, I think, by Hillary's father that the vitality he showed was due to the fact that he consumed honey. Honey gives you a ready-made industry. The industry is also important because of the fact that the pollination carried out by your bees is of great value to other primary industries. I am always ready to recognise and appreciate that. Your industry has expanded quite steadily over the years. Even though you have had something of a setback these last two years with rather bad climatic conditions, particularly here in the North Island, when you had what amounted to crop failures, and in many cases unfortunately the loss of considerable stocks, you have continued to go ahead.

"Statistics show that between 1940 and 1952 the number of registered beekeepers increased from 5,200 to 6,650, and the number of hives increased from 136,000 to 189,640. The statistics show a decrease in the number of domestic beekeepers and an increase in the number of apiaries and hives kept by commercial growers. Perhaps these figures too might help your industry and impress the public somewhat.

"For the year ended June 1952 our last statistics show that for 6,650 beekeepers the apiaries were 12,497 and the hives kept 189,640, as I have already indicated. I think for your own benefit it may well be restated, and it is a public interest too, to show the number of hives kept by the various

groups of producers in the industry.

"The group having 1 to 20 hives (in the group with 5,704 beekeepers) keep 25,207 hives—they are 13.29 per cent. of the total hives. The medium group keeping 21 to 50 hives—there are 385 beekeepers keeping 21 to 50 hives—the number of hives they keep is 12,656, which is 6.67 per cent. of the total of hives. The men having at least 51 hives or more—there are only 561 of them, but they keep 151,777 hives and they represent 80.04 per cent. of the total hives.

"Also, it has been estimated that £1,390,000 is invested in present bee stocks and plant in New Zealand and the average value of production is about £500,000 a year.

"I think it is worth while keeping that table in your minds because I think it gives you a true perspective of your industry. There are diverging and differing interests between the truly commercial man and the man not wholly engaged in beekeeping.

"I know you have had, particularly in this last two years, pretty poor climatic conditions, particularly in the North Island, although the South Island has not been so bad. My information is that in Canterbury in this last season honey crops from the light land have been very good, but poor on the heavier land. There have been some record crops in Southland. There have been quite heavy crops of Rata honey produced in Westland. It is good to know that there was a low proportion of dark honey produced this year in the South Island and a heavy supply of white honey. It is interesting to recount that the overall annual production in New Zealand, even including these bad seasons we have had, ranges between four and six thousand tons per annum. It seems that the New Zealand market will consume about 4,000 tons a year. It is interesting to note the per head consumption, which is about 4½lbs. per head of population.

On the basis of the average annual crop I have just indicated to you, it is clear that you need to set aside for export something between 600 and 1,000 tons, or maybe a little more than that, each year. If you want to stabilise your industry each year you will have to do something approaching the thousand ton mark each year.

"I want to speak about marketing. Since I spoke to you last (in 1950) and since you met last in 1952 for your Annual Conference, considerable activities in regard to organised marketing generally in New Zealand have been taking place, and particularly in recent months the tempo of those activities and developments has stepped up very considerably. I want to impress that very strongly upon you. Your Honey Marketing Committee have been kept pretty well abreast of those movements, and so have your Association Executive. I and my Departmental Officers have given the Marketing Committee, prior to this, virtually executive powers; we have widened that power over the months and, as you know, to meet some requests from the industry, we have appointed Mr Field, from the Association's Executive, to the Honey Marketing Committee, which gives it direct representation on that Committee. I took the opportunity to do that when Mr Beard, the Departmental Officer, resigned from the Government service.

"I know that at your last Conference you discussed the question of voting qualifications for the members of your Honey Marketing Committee. I know that you voted that there should be an increase in your seals levy from ½d. to 1d., and also that there should be some alteration in the qualifications for voting. As I say, I appointed Mr Field, after consultation with both the Marketing Committee and your Association Executive, to meet the situation at that time. The Executive of your Association have asked me over the months that the Honey Marketing Regulations and the Honey Marketing Committee Regulations should both be amended—the Honey Marketing Regulations to enable the seals levy to be increased from ½d. to 1d. per pound. I could have done that a little while ago. There were some arguments about technical difficulties, the date it should be implemented, physical difficulties, and so on, but one other reason why it has not been done is that I knew

there was some difference about it in your industry. Some claim that, at your last Conference, you passed the resolution approving the increase of the levy from ½d. to 1d., but that was contingent upon alteration in voting qualifications for members of the Committee. I have tried to meet the situation in the interim by the appointment of Mr Field. You will have to get your thinking caps on, do some talking, but do not just leave it at talking—make some decisions in the matter. In the meantime we have deferred granting that request. You should consider whether you want the seals levy raised from ½d. to 1d. without any tags (qualifications for voting and so on). You have to make up your minds. I am not going to be arbiter in these matters for you at all. You must get down to the job and resolve these problems. I will give you all the help I can and my door will be open on all occasions when you come to me with your problems, but do let them be collective recommendations. It is almost impossible for a Government and a Minister to help an industry if they do not know just where the industry stands and where it wants to go. Just let us know what you want. On the question of the Amendment to the Honey Marketing Committee Regulations, I thought it well to wait until after this Conference, when you will be confronted with the existing situation in regard to marketing, and the necessity to make up your minds. I am sure you will resolve these problems and come unitedly to me to tell me what you want and ask if the Government will give it to you under the powers of the Primary Products Marketing Act.

"The Marketing Department has been abolished. Please do not believe what reports you may have seen in newspapers, or heard—that it simply means a transition from one department into the Agriculture Department. That is not true. The sale and disposal of buildings and equipment from Government to primary producer marketing organisations will naturally take some months and in the meantime some activities of the Marketing Department are being carried on inside the Agriculture Department, but, before the end of this year, there will be no physical marketing activities carried out by the Government. I want to impress that on you. Do not think you can come back in six months' time and say—"Can you just carry this or that on for six or twelve months." We have made up our minds. In another 3 or 4 months there will be no marketing whatsoever carried out by the Government. You will have to come to some conclusions and let me and my Departmental Officers know just what you want and we will all be very pleased to hear from you. My Departmental Officers are here with you today to help you. I want to stress the point that the Government is not carrying on your blending plants. I am not, as Minister, going to continue as arbitrater in your industry, I am not going to act as super-Chairman of the Marketing Committee or of your Association. We are giving you the right to producer control and with it the responsibility of producer control.

"You are an industry—not an easy one to run, I know. You have your problems. You have your Conference—you have powers. What powers you have not and are necessary, we will have to give to you. Inside that framework you must govern your own industry. Producer control is our policy. All the protections that are necessary will be given, and it is necessary to provide for the protection of the consumer as well."

Voice: "Protection of minorities."

Reply: "Yes, that is right, protection of minorities too. That is quite a good point; I agree. Democracy does postulate Government by the majority. It at the same time postulates the need to protect the rights of minorities, but it does mean that minorities must pay attention to majorities—otherwise you cannot have a democracy."

Voice: "Hear, hear."

"When I am talking of producer control, I appreciate the fact that you will have to have a new Chairman of your Marketing Committee. You had a Government Chairman, Mr Brindle, who, as you know, has been appointed

Manager of the Poultry Board, but, at your request and with my approval, he has continued as your Chairman until the conclusion of this Conference. I would like to say how much I appreciate the work that Mr Brindle has done over the years and wish him well in the new position he is taking up.

"I did talk to you when I met you last (in 1950) about continuing the supply to the blending plant if you want to stabilise your industry. As I see it, this is more necessary to-day than it was then. The overseas markets are not quite as bright as they might be. You have given tangible recognition to this necessity by the quantities you have supplied to the blending plant over those years. The receipts at the depot this season have exceeded 1,000 tons. I think that is pretty gratifying in the light of the climatic conditions and the crop which came to hand this year. I pointed out to you in 1950 that the packing plant, if it is to continue, will require, as had been indicated by the Minister in the previous Government, about 800 tons, but the statistics of productions in the industry show that you will need to put somewhere around 1,000 tons in it and export the greater part of that if you are going to stabilise your industry. It is interesting to again quote to you the supplies of honey to the central blending plant over recent years, to show you the fluctuations and the danger:—

"Supplies received in 1949: Only 363 tons; in 1950, just double that—660 tons; in 1951, 1,497 tons; 1952, 708 tons; and 1953, 1,200 tons.

"The figures given to me are that the Committee has been able to export somewhere around 450 tons in this last year, and, apart from the normal markets, they have made some small sales to Singapore and Bombay, and are hopeful that there may be scope for larger sales there in the future. Sales in New Zealand are continuing at reasonable levels.

"You must keep your production costs down to the very lowest level if you are going to have stability in your industry. The overseas market is not quite as healthy and bright as it might be. I don't want to be a prophet of gloom, but the red light is there and we must attend to our costs of production. It is essential that the overseas market be continued if you are to have stability in the industry. Some other countries have advantages over you in the export field, and all I can say to you is that you generally must do your best to keep your costs of production down. As I see it, in all our principal industries, prices are about at their peak. While prices are increasing, I see a tapering-off in the increases. New Zealand has the lowest production figures of the world's markets as far as costs are concerned, and must strive to keep them the lowest, and even get them lower than they are at the present time.

"Competition overseas, particularly in Europe, is very keen.

"I have already indicated that the Marketing Department is abolished. The Government's policy is producer control, if you want it, in the form in which you want it, if it conforms with Government policy. I will be available and my Departmental Officers will be available to give you advice in that respect. But I repeat that there will be no, or practically no, Government activities after this year. The Apple and Pear Board, for which the Marketing Department has been agent, will be taking over completely the administration and physical handling of apples and pears before the end of this year. In the past many of the Marketing Department's depots throughout New Zealand have collected your honey and it was then despatched to Auckland. What are you going to do about that? We will be out of the job by the end of this year. Are you going to make arrangements with the Apple and Pear Board for continuation of that service? Perhaps more vital still is the fact that, with the transfer of activities of the Department to Producer Boards (again, the same applies with the Poultry Industry and also with the Town Milk marketing—our other biggest activity) not only premises but officers are being transferred.

"The Apple and Pear Board have already engaged 25 or more of the Departmental Officers who were in

the Marketing Department, and they will take their positions as officers of the Apple and Pear Board on December 1st. Some of these officers have gone to the Poultry Industry and a number of others will be going to the Central Milk Council, which will be outside Government control. The residue that are left (not many) are being transferred to other Govern-Departments, and the Public Service Commission is at the present time attending to these transfers. The Public Service Commission is busy on the job to protect your interests as taxpayers. Therefore, if you want any of these officers from the Marketing Department, you will have to let us know very soon or else it will be too late. You will have to make up your minds, gentlemen, at this Conference, whether you want some of these trained men or not. If you don't, it will certainly be too late."

Voice: "You are definitely leaving the baby on the doorstep?"

Reply: "If you put it there, I will leave it there." (Laughter.)

Voice: "You are leaving it there—it is whether we pick it up now."

Reply: "Yes, you can have it that way if you like.

"This is a change in public policy, determined at the polls. The people voted for a certain policy, and they said, 'We don't want to continue with Government control.' I am an instrument of that policy. I think you want it, but if you do not want it you must say so! This Government does not think that it is a proper function of the Government to be interested or active in day to day marketing of primary products.

Voice: "Hear, hear."

"As Minister of Agriculture—I cannot now call myself Minister of Marketing—I do want to stress to you that the sands are running out; time is getting short; and you must, at this Conference, reach decisions on a number of matters. One of these is, 'Do you want the present Central Blending Plant to continue physically as it is at present, or are you going to set up some other plant in some other place?' 'Do you want men who have been trained in the Departmental sphere?' If you do, you will have to hurry. Everybody is in—Apples and Pears, Town Milk, the Poultry Industry. It will be necessary for you to get right down to business at this Conference, reach decisions, and advise me of them.

"I know you have got enough intelligence, I think you have got enough courage, and that you have got enough enterprise, to know you have *got* to make these decisions. They will naturally have to be majority decisions, but the minority (unless it thinks it is being murdered economically or in other ways) must be prepared to conform to what appears to be a majority decision.

"I have told some of the other industries that the majority must be a *substantial* one, or else I won't act on it.

"I am not going to give you a percentage. You have got to be able to come to me and say that you want these powers. At that stage I want to be satisfied in my own mind that the minority is not being seriously disadvantaged."

Voice: "What about the consumers?"

"Under the Primary Products Marketing Act we took care to see that any organisation that might be set up under that Act—that there shall always be at least one Government representative upon the Executive body set up under that Act—at least one, but I would think usually there would be two. Some of our industries that might come under this Act are very small."

Voice: "Do they have a power of veto?"

Reply: "I am glad you raised that point. No: they will have no more power than any other member of the Committee, but the Act specifically states: 'In addition to his normal duties as a member of that Marketing Authority, he must have special regard for the interests of the consumer.' He, of course, can from time to time report to the Minister and the Government. The Act also says that 'Any authority set up under this Act shall have regard to the general policy of the Government.' In this way we

have taken steps to ensure that the public shall be protected against any abuses of powers."

Voice: "You must back that up by giving them a power of veto."

Reply: "Oh, no."

"Let me tell you, in that respect (reference to Government representatives) it is very rare indeed that I as Minister call upon one of those Government representatives to come and have a chat with me. And very rare is the occasion on which any of these representatives will want to come and see me. We simply say—'There is the best man for the job—let him go and do the job and we will trust him.' (Mr Holyoake referred to Mr Field, e.g.) In the case of Mr Bridle, he lives in Auckland. Whenever he is in Wellington, he does take the opportunity of coming and having a chat with me.

"Gentlemen, I don't think there is any more I can help you with to-day. I have taken rather longer than I expected to talk with you, but this is a fairly important occasion and a fairly important Conference for you. I know it is a common thing to say, 'We are at a cross-roads.' We can say that at any time, as we always seem to be at the cross-roads. I wish we were getting along the highway a little more. It is true that, as far as organised marketing is concerned, you are definitely at the cross-roads. You have to decide what course you want to follow. You must make these decisions at this Conference—and be sure they are decisions. Mr Fawcett, Mr Longmore and myself will be available to give you advice should you require it.

"I wish your Conference well and I am sure you will have very happy discussions. I am quite certain there will be no violent differences—certainly no recriminations between individuals and groups. I am sure you will realise the seriousness of the problem that faces you, and, with the future of your whole industry at stake and in your minds, you will approach the whole of your discussions in the frame of mind of sweet reasonableness, realising the absolute necessity of making decisions (I would hope, unanimously), but if it is not possible to obtain complete unanimity, at least substantial majorities may be obtained. I shall be glad to consider any resolutions you may pass in connection with marketing. I have very great pleasure in declaring your 1953 Conference officially open."

CONFERENCE REPORT

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held in Wellington on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th July. The President, Mr E. D. Williams, was in the chair, and there was a representative attendance of about sixty members and delegates.

The President extended a welcome to the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon. K. J. Holyoake, who officially opened the Conference. Mr Holyoake surveyed the general trends within the beekeeping industry and explained the significance of the Primary Products Marketing Act as it affected the marketing of honey. In declaring the proceedings open, he wished members a successful Conference.

Mr Holyoake was thanked for his attendance and for the interest he has shown at all times in the welfare of the industry.

The Conference was then addressed by the Chairman of the Honey Marketing Committee, Mr A. C. Bridle, and by the Director of the Horticulture Division, Mr A. M. W. Greig, who reviewed the past year's events in the separate fields of marketing and production.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts were then presented and adopted after a brief discussion.

A message of greetings and good wishes from Mr W. J. Lennon was read to the meeting.

The President referred to two members who had died during the past year, Mr A. W. Ogilvy, of Romahapa,

and Mr Walter Watson, of Geraldine, and members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

Marketing

In introducing the subject of marketing, the President mentioned the provisions of the Primary Products Marketing Act and the necessity for the beekeeping industry, if it desired an orderly market, to set up its own marketing organisation under the terms of the Act. He then explained the scheme prepared by the Executive with the approval of the Director-General of Agriculture, and the proposal to call district meetings in order to obtain the approval of the industry as a whole.

In the ensuing discussions on marketing matters the following remits and motions were considered:—

Marketing Administration. "That in view of the Minister's statement regarding the limited future for the disposal of honey through the Marketing Department and the absolute necessity for a central organisation to safeguard marketing conditions, this Conference urges immediate action by the incoming Executive to submit such marketing proposals as have been approved by the Executive to all Branches and commercial producers for a Postal Ballot, and if approved by the majority to submit the proposals to the Minister." Carried.

Case for Subsidy. "That the Executive press its claims for a subsidy on the Seals Levy in order that the returns to suppliers to the Central Depot may be brought into line with the cost of production." Carried. Several speakers drew attention to the desperate position of producers in certain districts, especially in Taranaki, and stressed the vital necessity that returns should cover the established cost of production if the industry was to survive.

Seals Levy. "That we rescind last year's motion to increase the seals levy to one penny per pound." This remit was decided on the delegates' vote and was lost. For 749. Against 1219.

"That Conference requests that provision be made for an annual income from Seals Levy on the following basis: That for every ½d. per pound of seals revenue received 1/12th or up to the maximum of £500, be paid to the Association." Carried.

"That the incoming Executive take immediate steps to have honey tax seals over a value of £25 supplied on credit, or that consideration be given to holding stamped carton lids in bond, at the various offices of the Department of Agriculture, until required by beekeepers. The lids to be released in suitable quantities." Carried.

Price Order. "That the incoming Executive take immediate steps to have the price of honey filled into customers' own containers brought into line with the price obtainable for packed honey." Carried.

Advertising. "That when honey advertising is being done by the Marketing Department this Conference requests that no particular brand be mentioned, but just honey in general." Carried.

Honey Cases. "That the incoming Executive request the Honey Marketing Authority to make a trial shipment of uncased 60lb. tins of granulated honey from the Port of Timaru to Auckland." After an explanation of the difficulties associated with uncased honey and the value of cases in stacking for export, this remit was lost.

Beeswax. "That the Marketing Authority be urged to undertake the marketing of beeswax." This remit received substantial support, but it was suggested that the matter should not be pressed this year while the new marketing authority is being set up. The voting for and against was found to be equal and the remit was allowed to lapse.

Apiary Protection

Transport. "That because of the nature of their duties and the type of country in which they work, all Apiary Instructors in offices serviced by Public Service Garages be supplied with a suitable permanent vehicle to carry out their work as the present system of using Public Service Garage cars and rental cars is most unsatisfactory." Carried.

Neglected Apiaries. "That the Apiaries Act be altered to allow the Department of Agriculture to compel apiarists to maintain apiaries in an accessable condition, and to sell abandoned apiaries by public auction after due notice has been given to the owner." Carried.

Sprays and Parasites. "That the Executive keep in close touch with the Department of Agriculture in order to check on poison sprays and parasites being released in the Dominion." Carried.

Association Rules

Commercial Beekeepers. "That alterations be made in the Constitution of the National Beekeepers' Association in order that voting on commercial subjects be taken on the commercial beekeepers' vote, a commercial beekeeper being a producer having 30 hives or over." This remit was decided on the delegates' vote and was carried. For 1835. Against 146.

Election of Officers. "That the rules of the Association be amended to provide for the election of officers on the morning of the last day of Conference, providing that the newly elected officers do not take office until Conference closes." Carried. A motion that the Executive be elected by delegates' vote was lost.

Financial Year. "That the Constitution be amended by the addition of a further sub-clause to Rule 18, which shall provide that the financial year of District Branches shall commence on the 1st day of May and end on the 30th day of April in each year." Carried.

Meeting Expenses. "That it be recommended that members of the National Executive be placed on the same financial footing when attending meetings, as members of the Honey Marketing Committee." Carried.

Preferential Voting. "That this Conference request the incoming Executive to rescind Rule 22 (a) (preferential voting) as carried at last Conference." This remit was withdrawn in order to allow the new system to be given a fair trial.

Dual Voting. "That the Executive investigate the question of dual voting in the Association." Carried. This matter was raised during general business in order to clarify the position where individual members belong to partnerships or companies operating as a single unit.

Sir Edmund Hillary

On the motion of Mr E. A. Field, members of the Conference sent heartiest congratulations to their fellow beekeeper, Sir Edmund Hillary, upon his magnificent achievement as a member of the British Himalayan Expedition. A number of speakers supported Mr Field in paying a tribute to Sir Edmund for his historical exploit which had brought honour to New Zealand and to the beekeeping industry. Mention was also made of the prominent part played by Mr George Lowe, the other New Zealand member of the party, and of the splendid team spirit which had resulted in the final conquest of the mountain by Hillary and Tensing. The Expedition's example of unity and fortitude and singleness of purpose was quoted as one which might well be followed by the beekeepers of New Zealand when they step into the future as an organised industry.

Election of Officers

The following Officers were elected for the ensuing year:—

President: Mr E. D. Williams (Te Awamutu). Re-elected unopposed.

Vice-President: Mr E. A. Field (Foxton). Re-elected unopposed.

Executive: Messrs J. R. Barber (Pio Pio), E. J. Kirk (Wanganui), G. E. Gumbrell (Geraldine), and J. W. Fraser (Ryal Bush).

Messrs Moir and Campion, Levin, were re-elected as Auditors.

1954 Conference

Remits from two Branches requested that the next Conference be held in Greymouth. During the discussion, however, it was pointed out that in the early stages of the new marketing administration there might be some special reasons for meeting in Wellington, and eventually it was decided that the venue of the 1954 Conference be left to the discretion of the Executive.

Conclusion

The President expressed appreciation to the Officers of the Department of Agriculture and the Marketing Department for the assistance they had given during Conference, and special mention was made of the keen interest taken by Mr A. M. W. Greig, Director of the Horticulture Division, and of his valuable help at a time when the industry is setting up its own marketing administration.

Votes of thanks were extended to the Chairman and the Secretary, members of the Executive, the Editor, the Scrutineers, the Stenographer, and all who had assisted in the proceedings, and the Conference was formally closed.

MARKETING REVIEW

Address to the 1953 Conference by Mr A. C. BRIDLE, Chairman of the Honey Marketing Committee.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Since last Conference, much has happened that will have a pronounced effect on the future of your industry and on your industry marketing organisation.

You have already been advised by Mr Holyoake, to submit to Government, your proposals for your future marketing set-up, and, likewise, he has advised you that, at his request, and at the request of your producer members on the Committee, my resignation, handed in when I accepted an appointment with the N.Z. Poultry Board in March, has been held over until this Conference.

It was my desire, this year, conditions being normal, to have had a report printed and distributed to members of Conference, but you will readily appreciate that in my initial organisational survey of the Poultry Industry I have found it necessary to undertake a considerable amount of travelling and it has just not been possible to have a report so prepared.

I will now, as briefly as possible, review the operations of last season and then those of this season, to date.

1951-52 SEASON

As you know, the contract system introduced in the previous season was continued with certain modification. Only honey of over 50% of the colour points allowed was accepted under contract conditions in addition to the established flavour qualifications. Where producers, who through seasonal conditions, were able to avail themselves of the supplementary contracts conditions, they were permitted to take supplementary contracts up to 100% of the original contract quantities allotted to them.

Our original contracts totalled 923 tons spread fairly evenly throughout New Zealand. It became evident, at an early date, that the season was going to be a poor one. Continued wet weather and high winds with generally unfavourable conditions throughout the country, with the exception of Canterbury and portions of the South Island, resulted in one of the poorest crops on record. The Taranaki area was particularly heavily hit.

Our Committee quickly appreciated this position and permitted those contracting producers who were seriously affected, to review their contract quantities.

As a result of this approach, our original contract quantity of 923 tons was reduced to 693 tons, and together with supplementary contracts amounting to 58 tons totalled 751 tons in all.

This quantity compared favourably with the 708 tons received by the Department for the season, but nevertheless only 393 tons earned the contract premium and 45 tons the supplementary contract premium.

While allowance can be made for the poor seasonal conditions, a review of individual contract applications that year indicated that over-optimism was displayed by many producers, and in order to safeguard the contracting principle, the Section Manager continued to use increasing discretion, combined with the knowledge of a producer's past supply performance when approving contract quantities for this season.

Receiving Depot.	Estimated Production in Respective Areas.	Received by Section.
Auckland	1517	265
Christchurch	1200	258
Greymouth	810	173
Dunedin	112	12
	3639	708

The Depot therefore received approximately one-fifth of the overall production, but when it is realised that the Christchurch production was 100% greater than normal and the amount of honey received from Christchurch was 50% of this surplus, while the receipts from Auckland were just over 15% of the production and receipts at Dunedin were slightly over 10% of the production, it appears that the advantages of the contract system, while it is subject to yearly review, should be again carefully looked at.

It must, however, be admitted that the attractiveness of local packing is now generally acknowledged, but if producers throughout New Zealand follow this practice too generally and overstock the local market with retail packages, there is a serious danger, if the position has not already been experienced, where local prices, despite the existence of a central organisation, may be unduly depressed.

I realise that while making this statement, many producers will claim that more honey should have been exported or more money should have been spent in local advertising. The strongest supporters of this view are those who pack considerable quantities for the local market, and while contributing a seals levy, which has been insufficient together with sales returns to enable an attractive pool payout, overlook the Committee's responsibility to return to those producers, who have contracted and who by their support in the past have enabled the local market conditions to be stabilised with a measure of success, a price which is reasonably acceptable to them.

During the season we received a considerable quantity of low specific gravity honey, and much of this was handled through the existing plant.

The Manuka crop in Northland was practically a failure with only 33 tons received at a time when earlier efforts to establish a satisfactory market in the United Kingdom were achieving success.

In order to assist producers to achieve a quality Manuka pack suitable for direct shipment to the United Kingdom, officers of the Department of Agriculture did a very good job. The payout for this type of honey was 7¾d per lb. against 5½d per lb. paid the previous year.

Local Sales:

Our local sales for the year totalled 658 tons, and although deliveries covered most of the North Island, the bulk of sales were in and around Auckland.

This quantity was a considerable increase over the sales made in the previous year of 440 odd tons, and was a creditable performance in view of the quantity of direct producer shipments from the Christchurch area, in particular, to the North Island.

You will also recollect that the delay in the Price Order increase, a rise which was generally anticipated, resulted in heavy merchant buying. These large wholesale stocks, and in many cases retail stocks, combined with a tightening of bank credit, slowed up sales for a considerable period. There was also a slowing up of consumer demands, a natural reaction to almost any price increase, although in our case there had been no material increase in price since 1947.

Blending and Packing:

821 tons were blended and packed by the Depot during the year.

Exports:

373 tons were exported for the season.

Final Payments:

The maximum final payment amounted to 1/- per lb. on all honey except on birch honey, where 11d per lb. applied. This maximum payment excluded the additional contract and supplementary contract premium of ¾d and ½d per lb. respectively.

Final Reserves:

The end of the year finished with a balance in the Seals Reserve Account	£21,684
General Reserve	10,472
	£32,156

The total gross seals revenue collected for the season amounted to £7,271 on a production of 3,639 tons, as against the previous season's seals revenue of £9,960 from a production of approximately 6,000 tons.

1952-53 SEASON

The production again, this season, was low and particularly of darker coloured honey, while a heavy production of white honey was obtained in some areas, particularly on the light land of Mid and North Canterbury and in Southland.

The production for the year ended 31/3/53 was estimated at 3,900 tons, which is about two-thirds of the normal New Zealand production (excluding domestic production). This, when analysed into the respective production districts, is as under:—

Production Area.	1952	1953	Relation to Normal Ave. Production.
North Auckland	180	200	Approx. 50%
Auckland	180	170	„ 50%
Hamilton	430	658	„ 66%
Tauranga	280	200	„ 50%
Hawera	109	72	„ 15%
Palmerston North	68	141	„ 25%
Hastings	270	180	„ 30%
Total N. Island	1,517	1,621	

Greymouth	112	286	Average
Christchurch	1,200	500	Below ave.
Oamaru	580	630	Above ave.
Invercargill	230	620	50% above ave.
Total S. Island	2,122	2,036	
Total for N.Z.	3,639	3,657	

Contracts were signed for:—

	Contracts.	Supplementary Contracts.	Total Contracts.	Receipt to Date.
Auckland	68	–	68	116
Hamilton	194	3	197	150
Tauranga	79	–	79	38
Hastings	1	–	1	7
Taranaki	17	–	17	7
	359	3	362	318
Nelson-Greymouth	54	16	70	107
Christchurch	145	5	150	172
Oamaru	219	16	235	185
Invercargill	171	84	255	359
	589	121	710	823
N.Z. Totals	948	124	1,072	1,141

Or approximately one-third of the estimated commercial and semi-commercial production.

It will be seen from these figures that receipts are much closer to contract quantities for this year.

Depots:

Were operated in Greymouth, Christchurch and Dunedin, while direct shipments were made from Bluff and Oamaru.

Packing and Blending:

A total quantity of 633 tons was packed and blended during the year.

Local Sale:

The sales to date amount to 350 tons, but as already mentioned, sales fell following the last price rise but have now returned to our normal sale of approximately 50 tons per month.

Export:

We have exported, to date, 402 tons, and our returns are slightly better than last year. The demand for bulk honey has been good, but bulk prices have recently eased slightly.

Despite the optimistic tone of our agents, packed sales have made slow progress.

Geydes, who have continued to sell N.Z. honey in their "Stag Brand" for many years, have maintained their interest, but C. G. Morton's have made little progress in developing packed sales. Uni Products' packed

sales are slow although this firm has proved a valuable outlet for the sale of bulk lines at attractive prices.

Although £500 was spent in the preparation of counter display cards last year, we have not been prepared to spend large sums in advertising, while the U.K. market takes our immediate surplus, and the N.Z. market, returning a higher price, finds an outlet for the balance.

When the increased seals levy is an established fact, this position can be looked at in a different light because it may then be possible for the pool payout to be kept in reasonable relationship to the production costs.

Sales to India and Singapore have been maintained, and a token shipment was sent to New York. The costs of packing material in New Zealand has not made it economically possible to pre-pack retail containers in New Zealand for consignment to U.K. If this could be done and we could deliver to U.K. our standard colour lines, we would not be restricted to the same extent in our distribution methods.

Experimental shipments have been sent to U.K., pre-packed in New Zealand, and we are still working on this problem.

Price Orders:

With the setting up of your own organisation it will be necessary to review the necessity for the continuation of price orders. Retail prices could be fixed by your central organisation.

Regulations:

No further action has been taken on the draft Honey Marketing Regulations in view of the Primary Products Marketing Act, which permits industry reviewing its marketing structure.

That section of the Draft Regulations dealing with the Seals increase can be put into effect quickly by an amendment to the 1938 Honey Marketing Regulations. The intention was that as from 30th September no honey shall be sold by a producer or wholesaler unless the higher rate of seal is attached to the package, and as from the 30th November no honey shall be sold by a retailer unless the higher rates are attached. Carton manufacturers could cease the manufacture of embossed lids as from 30th September or thereabouts.

Bees Wax:

The Executive has asked that the Marketing Committee look at the question of providing a marketing scheme for beeswax. This matter is under consideration, and it is felt that assistance could be given to the industry along the lines suggested.

Primary Products Marketing Act:

The Government last session brought down the Primary Products Marketing Act, an empowering Act enabling the Honey Industry to take over its own marketing activities. This Bill has drawn considerable criticism from certain sections of the community. Provision is made in the Act for at least one Government representative to be appointed to any marketing authority set up under the Act and in addition the authority is called upon to have due regard to the general Government trade policy.

The appointed Government representative is specifically charged with the duty of watching the interests of the consumer.

The smaller industries such as the Honey Industry may appear insignificant when judged by its annual turnover in tons or in £.s.d., but its huge contribution to other primary industries by the pollination service given by the bees must not be lightly passed over.

The honey industry is comprised of a multiplicity of small producers depending in the main on local sales of their produce for a livelihood. They, like the wage earner, compete for the sale of his service to the community, but not by the hour, by the pound or package.

Nothing would bring the industry to its knees quicker than the unrestricted cut-throat competition of producers peddling their wares throughout New Zealand, a condition already experienced by the older producers, and not easily forgotten, out of which has grown a desire for the retention of a central marketing scheme. As an industry you must, in your own interests, expect the same measure of protection that is obtained by the co-ordinated activity of any group with similar interests.

The Act offers you that protection, and I find it hard to believe that the critics of this Act could wish the past state of affairs as the lot of the honey industry, with its immediate reaction to other primary industries allied to it.

After coming out of a period of shortage, most producers realise that the wealth of their industry is generally in the hands of the consumer and that it is in your own interests to see that your prices are kept in relation to costs. More attention should be given to reduction of costs than to the mere recovery of costs. Unless this is done, any industry may tend to price itself out of its market and thereby greatly reduce the value of the capital asset that has been built up over a number of years.

You have been requested to formulate a plan and submit it to Government. Our Committee has already submitted to your Executive our ideas, which if adopted by the industry would permit a quick change-over from Government to industry operation. The Marketing Department, which has acted as your agent to an Executive Committee, is now a temporary division of the Department of Agriculture. Other industries are setting up their own organisations, and the costs previously shared by these industries will become a heavier burden on those industries that remain. In addition, the staff is being absorbed by other industries and departments.

The opportunity is now to hand for you, as an industry, to run your own concern, shoulder your own responsibilities and exercise your own authority. I feel that you have a firm base from which to build, and I am pleased that I have assisted you this far on your way.

As Chairman of your Committee, I have enjoyed my association with your industry, particularly in the later years. I feel that particular progress has been made apart from the tangible evidence of increased supplies to the Depot.

My task has also been made much easier by the sympathetic assistance of our Minister, Mr Holyoake, to our problems and difficulties.

In conclusion, I would extend my thanks and those of the Committee to all members of the Department of Agriculture, who have given such valuable assistance during the year. In particular, to Messrs Winter, Patterson and Walsh. To Mr Palmer Jones, who has carried out investigation for us which can be of considerable value to the industry in future years.

To your elected producer representatives, who have given up so much to serve your industry, and who have enabled our Committee to carry out the difficult task allotted to us.

I would also like to express my thanks to officers of the Marketing Department who have carried out their work with a personal keenness seldom seen by the producers they serve.

I trust that the future of your industry will be successful under your own banner, and I will watch with interest your progress.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
HORTICULTURE DIVISION

CONFERENCE ADDRESS BY
MR A. W. M. GREIG,
Director, Horticulture Division.

1. Introduction:

Two years ago, at Christchurch, your Executive extended an invitation to me to address your Annual Conference, and my remarks were fully reported in the "N.Z. Beekeeper" of August, 1951.

This year I appreciate the opportunity of reviewing the work now being done for beekeepers by members of the Department of Agriculture.

2. Staff:

The advisory and inspectorial services to beekeepers are being maintained, and at present the Apiary Section of the Horticulture Division has its full complement of Apiary Instructors—11 in all, stationed at Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Hastings, Palmerston North, Hawera, Greymouth, Christchurch, Oamaru and Invercargill.

The apicultural cadetship scheme has not been successful. The two young men failed to complete their university training, and it may be desirable to initiate a special beekeeping diploma as an appropriate qualification for future recruits to the staff of the Division.

Honey grading work has increased, and Mr R. S. Walsh, Honey Grader, examined honey at the Auckland Depot and also made two special visits to Christchurch.

Research and experimental work on behalf of beekeepers has been undertaken by a Departmental team of officers whose efforts are co-ordinated by Mr T. S. Winter, the Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry with headquarters at Wellington.

Mr Palmer-Jones, of the Wallaceville Research Station, under the direction of Dr. I. J. Cunningham, has continued with work on the following lines:—

- Diagnosing bee diseases and related problems.
- Acting as a bee quarantine officer to check all bees entering the country.
- Testing the moisture content of N.Z. honey and assisting in the removal of excess moisture.
- Designing a method of producing honey mead from low grade honeys.

The Extension Division of the Department has assisted with the honey cost of production survey; in the experiments in the Waikato on white clover nectar yield and in testing whether D.D.T. super caused bee losses. Advisory officers of the Extension Division warn farmers of the dangers to honey bees if D.D.T. super is supplied at any time when nectar sources are in bloom.

Mr C. R. Paterson, Apiculturist—with headquarters at Hamilton but with Dominion coverage in his work—has been concentrating on the following:—

- An improved method for the extraction of moisture from N.Z. honey.
- A standard plant for handling manuka honey.
- Cost of production of honey.
- The white clover nectar problem in the Waikato.

3. (a) Inspection of Apiaries:

The inspection of apiaries by part-time Inspectors was continued last year—5,104 apiaries being visited and 43,137 hives inspected. Of these 1,290 hives, or 3%, were found to be diseased. The burning policy commenced

over two years ago is giving good results. In addition 172 colonies of bees were destroyed because they were not established in frame hives.

There has been no cut in expenditure on inspection work—£779 was spent in the year ending 31st March, 1951, £1,123 for 1952, and £1,228 for 1953. The actual number of apiaries and hives inspected differs little from two years ago, but last spring, especially in the North Island, was a difficult period for inspection and many of the apiaries visited were more remote from Inspectors' headquarters.

3. (b):

From time to time during inspection duties it is found that the hives in some apiaries are semi-abandoned and completely covered in vegetation such as gorse and blackberry. It will be appreciated that under such circumstances the work of inspection is retarded and time and energy have to be spent before inspection can be undertaken. At present there is no provision in the Apiaries Act requiring an owner to keep his registered apiary maintained in such condition that it can be readily inspected. As I feel that this is an omission which could be restified when an Apiaries Amendment Bill is next before the House, I would appreciate the support of this Conference in that direction.

4. Decentralisation of Apiary Registration:

This year, on 31st October next, all apiary registrations expire and re-registration is necessary if a check for inspection purposes is to be maintained on the 200,000 hives in the country.

In line with Departmental policy to decentralise registration work as far as it is practicable, it has been decided to make each centre where an Apiary Instructor is stationed into a registration district, and the Apiary Instructor there will be the registrar.

Next November every beekeeper who is at present registered with the Horticulture Division, Wellington, should receive a new application form and a stamped envelope addressed to the local registrar. The form should be completed by the beekeeper as soon as possible and forwarded to the Apiary Instructor for the district. The form has a tear-off section which will be returned to the beekeeper by the Instructor. This will be the evidence of registration and replaces the special certificates which were previously issued from Wellington.

Registration continues as a free service and is closely linked with the inspection service for American foul brood.

Re-registration is intended at five-yearly intervals.

5. Hawkes Bay Bee Protection Advisory Committee:

No losses of bees due to arsenate of lead poisoning were reported from Hawke's Bay in the spring of 1952, and I feel that this was largely as a result of the work of the Hawke's Bay Bee Protection Advisory Committee. Mr A. D. Masters, President of the Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers' Association, and Mr G. F. R. Gordon, past Secretary of the Hawke's Bay branch of the National Beekeepers' Association, are now members of this committee, and I feel that their presence ensures that practical efforts are being made to keep bee losses to a minimum. I wish particularly to thank the N.B.A. and Mr Gordon for their co-operation in tackling this problem.

Considerable publicity was given the question in Hawke's Bay. There were three special radio broadcasts, an article in the "Orchardist" and the "Commercial Gardener"; advertisements in the local papers; screen slides were shown in Hastings theatres during the most dangerous period in October; and a circular was issued to each Hawke's Bay fruitgrower, berry-fruit grower and beekeeper. In addition, Horticultural Inspectors at Hastings maintained a careful supervision over the spraying of apple and pear trees during the blossom period. The existing legislation states that "No person shall spray or dust any fruit trees . . . with any poisoning substance injurious to bees unless almost all the blossoms have fallen from the trees." As berry fruits such as raspberry canes are not specifically covered by the term "fruit tree," an amendment has been recommended to the Government to widen

the definition to cover raspberries and related species of plants, and it is hoped that the amending legislation will be passed this year.

6. Research & Experimental Work:

(a) Moisture in honey and a new method for its reduction.

Honey with too high a moisture content is liable to ferment. This is the reason why a maximum of 17.2% moisture has been fixed for all honey submitted for export, and this standard must be maintained.

On the local market honey has been seen in a fermenting condition, and too large a quantity of honey with excess moisture has been submitted for grading.

Messrs Paterson and Palmer-Jones have tackled this problem and designed a plant to remove excess moisture from honey. This plant has already been tested at Wallaceville and has proved so satisfactory that authority has been obtained for these two workers to design an up-to-date model which could be regarded as a prototype for beekeepers requiring equipment for this purpose.

(b) Manuka honey.

Manuka honey cannot be clarified or blended with other honey by the usual methods. Because of this difficulty, beekeepers are not being encouraged to produce this type of honey. However, where it is impossible for a beekeeper to move from a manuka area the honey produced must be handled. Messrs Paterson and Roberts are designing a plant for handling manuka honey and details will be published shortly.

(c) D.D.T. super and its effects on honey bees.

Beekeepers have expressed concern lest the use of D.D.T. super by farmers for the control of grass grub might, at certain periods of the year, be harmful to honey bees.

Reports from Apiary Instructors state that no signs of excessive bee mortality have been noticed in those areas where D.D.T. super was applied last year.

Arrangements, however, were made last October for experiments in the Marton district to obtain data on this question, but these proposals had to be abandoned owing to unfavourable seasonal conditions. Next season it is hoped to proceed with the trials in a more favourable locality near Levin.

(d) Nectar secretion.

From the preliminary nectar secretion work already done at the Rukuhia Research Station, Hamilton, it seems that more honey was formerly produced from weeds, such as blackberry, than was generally realised. The intensive weed control campaigns by modern weed-killers seems to be the cause of the fall in honey production of some Waikato hives.

5. Air Transport of Bees:

The air transport of bees in packages from North Auckland to the South Island has been tested and found to be superior to rail and sea transport. Details will be published soon.

6. Export of Comb Honey:

Trial shipments of comb honey to the United Kingdom and United States have been made, and we await results.

7. Visit to United Kingdom:

Last year I was nominated by the Government to attend the 13th International Horticultural Congress, held in London during September, 1952. In addition I spent seven weeks in the United Kingdom and visited various horticultural institutions. Included was the Bee Research Department, Rothamsted Experimental Station under Dr. C. G. Butler. This institute, a part of Rothamsted near Harpenden, 40 miles north of London, has a staff of 19—6 of whom are technical.

In the course of discussions the following points were mentioned:—

Much of Dr. Butler's work is the field behaviour of pollinating insects in an effort to increase seed yields. He considered time has been wasted on large scale trials in England and that it is necessary to study the behaviour of individual colonies of bees in relation to pollination.

I also met the Ministry of Agriculture Chief Bee Advisory Officer, Mr P. S. Milne.

Ministry advisory officers in England only serve commercial producers, whilst domestic beekeepers with up to 40 hives receive an advisory service from the County Beekeeping Instructors, numbering 26 in all. On the commercial side Mr Milne has only one assistant at Rothamsted and one in Wales.

Foul-brood legislation is administered by County executive committees with full-time organisers and local beekeepers as Inspectors. The aim is to cover a county in three or four years, and the figures of disease given are on the basis of diseased colonies compared with colonies inspected. In 1944 it was 7%, reduced to 3% in 1946, and down to 1.7% during 1951 and 1952. Foul-brood eradication is associated with an insurance scheme in England.

About two years ago Nosema was detected in one worker accompanying a queen bee from New Zealand.

Some bee losses are being experienced through the use of new sprays, but at present the Ministry is collecting data and endeavouring to reduce losses through an educational campaign.

No move has yet been made by the universities in Britain to establish a diploma in beekeeping, but a National diploma in beekeeping is being considered by the Beekeeping Education Association, which aims to have a diploma of equal standing to the National diploma in horticulture granted by the Royal Horticultural Society and recognised by the United Kingdom Ministry of Agriculture as a suitable qualification for Horticultural Advisory Officers.

The British Beekeepers' Association has initiated a series of examinations open to beekeepers.

The prerequisite is a certificate that the applicant has kept and managed bees for at least a full year or that he has taken an approved course of instruction which must include practical work in the apiary.

This is followed by a preliminary examination of two parts—a practical examination in the manipulation of a modern hive of bees and an oral examination on the year's work in the apiary.

After the preliminary examination a candidate may elect to continue on practical lines, and having kept bees for at least five years may undertake oral and practical examinations which, if successfully passed, entitle him to the designation.

"Practical Beekeeper":

On the other hand, he may continue with Intermediate and Senior examinations covering the practical and scientific aspects — bee pasturage, anatomy, physiology and pathology. Final examinations are only open to those who have kept and managed bees for at least three full years.

On completion the candidate is entitled to the designation *"Master Beekeeper."*

I feel the time has arrived when the National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand, in co-operation with the Horticulture Division, should discuss a similar series of recognised qualifications for New Zealand beekeepers, from whom future Apiary Instructors could be recruited. Such a move will have my personal interest and support.

8. Congratulations:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate the N.B.A. in having such a distinguished member as the conqueror of Everest—Sir Edmund Hillary. There is a man who has looked forward and upward. At the various annual conferences of this Association which I have attended in recent years I regret to say that some members seem to have been more concerned with what a fellow member said 20 years ago than with where beekeepers individually and collectively are going in the future. This year your organisation is being offered by the Minister a new approach in the marketing of your product. May you take this opportunity to deal with an important problem and concentrate your attention to the future—looking forward instead of looking backward.

I wish you the best for a successful Conference.

HONEY MARKETING COMMITTEE

At the recent Beekeepers' Conference the Hon. K. J. Holyoake, Minister of Agriculture, made it clear to the industry that the Marketing Department has ceased to exist and that the Honey Industry must decide by December of this year whether it is prepared to take over the existing Government-operated Honey Marketing Organisation.

All beekeepers with 30 hives and over are being circulated and urged to attend meetings to be arranged in the principal honey producing districts. These meetings will be addressed by representatives of the N.B.A. or producer representatives of the H.M.C.

The H.M.C. has no hesitation in urging all commercial beekeepers to give full support to the proposals for the industry to take over the Honey Marketing organisation at present operated by the Marketing Department. The application of the principle of organised marketing under producer control has long been recognised by all primary industries as necessary to the profitable disposal of their produce. The alternative is competitive selling through channels of proprietary and commercial concerns whose only interest in the product is a "turnover" at the greatest margin of profit to themselves.

The existing marketing organisation has now created a valuable business representing the total of approximately 1000 tons of honey annually on the overseas and local markets, all of which has been financed by Government loaned money.

The question now at issue is whether this valuable business, together with the future marketing, should pass out of the control of the producers or be retained by them and further developed and extended by a producer-elected board.

The Marketing Committee has the assurance of the Government that, in the event of the producers deciding to take over the existing organisation, the finance will be made available to make initial payments to suppliers of the producer-operated concern. The Committee has also had the assurance that technical advice and practical assistance from Government officers will be offered to the industry should it decide to establish a producer-operated marketing structure.

Beekeepers should, in their own interests, make it a matter of urgency to be present at the district meetings called for the express purpose of providing them with an opportunity to record their vote on a question that very seriously concerns their future.

WALLACE NELSON,
Honey Marketing Committee.

BRANCH NOTES

FAR NORTH

In the annual report of the Far North Branch the past year showed a further decline in membership owing to the amateur members giving up beekeeping.

During the year meetings were addressed by the Apiary Instructors, Messrs Robert and Smellie, and at each meeting discussions were held on all aspects of beekeeping.

The beekeepers' stand was again held at the A. and P. Show when, considering the conditions prevailing at the time, the entries were good. We would like to see more competition at these shows.

Owing to weather conditions the spring manuka crop was below average and of short duration. The flow from pastures was in most parts a failure.

The Apiary Instructor carried out extensive inspections during the year and we are pleased to report that through the untiring work of the Inspectors and the co-operation of the beekeepers the disease has been reduced to a very low percentage, and we hope that the co-operation and work will continue.

The branch suffered a severe loss with the resignation of the popular secretary, Mr Graham. Mr Graham has been the secretary since the Branch was formed in 1944 and was always an untiring worker and did much to improve the standard of beekeeping in this district.

To Mr Graham we extend our thanks and appreciation of work and comradeship during these years and hope that he finds happiness and prosperity in his new district.

We extend our thanks also to the General Secretary and the Executive of the Association.

The following officers were elected: President, Mr W. G. Macpherson; Vice-Presidents, Messrs C. F. Brent, Geo. Hancox, J. Walton and C. Werner; Secretary-Treasurer, Mr W. I. Haines; Committee, Messrs J. W. Thornton, P. R. Atkinson, D. I. Michie and President and Secretary.

AUCKLAND CENTRAL

An attractive leaflet from Auckland Central gives information concerning the Branch and sets out the following programme of meetings for 1953-54:

June 26th: Site Selection.

July 31st: Spring Overhaul.

August 28th: Spring Feeding.

Sept. 25th: Debate, Spring and Autumn Re-queening.

Oct. 30th: Increase and Swarm Control.

Nov. 27th: Seasonal Preparation.

January 29th: Honey-house Procedure.

February 26th: Open Discussion.

March 26th: Social and Film.

April 30th: Honey Show, Nominations, Remits.

May 28th: Annual Meeting, Report, etc.

Meetings are held in the Chess Club Rooms, His Majesty's Arcade, Queen Street, Auckland, at 8 p.m. on the last Friday of each month. There is an open discussion period during supper and prospective members and visitors are cordially invited to attend.

Branch officers for the current year are: President, Mr S. Broadhead; Vice-Presidents, Messrs C. G.

Rope and H. Belin; Secretary, Mr L. Riesterer; Committee, Miss G. A. Lawson, Messrs I. G. Muncaster, H. Broadhead, A. Greenman and W. Riley.

CANTERBURY

ANNUAL REPORT

During the year the membership of the Branch has remained at a satisfactory level. Seven new members were nominated, making a financial membership of 65; unfinancial members 5. Three members resigned during the year and six have been deleted from the membership list as being unfinancial.

Five meetings were held during the year and these were well attended. Honey advertising by the Marketing Department throughout New Zealand was a step in the right direction towards popularising honey. The Branch unanimously opposed any increase in the honey seals levy. Grave concern was felt at the manner in which the Minister of Marketing disregarded the decision of the Conference that purchasers of seals should have representation on the Marketing Committee. Two letters by this Branch on the above matters were sent to the Minister.

The honey industry is passing through a serious crisis. The suppliers to the Marketing Department and Marketing Committee are forcing the hand of the Minister to bring into force the increase in the seals levy. We apiarists must get down to fundamentals and realise that one section of the industry needs the other. My contention is that the more honey forwarded to the Marketing Department the higher the seals levy will have to be to cover overhead and trading losses.

Our central marketing organisation is in the throes of a change. The Marketing Committee (which only represents approximately one-fifth of the production of New Zealand) has already had a preliminary meeting with the Under-Secretary to the Minister of Marketing to discuss the new set-up. Strong exception is taken to this procedure and I suggest every endeavour be made to incorporate our National Executive in any further discussions.

We have a thriving industry, and if some of the officers of the Marketing Committee would cease adopting a policy of keeping the industry divided we would soon become a harmonious organisation.

A. R. GOSSET, President.

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Canterbury Branch was held in Christchurch on Friday, 3rd July, 1953.

The statement of accounts showed a credit balance of £28/7/6.

Mr T. F. Penrose was elected Branch Delegate to Conference.

The Branch considered the remits to Conference, and decided to strongly oppose any attempt to increase the seals levy.

The election of officers resulted: President, Mr A. R. Gosset; Vice-Presidents, Messrs R. Woods, C. Hill and R. Murray; Committee, Messrs T. E. Pearson, T. F. Penrose and K. Ecroyd.

R. R. BUSHBY, Hon. Sec.

Wasps' 10-foot Nest

A party of Ruapekapeka residents who recently attacked a wasps' nest near the Ruapekapeka-Kawakawa road found themselves with a two-day job. The visible portion of the nest measured three feet across and about three feet deep, and the party set to work in the approved fashion by spraying the nest with Diesel oil from a flame-thrower and then scorching the whole area with a brushwood fire. Then they found that the nest ran deeply underground. The next day the party came back with two flame-throwers, more Diesel oil and more brushwood. They finally uncovered and destroyed the entire nest. Ten feet deep and ten feet across the bottom, it tapered up to a width of five feet at the top.

Some people keep so busy laying up for a rainy day they seldom see the sunshine.

CASE FOR A SUBSIDY ON HONEY

27th April, 1953.

The Hon. K. J. Holyoake, M.P.,
Minister of Agriculture and Marketing,
Parliament Buildings,
WELLINGTON.

Dear Sir,

BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY—CONTINUED EXISTENCE VITAL TO DOMINION ECONOMY—FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE REQUIRED.

As has already been indicated to you, both in correspondence, and more recently in person by the Dominion President of this Association (Mr E. D. Williams), the question of assuring the continued existence of the Beekeeping Industry in New Zealand on a stable and permanent basis has been given very considerable consideration by the Dominion Executive, who have reluctantly come to the definite conclusion that financial assistance from the Government is the only practical means whereby these objectives can be attained.

At his recent interview with you, Mr Williams handed you a statement dealing with this matter, and the purpose of this letter is to amplify that statement in support of the Industry's contention that financial assistance from the Government is both necessary and justified. The factors mentioned by Mr Williams are basically those which are the cause of the worry and concern within the Industry regarding the problems of marketing in general, and of the operations of the Central Marketing Organisation in particular.

Through no fault of the producers, a very serious situation has recently developed, and unless speedily removed, Beekeeping within the Dominion will rapidly decline, with the inevitable result that production from other primary industries will also be seriously curtailed.

I believe that the facts of the case are already known to you, but in order to keep the record straight, I will mention the following important points:—

(1) The overall production of honey in the Dominion in an average season is approximately 6,000 tons.

(2) The overall consumption of honey within the Dominion per annum is estimated at approximately 4,464 tons (i.e., 5lbs. per head of population), leaving a surplus in an average production year of approximately 1,536 tons.

(3) In order to assure that Beekepers will receive at least their costs of production, it is absolutely essential that a *minimum* of 1,000 tons of honey be exported from the Dominion annually.

In this regard, under present conditions, the Industry finds itself in a quite impossible position, for two very simple reasons.

Firstly, the Marketing Department, allied with the Honey Marketing Committee, cannot export this quantity of honey and receive from the sale thereof, sufficient funds to enable them to return to the producers who supply the honey, a figure equal to the established cost of production, even after taking into consideration the payment of 1d per pound Sales Levy upon producers who sell their product direct to the local market.

Secondly, the inevitable result must be that the Department has to blend and pack the bulk honey they receive and endeavour to dispose of the major portion of it on the local market in competition with the producer-packers who contribute the Seals Levy which, in part, is used towards meeting the cost involved in operating the Central Organisation.

Up to the present time a few hundred tons of blended honey has been exported by the Department each year, but this quantity is not nearly sufficient to avoid an over-supply on the local market, with the result that in different parts of the Dominion price-cutting is being resorted to by Beekeepers in an endeavour to dispose of their crops. This is not an economic proposition, and if continued, will spell the ruination of many commercial producers.

In no other industry in New Zealand is there such a precarious livelihood as in the Beekeeping Industry, where the result of a whole year's labour and expense is almost entirely dependent upon climatic and other conditions during the few vital weeks of the honey flow.

Under these circumstances it is imperative that Beekeepers be assured of disposing of their product, either through the Central Marketing Organisation or direct to the local market, at prices which will enable them to adequately maintain their establishments and at the same time enjoy a reasonable standard of living.

From the foregoing, it will be apparent that it is a physical impossibility for the Beekeeping Industry to be maintained at a healthy and vigorous level unless financial assistance is made available to enable the Central Marketing Organisation to export the amount of honey produced in excess of the Dominion's requirements, and at the same time to be in a position to return to the producer a price which, at the very least, will meet his costs of production.

There is an abundance of authoritative evidence available in support of the fact that the Beekeeping Industry is of inestimable value to the national economy of the Dominion, not only through the production of a valuable food product, but mainly in the pollination service provided to Agriculture in general by the operations of the bees themselves.

In this regard I am attaching hereto a number of authenticated reports published by eminent authorities regarding the enormously valuable contribution of honey bees to Agriculture.

Firmly believing that the future of the Industry is in jeopardy, and realising that the assistance now sought is a matter of urgent necessity, the Dominion Executive of this Association respectfully makes the request that the Government subsidise the funds already being provided by the Industry itself per medium of the Honey Seals Levy.

The sum required for the purpose would be small indeed, having due regard to the importance of the Industry in relation to the overall economy of the Dominion.

It is understood that at the present time the average return from sales of honey overseas is approximately 11¾d per pound. The cost of producing honey and supplying it to the Central Blending and Packing Plant is 1/1 per pound, so that the disparity between returns from overseas sales and the cost of producing the honey exported is roughly 1¼d per pound. On 1,000 tons this works out at £14,000, a very modest sum indeed when considered in relation to the value of the pollination service provided to Agriculture by the Beekeeping Industry.

Commercial Beekeeping is a highly skilled craft, and the number of persons who possess the right temperament and are prepared to put up with the pain and inconvenience caused by innumerable bee-stings, and also undertake the very heavy lifting work involved in the occupation, is strictly limited.

Having regard to all these matters, my Executive most earnestly and sincerely trusts that the Government will fully appreciate the value of the Beekeeping Industry to the Dominion's economy and find that the Industry's plea for the financial assistance asked for is fully warranted.

Yours faithfully,

G. V. FRASER, General Secretary.

FACTUAL NOTES, RE VALUE OF BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY TO NATIONAL ECONOMY

The first hive of bees were brought to New Zealand from England in 1839.

During the past forty years beekeeping in New Zealand has developed from a backyard semi-commercial venture in the main to a highly specialised industry.

The latest beekeeping statistics to the end of June, 1952, show:—

Beekeepers.	Apiaries.	Hives.
6,650	12,497	189,640

It is estimated by the Department of Agriculture that £1,390,000 is invested in bee stocks and plant in New Zealand based on present holdings.

The overall production, including domestic beekeeping, was estimated to be 6053 tons of honey and 181,000lbs. of commercial beeswax last season.

Because of the area which bees habitually range, it has been found to be impractical to raise plants especially for the honey and pollen which might be obtained from them.

Consequently the trend in beekeeping practice during the past forty years in New Zealand, and also in all other important agricultural and beekeeping countries, has been toward the extensive operation of more hives of bees on an apiary basis, spread over pasture lands.

The object of all beekeeping practices is to have maximum producing populations during honey flow periods when pollination of economic plants occurs.

Authorities in all agricultural countries state that the pollination service provided by honey bees is essential to their economy.

In New Zealand, as in other agricultural countries, the beekeeping industry provides that service which could not be provided in any other way.

According to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (U.S.A.), a total of 5,581,000 colonies of bees were on hand at July 1st, 1951.

U.S.A. Department of Agriculture Research Adminstration—Bulletin E276 revised —November, 1949—states:—

"Most persons appreciate that the only source of honey and beeswax is the honey bee. Few realise, however, that although this insect (kept under control conditons by beekeepers) in the United States produces in excess of 200 million pounds of honey and 4 million pounds of beeswax annually, these are merely by-products, and that its main value to the nation is in the pollination of some 50 Agricultural crops for the production of seed and fruit. Although many other insects are of value as pollinators their numbers have been so depleted in the course of Agricultural Development that they can no longer be relied upon."

This is also true of New Zealand and other countries. In U.S.A. and Canada pollination service contracts between Beekeepers and Agriculturists, for the hire of hives of bees to pollinate economic plants, are common in areas where there are few permanently established apiaries.

In England and Wales there are 80,000 beekeepers tending some 400,000 hives of bees.

Extract from proceedings of the Linnean Society, London, 155th Session—Part 2—January, 1944:—

"Bees are kept in order to obtain honey, but it is not generally recognised that the value of bees as pollinators of orchard and farm crops greatly exceeds the value of the surplus honey they produce. It is estimated that the annual value of bees as pollinators in England and Wales is at least £4,000,000, whereas the value of the honey is barely a third of that figure."

Information Bureau, Canberra, Australia, January, 1951. In 1949, 385,256 hives of bees established in Australia produced 53,203,000 pounds of honey (over 23,000 tons).

The Minister for Commerce and Agriculture told a deputation from the Australian Honey Advisory Council in Canberra in 1950 that the beekeeping industry was entitled to Government assistance.

Beekeeping Industry in Canada.

1947—		
Beekeepers.	Hives Established.	Production.
34,950	605,100	18,639 Tons of Honey.

R. E. English, Supervisor Agricultural Information, Alberta Dept. of Agriculture, Bulletin No. 14/1948:

"The clovers are the most important of our agricultural forage plants and they are largely self-sterile. Honey bees which can be controlled as to number are the most efficient agents in cross pollinating the clovers.

"Honey bees and wild bees are efficient pollinators. When honey bees were added to the population seed yields were substantially increased, etc."

THE VALUE OF HONEY BEES TO THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Extract from a Synopsis prepared by the Horticulture Division of the Department of Agriculture and published in "The New Zealand Beekeeper" by courtesy of the Hon. J. G. Barclay, M.P., Minister of Agriculture, January, 1942.

"The Beekeeping Indusry in New Zealand is essential to our economy, as it supplies a natural service of pollination of flowers of economic plants, and also adds to the wealth of the community by the production of a first-class food that would otherwise go to waste."

Extract from a statement published in February, 1944, under the heading "Honeybees Increase Clover Seed Production 15 Times," by the Departments of Zoology and Entomology and Agronomy of the Ohio State University (U.S.A.).

"Insect Pollination Vital Factor in Increasing Seed Yields."

"Alsike, medium red, white Dutch and Ladino Clovers are practically self-sterile, and are dependent upon insect pollination to insure cross-pollination and subsequent seed set. Sweet clover, mammoth red clovers, and alfalfa, vary in their degree of self-fertility, but in all cases are dependent on insect pollination to insure self and cross pollination so necessary for profitable seed yields. The flower structure of all these legumes makes wind pollination a negligible factor.

"The size of the pollination job for an acre of legume bloom is much larger than most of us realise. For example, an acre of alsike or red clover blooms contains 400,000,000 or 216,000,000 individual florets respectively. To have 100 per cent. pollination occur each floret must be visited by a pollinating insect. Of course, under field conditons this would never happen. However, under experimental conditions where 100 per cent. pollination took place with alsike clover bloom, yields varying from 12½ to as high as 20 bushels of seed an acre have occurred."

"Legume Pollinating Insects."

"The legume pollinating insects may be classed in two groups, namely: the natural pollinating insects over which we have little control; and the honeybee—the only controlled pollinating insect. The uncontrolled pollinating insects which play a meagre role in legume pollination, are exemplified by the bumblebees, solitary bees, flies, butterflies and moths. In 43 hours of collecting natural pollinating insects on alsike bloom in various counties, only an average of 9 insects were collected per hour. Where honeybees are plentiful, from 200 to 300 can be found in an hour.

"The honeybee represents the only controlled pollinating insect and is ideally adapted to accomplish the pollination job. Its social organisation makes possible the development of enormous colonies which may be placed in any desired location in the numbers necessary. The instinct of the honeybee to gather nectar and pollen along with its behaviour of working every hour of the day when weather permits, are assets which very few other insects possess.

"By skillful bee management it is possible to build the bee population of each colony to over 80,000 worker bees by the clover blooming season, and those colonies can be stimulated to deliver maximum pollinating service.

"The density of the honeybee population and its constancy over a period of years should be of much concern to farmers. FOR EACH DOLLAR THAT THE BEEKEEPER RECEIVES, FIFTEEN TO TWENTY DOLLARS WORTH OF POLLINATION SERVICES ARE RETURNED TO AGRICULTURE. As long as farmers receive free pollinating services there is only one factor which will insure an adequate honeybee population, namely, the profitableness of honey production to beekeepers. It is of real economic interest that the density of the honeybee population increase as much as possible. Yet, at the same time, those bees should return profitable honey and beeswax yields to the beekeeper."

"Utilisation of Honeybees Solution to Pollination Problem."

"Experimental studies conducted by the Department of Entomology, Ohio Agricultural Experimental Station, show that seed yields are directly correlated with the density of the honeybee population.

"The Station's experimental data relating to alsike seed yields can be taken as a general index of what will occur with the self-sterile group of legumes.

"Because of the general impression that honeybees do not pollinate red clover, the data from Henry County presents a typical example of the significance of the honeybee as a pollinating agent.

"Extensive studies were carried on over a 3-year period involving detailed observations in fields of red clover for each day of the second blooming period. The pollination of red clover by honeybees is incidental to the collection of large quantities of pollen and nectar in small amounts. DURING THE 3-YEAR PERIOD, STUDIES SHOWED THAT MORE THAN FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE TOTAL POLLINATION SERVICES WERE PERFORMED BY HONEYBEES."

Extract from "The N.Z. Journal of Agriculture," December 1950, on Pollination—The Importance of Honey Bees.

(Article by I. W. Forster, Apiary Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Oamaru.)

POLLINATION SERVICE IS FREE.

In most districts honey bees are worth keeping for the honey and beeswax they produce. This means that their most important work, pollination, is available to mankind free. That pollination is their greatest service is shown by the following, which is based on statistics compiled by the United States of America Department of Agriculture.

It has been estimated that 75 per cent. of all returns from various crops requiring insect pollination are due to the work of honey bees. Although honey bees are instrumental in pollinating more than 50 agricultural crops, only the value of 25 which are shown in the statistics are taken into consideration. The total value of these crops was 1,300,000,000 dollars, of which nearly 1,000,000,000 dollars can be attributed safely to the work of honey bees. As the honey and beeswax for the same period was worth 35,000,000 dollars, the pollination service performed was worth at least 28 times more to the country than beekeepers' returns from honey and beeswax.

In most parts of New Zealand there are ample honey bees to give a satisfactory pollination service, and commercial beekeepers are capable of maintaining the bee population under reasonable conditions.

However, honey bees, with their keen foraging habits, are at times most vulnerable to poisonous sprays and dusts, and with the discovery of new methods of application which give greater coverage this danger has increased. It is essential, therefore, that thought should always be given to the welfare of beneficial insects before sprays or dusts are applied indiscriminately.

SPECIALISED WORK

Some farmers may think that they should obtain a few hives of bees to keep up the bee population in their locality, but it should be remembered that beekeeping, always specialised work, is to-day an even more exacting occupation under the conditions imposed by modern agriculture, which usually provides such a short honey flow that only expert apiarists can exploit it.

Unless a farmer is prepared to make a full study of beekeeping and so be able to rear young queens, control swarming, deal with bee diseases and perform many other manipulations, he will probably do only harm to the bee population of his district and will himself suffer financial loss and personal disappointment.

HONEY BEES AND RED CLOVER

The ability of honey bees to pollinate red clover is a subject that has aroused much interest in recent years. Red clover is almost completely self-sterile and, being entomophilous, it depends on insects for pollination. The average red clover floret is about 10 mm. deep, and as the tongue of the honey bee is about 7 mm. long, it may appear at first that the difference of 3 mm. would preclude the honey bee working red clover, but it does gather nectar from this source. The honey from this source has a characteristic delicate flavour and is produced in fair to large quantities in parts of Otago and Southland. A sample of honey representing several tons was tested recently by the Botany Division of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and was found to contain 83 per cent. of red clover pollen.

The 3 mm. discrepancy is overcome by the nectar rising high enough in the floret for the bee to reach down to it with its tongue.

Honey bees also gather much pollen from red clover, and as pollen gatherers obtain only as much as will stick to the hairs of their bodies at each visit, they do not linger in the blossom and consequently enter many flowers to obtain a full load of pollen. Red clover as a source of pollen is at times very satisfactory to honey bees, and the amount of pollination achieved by bees employed on pollen-gathering duty is very considerable.

Extracts from "A Review of the Dependence of Agriculture on the Beekeeping Industry." Issued by the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Administration, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine.

(Issued Dec. 1942—Revised July 1946.)

The principal role of the honeybee is not in the production of honey and beeswax, as is commonly supposed, but in the pollination of agricultural crops for the production of seed and fruit. Without insects to effect pollination, many species of plants will not set seed or produce fruit, no matter how well they are cultivated, fertilized and protected from diseases and pests.

The service rendered to agriculture by the beekeeper in furnishing the public with pollinating insects has commonly been overlooked. In too many cases his only reward has been his honey crop, which, until war years, he often had to dispose of at depressed prices. In addition, his bees were frequently killed through the indiscriminate use of insecticides by the very man he was benefitting. Under such circumstances, since the beekeeper's interest was not safeguarded by sufficiently high honey prices, rentals, or a subsidy of any kind, the keeping of bees has declined in many communities, and this in turn has meant decreased yields for the grower of insect-pollinated crops.

The fertilization of flowers is so imperative that beekeeping must be carried on to maintain a profitable agriculture. Owing to conditions brought about by the recent war, of which increased acreage of insect-pollinated seed crops is but one, safeguarding the beekeeping industry has become doubly urgent. Beekeeping can be mastered only through years of experience. It cannot be learned as a trade is learned, and there is no floating population of persons seeking employment in beekeeping. The fact that bees have a propensity for stinging discourages many people from keeping them, and only certain individuals possess the proper temperament to be beekeepers. For these reasons every experienced beekeeper should be encouraged to continue with his bees. It may even become necessary to subsidize the keeping of bees, since there is no practical substitute for honeybees in the transfer of pollen from flower to flower and from plant to plant.

Extract from U.S.A. Journal of Economic Entomology, August 1944, No. 37, Pages 522 and 524. (Article by Jas. I. Hambleton, U.S.D.A. Agricultural Research Administration Bureal of Entomology and Plant Quarantine.)

The unprecedented wartime demand for food of all kinds has focussed attention upon the importance of the beekeeping industry in the production of many food crops. The beekeeping industry has been looked upon chiefly as a source of honey and beeswax; consequently, early in this war it received little consideration in the assignment of priorities on manpower and strategic materials. Fortunately, many of the war agencies soon realised that beekeeping must be safeguarded if food production, so far as it was affected by pollination, was to be maintained.

The ultimate objective of economic entomolofy is to increase the production of farm, garden and orchard crops, live-stock products, and fibres, and to safeguard the health of man, and generally to enhance his comfort and well-being. Many entimological projects are directly concerned with increasing production through the control of destructive insects; yet the psosibilities of bettering production through the planned use of beneficial insects, other than parasites, have been largely overlooked.

For example, a good stand of red clover carries enough blossoms to produce 10 to 12 bushels of seed per acre, and in certain places such yields have been obtained, but the current average production in the United States is only 0.89 bushel per acre. Similar comparison can be made of seed production in other legumes. There is, of course, a wide difference between the average production and the possible of optimum production of any crop. Nevertheless, the opportunities for increasing production are being lost through indifference to the conservation and propagation of wild pollinating insects and to the scientific and strategic use of honeybees. The difference between 1 bushel and 12 bushels of seed per acre creates a problem requiring the attention, not only of entomologists, but of agronomists and others as well.

There is a heavy demand for legume seed, a demand that will continue long after the war. The problem of inadequate pollination existed before the war. It has beceome intensified during the war and will continue after the war.

There is scarcely a State where crop production could not be benefited, pastures improved, and soil erosion lessened through a widespread beekeeping industry; yet few States have recognised the place of beekeeping in pollination, and few agricultural colleges and experiment stations give more than passing thought to fostering beekeeping.

Extract from an article "Wings of Agriculture," by M. H. Haydak, Division of Entomology and Economic Zoology, University of Minnesota. (Published in the "American Bee Journal," May, 1947.)

They (bees) are the only insects that pass the winter in large communities and consequently are present in the largest numbers in the spring. Because they are kept in hives, they can be transported to any place wherever and whenever their services are needed.

At the University Farm in Minnesota honeybees formed 90 per cent. of all insects working on sweet clover. In Massachusetts it was found that "The honeybee was the most important insect pollinating onions." In Florida they are indispensable for watermelon production. These are only a few examples of the numerical relation of honeybees and other insects as pollinators of our agricultural plants. We can thus safely assume that between 75 to 80 per cent. of our agricultural crops are pollinated by honeybees.

Extract from the Agricultural Gazette (New South Wales), Jan. 1st, 1947. (Article by W. A. Goodacre, Senior Apiary Instructor.)

"BEES IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY—VALUE OF THE POLLINATION SERVICE"

Bees play a more important part in the national economy than most people realise. Their activities are of value, not only to the beekeeper, but also to the farmer, orchardist and vegetable grower—and thus, indirectly, to the whole community.

In addition to the production of honey—a valuable natural food—and of beeswax—which is used in the manufacture of many articles in everyday use—bees also work for practically all who are engaged in agriculture and in horticulture. This they do by providing a pollination service on which, in many cases, the primary producer depends for the setting of payable crops of fruit, vegetables and seeds of crop plants.

Bees are social insects, and one hive may have a population of up to 50,000. They visit the flowers of plants to obtain their food supplies, consisting of both nectar and pollen. As they do so they become dusted with tiny granules of pollen, some of which are transferred to the stigmas of other blossoms visited, thus effecting pollination and ensuring that the plants produce seed.

SERVICE TO FRUIT-GROWERS

For this reason, bees have a particular value to the fruit-grower. Practically all commercial varieties of pome and stone fruits are self-sterile, and require cross pollination. Bees can provide a very useful service under these conditions because the colonies can be controlled and placed where required. "No bees, no payable crops," is a generally accepted saying. The apiary should be established on a sunny, well-drained site close to the orchard, and reasonably handy to a permanent water supply. This is particularly necessary during changeable weather in spring, a time when most fruit trees come into flower.

SEED CROPS OF LUCERNE AND VEGETABLES

The pollination of the lucerne flower by bees is an example of the service rendered in seed crop production. The flowers of lucerne need to be "tripped" to effect fertilization, and this "tripping" process is often effected by the bee when it enters the flower in search of nectar. The weight of the bee and the pressure exerted release the stigmas and stamens. The hairs on the thorax of the bee become dusted with pollen, and when the bee visits other lucerne flowers, causing a similar action on the part of these flowers, the pollen previously collected is transferred, effecting crop fertilization and resulting in an increase in the amount of seed set.

Just a Case of Bees.—It is learned from Christchurch, New Zealand, that a policeman, seeing a swarm of bees settle on a babys pram, opened a suitcase, shook in the bees and calmly walked off with his captives. He was a bee-keeper.—"British Bee Journal."

MINISTER'S REPLY

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE,

Wellington, 4th June, 1953.

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

Dear Mr Fraser,

Further to my letter of the 8th May, I have now to state that your letter of the 27th April and the copies of reports enclosed therewith have been read with considerable interest, but I regret I am unable at present to make any recommendation to Cabinet for a subsidy to your industry.

As you are aware, it is the Government's policy to facilitate the transfer of responsibility from Government agency to the industry itself. The producer members of the Honey Marketing Committee have already had preliminary discussions with my Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Mr S. W. Smith, M.P., who has suggested that the Committee formulate plans to give effect to the Government's policy on marketing generally.

The Committee's plans, when completed, will no doubt be discussed with your Association, and if they include proposals for financial assistance, then these proposals will be considered in conjunction with the marketing scheme as a whole.

As to further details on future marketing plans for your industry, I note from your letter of the 18th May that your Executive will endeavour to arrange for a discussion with the Director-General of Agriculture when you next meet in Wellington.—Yours faithfully,

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

DUNEDIN CONVENTION

Beekeepers in Otago and Southland were given a wide view of the honey industry in New Zealand when Mr G. E. Gumbrell. a member of the General Executive, and Mr W. T. Herron, of the Honey Marketing Committee, addressed the Annual Dunedin Convention on June 3rd. The speakers occupied the greater part of the morning and afternoon sessions and discussed the problems of the day in a broad-minded and tolerant spirit. As a consequence the problems seemed to be by no means insurmountable. Producers throughout the area had experienced a satisfactory season and showed a lively interest in honey marketing prospects for the future.

"Package Bees" was the subject of a talk by Mr I. W. Forster at the evening meeting. After referring to the trade in packages in America and the trials made in Otago before the war, Mr Forster, in his usual thoughtful and practical style, gave a detailed account of the past season's work in Canterbury. Among the audience were Messrs M. Morrison (Balclutha), N. and J. Glass (Waikaka Valley), and G. Gumbrell (Geraldine), who were able to speak on the subject with the voice of experience, so the address was followed by a stimulating discussion. The Convention concluded with a social hour.

Mr N. Glass was in the chair during the day sessions and Mr A. J. Shaw presided at the evening function.

Associated with the Convention was the Beekeepers' Display Stall at the Winter Show, which this year took the form of a revolving stand. Some high quality honey was to be seen, both here and in the competitive section, where the entries numbered 35.

NOTES FOR BEGINNERS

By "SKEP"

(We have pleasure in introducing a new contributor to this column, a commercial beekeeper and a busy man. We know that with him the reputation established by "Skep" down the years is in very good keeping, and we can recommend his advice to young and old alike.—Editor.)

I have been appointed by the Editor to take over the duties of "Skep" for a period, and it will be my privilege to discuss with you the pros and cons of beekeeping at intervals, as the season progresses.

I have been associated with bees and beekeepers, but I still class myself as little more than a beginner, so wide a field does this subject cover. The more we learn, the more we realise how many matters pertaining to bees and hive management have still to be fully mastered. The beginner and the smaller beekeeper have, throughout the years, added much to our wealth of knowledge by observation and experiment. Commercial beekeeping tends to be a very rush and bustle occupation with little opportunity for other than absolutely essential manipulations.

I still envy the hobbyist, who has time to smoke his pipe and observe and work amongst his bees in a leisurely way.

Even he, however, must at times give up his pipe-dreaming and get into action.

Conference is over once again, and this is the zero line for ease and fanciful planning for the beekeeper.

From now on it's up to him to put his plans into action. Almost everyone's plans are beyond what is physically possible to accomplish. Start by pruning them down, if necessary, to what is practical.

Work for August

How many hives can you work well this coming season? If your answer to this means increase, check up on your supply of serviceable hives and fittings, allowing not less than four supers of combs, or frames fitted with comb foundation, for each hive. Carry out any repair work or painting necessary. If your programme entails making up new equipment, secure the necessary timber or factory-machined hive fittings, whichever you prefer, without delay, and assemble them right down to the last detail.

If you plan to make your own hives, as many do, be sure to use well dried timber, and on no account make other than absolutely standard sizes. Nothing wastes so much time or aggravates both bees and beekeeper more than does ill-fitting non-standard gear. The time and work spent in producing accurate standard equipment will amply repay you in the pleasure you will derive from working with it. Also its re-sale value is at least double that of roughly made, odd sized equipment.

In case you are in doubt as to what standard measurements are, let me advise you to secure and study the book "Beekeeping in New Zealand," by T. S. Winter, issued by the Dept. of Agriculture. Not only does it give you reliable information on this matter. Anyone beginning with bees or well experienced for that matter, will find it a veritable goldmine of information.

If you intend to buy your queens, and have not yet ordered them, write to your queen-breeder this very night and place your order. You are helping yourself and helping your queen-rearer by ordering early.

In the South Island it is too early yet to do much with the actual hives, provided they have sufficient stores to carry on. In the warmer northern districts conditions may be more advanced. Have a look round to see that all entrances are clear and observe whether mice have gained access. Mouse activity is usually evident in the form of crumb-like comb fragments about the hive entrance, and on the floor-board.

Work for September

As soon as the weather permits, start on a general check of your hives, observing the following points:—

1. Has the queen survived the winter? If so, there will be brood on two or three frames in the centre of the broodnest. Note if the brood is in solid patches or whether it has been layed in a straggling pattern. This latter denotes a queen which will progressively fail. You may not have a young queen to replace her yet, but mark her down for requeening at the earliest possible moment. You will be fortunate indeed if you do not have one or two hives either queenless or with drone-laying queens. It is useless to try to introduce queens in cages to hives in either of these conditions at this time of the year. The bees are old and of low morale, and will, in most cases, kill any queen you endeavour to introduce. If you have carried over nucleus colonies from last season—this should be standard practice—you can readily restore the casualties by uniting a nucleus after killing the drone-breeding queen in hives so affected. In straight queenless colonies there will be no brood, and the bees will hum and fan briskly when the hive is opened. Uniting is best done by shaking all the bees from the queenless hive into the bottom broodnest. Place a double sheet of newspaper over them. Transfer the nucleus into a standard super and place it on top of the paper. Do not disturb for at least a week.

2. Whilst checking the brood pattern and general condition of your hives, look over carefully for foul brood. Sunken dark sealing over the brood is always suspicious. Try any such cells with a match stick. If the substance in the cells ropes or strings out, similar to bicycle tube repair solution, close the hive immediately and sterilise your hive tool by scorching it. Wait until evening, when all bees are in the hive. Gas the bees with "Cyanogas." Dig a hole and burn the contents of the hive in the hole. Replace the soil over the ashes. This is a drastic measure, but it is the only really safe remedy. Supers cover and floorboard may be saved, but must be thoroughly scorched with a blow lamp. If in doubt consult your Apiary Instructor.

3. This is the time to sort over your brood combs for excessive drone comb. Remove bad combs for melting at a later date.

4. Ample stores are of tremendous importance at this stage. No hive will build up as it should, on a hand-to-mouth existence. Forty to fifty pounds is necessary at this time of the year in most southern districts. In milder areas less will suffice, especially where early spring honey flows are experienced.

5. Look over the floorboard and. if necessary, scrape clean to start the season. Leave entrance guards on as yet.

6. If you have had a little previous experience in rearing queens you could try grafting a batch of cells, using larvae from a quiet, pure stock, which proved itself a good honey gatherer last season. Even if you get only a few good queens from this attempt, the effort will have been worth while, for these early queens are invaluable to the keen beekeeper. I would advise you not to attempt this work until about the middle of September at the earliest.

Work for October

Have a quick run over your hives to ensure that the feed position is satisfactory. Provided your September work was done thoroughly, not a great deal of work will have accumulated up to this point.

This is the main Spring queen-rearing month. So much has been published on this subject that I will not try to cover it in these notes. I would, however, like to draw your attention to the length of time which must elapse from the time your cells are grafted—or hives made queenless if you let the bees raise their own cells—before you can have emerging brood. Your cells must mature and hatch; the queen must in due course mate and commence to lay; her brood must mature, and on to this you must add a further three weeks before young bees are old enough to gather nectar. Under average conditions the cycle takes nine weeks to complete. From this you will readily see how important it is for you to commence your queen-rearing work as early as

the weather in your district permits. As a guide to you, I like to have all my spring cells grafted by 20th October.

The introduction of queens can, at times, be troublesome. Losses are sometimes high, especially in or near swarming time. I hope to give a few hints on this subject in my next notes to beginners.

PACKAGE BEES

The experiment with package bees in the Rangitata Gorge during the 1952-53 season was described in detail by Mr I. W. Forster in the course of his address to the 1953 Dunedin Convention. The main purpose of the trial was to obtain pollination of clovers in a rather inhospitable region, but it also proved useful as a further indication of the possibilities of packages in honey production.

On the river flats among the mountains in the upper reaches of the Rangitata ten 3-pound packages were installed on two sites on 29th October. Each colony used about 15 pounds of honeydew during the build-up period, and they were in good strength by the time the honey flow started, about the 7th January. The season was fairly short, being finished by the 15th February, and the bees were then destroyed and the honey extracted. The average yield was 104 pound of good quality honey per colony.

Points arising from Mr Forster's address were, first, that plentiful supply of pollen is essential after the bees are installed and must be supplied in combs if it is not readily available to the bees. Second, a 10-week build-up period seems to be satisfactory; an earlier installation means a greater risk of severe weather and entails more feeding. Third, four of the ten queens failed during the course of the season, and this is in line with experience in America where supersedure of queens is regarded as one of the main problems with package bees.

The full story of the Rangitata Gorge experiment is being told in the *Journal of Agriculture*, and it should make interesting reading. Messrs W. Haines, of Kaitaia, B. Sharp, of Matakana, and G. Gumbrell, of Geraldine, co-operated with the Department of Agriculture in conducting the trial.

Why "Package Bees"?

"Package Bees" is the name given to a cluster of worker bees, usually with a queen, placed in a cage ready for transport. In North America there is a well established trade in packages. The winters are very severe in the northern States and Canada, and many beekeepers in these parts destroy their bees in the autumn and restock their hives in the spring with package bees from the sunny south. Others secure package bees to replace their normal winter losses, or they may purchase queenless packages to boost along their wintered colonies.

The usual procedure in installing package bees is described very well by W. G. le Maistre in a recent article in *"Gleanings in Bee Culture"*:—

"The method employed to install the packages is in fairly common use and is practical and successful. Single brood chambers are prepared having at least 20 pounds of honey in the comb, the equivalent of two combs of pollen, and at least two empty combs. The empty combs are placed in the centre of the brood nest with pollen either side and the honey outside that. All entrances are reduced to about one inch. These brood chambers are brought out warm along with the packages and set on their stands in the apiary. The bees are sprayed or sprinkled with a light sugar syrup in a warm building before being brought to the apiary.

"Four combs are removed from one side of each brood chamber and placed alongside the hive. The package is banged on the ground to dislodge the cluster of bees, the food can and queen cage are lifted out, the queen is examined and sprinkled with syrup. The bees are shaken out through the feed can hole of the package directly into the hive. The screen is torn off the queen cage and the queen run on to the bees in the hive. In about two minutes the combs are replaced in the brood chamber and the hive closed.

"The colonies established in this manner were examined in ten days for queens. They required second

brood chambers four weeks after installation. They did not require food, other than that provided at installation."

Prospects in N.Z.

At first sight a package bee trade seems rather superfluous in this country. Cook Strait in the middle makes surface transport very complicated and air freight is expensive, and in any case there is no serious difficulty in wintering bees in any part of the South Island. (In some remote districts the real problem seems to be to winter the beekeeper!)

However, in some areas where there is a slow build-up in spring and it is difficult to replace winter losses, it is felt that package bees can be used to advantage. Prior to the war several trial shipments were made from Northland to different parts of Otago and they gave encouraging results.

During the 1952-53 season John and Norman Glass, of Waikaka Valley, Southland, who operate a large commercial outfit, tried out fifteen three-pound packages. Their experiment was carried out with scant ceremony, but it is perhaps worthy of mention. The bees arrived in mid-November. Bad weather delayed the plane, and John received the packages at Taieri about 3.30 p.m., motored a hundred miles or so to the Glass territory, where he met Norman in the evening, and together they slammed the bees into five hives at each of three yards. Each package received one frame of honey and eight of them were given one frame of brood each as a start. What happened to these poor bees? The record shows a minimum of attention, a good queen in every hive, no swarming, and at the end of the season they had gathered a uniform crop equal to that obtained from stock colonies.

Taken all round, the performance of package bees in New Zealand has been impressive, and we may be able to develop a useful trade in this country. In any case, the trials have not been in vain for they teach a lesson in honey production which is there for any beekeeper who cares to look for

GADGETS AND IDEAS

Cell Cups

A method of preparing artificial cell cups is described by Mr T. P. J. Williams in the *Journal of Agriculture*. A moulding stick is made from a piece of hardwood, such as a meat skewer, the end portion being ⅜in. in diameter with the point rounded off.

From a sheet of comb foundation wax pieces about 1in. square are cut, and these are allowed to become slightly softened by the sun or by warming near a stove.

Each piece of wax is rolled up into a small ball and placed on the tip of the moulding stick, which is pressed down to flatten the wax out. The overlapping wax is smoothed round the end of the stick with the index finger. Surplus wax is cut off about ⅛in. from the end of the cup with a sharp knife or razor blade.

The cup should be removed with a twisting motion, and will come away more readily if the moulding stick is dipped in water before coming into contact with the wax, thus preventing wax from adhering to the stick.

When sufficient cell cups have been prepared they should be waxed on to the top bar of a frame and placed in a hive for cleaning.

Simple Hive Stand

Take two pieces of timber, one inch thick or better, about six inches in width, and 27 inches long. Make a slot of the correct size at the centre of each piece and fit the boards together so that they stand on edge X fashion. It is well to treat the stand with a wood-preservative such as Cuprinol.

A floor board resting on this stand is supported at four points. The stand is cheap and easily made, the air can circulate under the hive, and there is a space for the toes to go right under the hive when standing either at the side or the back. Also there is no inaccessable space under the hive to harbour pests.

This stand is recommended by C. Saunders in *Gleanings*.

Robbing

May I be permitted to tell of a method I have used at various times that is quite simple when a colony is robbed to a very low point. Usually there is one stronger colony that is doing the bulk of the robbing. If you can find this particular one, it will be fine; otherwise use any other strong hive. Cage the queen in your robbed-out colony (so she will be released in perhaps a day) and exchange places with the stronger one. Both locations will then be defended and in most cases you will have two good colonies resulting.

—C. M. Isaacson, in *Gleanings*.

Hive Tool

It is well to paint the hive tool white or any prominent colour so that it is easily found if dropped in the grass during apiary work.

Swarm Control

Consider the thickened bottom edge of your brood combs and its use to the bees. Here is ventilation control for the cool nights of early spring. But as the weather warms up, not enough air can circulate. The bees begin to feel the swarming urge. The very first sign of such intentions is the start of a thick layer of drone brood that almost closes the spaces between frames. A wide entrance does little good at the closing of these spaces spoils the effect. The remedy is to tip up the brood section of the hive and slice off the heads of the drones on the bottom of each frame with a sharp knife. In a few minutes the drones will be seen lying on the ground in front of the hive. The destruction of drones and the resulting air spaces will often be enough to stop the effort at swarming. Do not cut out these closures too soon. Remove them when the drone larvae are just straightening themselves out in the cell. It takes only a minute to do, and makes future manipulation faster and safer. — T. Edwards in *American Bee Journal*.

WORLD NEWS

Luton Honey Floor

For several years Australia has maintained a honey depot at Luton in England for the purpose of packing and distributing Australian honey in the United Kingdom. Recently increasing difficulties have been encountered, especially through the lower market values ruling in the United Kingdom and the weakening of the distribution service, and it has now been decided to close down the depot. A prominent Australian beekeeper, Mr C. E. Cottman, in commenting on this decision, writes in "*The Australian Bee Journal*" as follows:—

"Leading apiarists in the three Eastern States will learn with deep regret of the decision to close the Luton honey packing floor in the U.K.

"This project, opened in Luton in May, 1949, under most favourable auspices, was the culminating result of a vast amount of thought and work on the part of those who believed that the time had come when it was imperative that high grade Australian honey should be packed, labelled and distributed as such to the vast population of the U.K., on behalf of the honey producing interests in Australia.

"The portents were good. Forty-five millions of people on an island smaller than Victoria, and well served with distribution facilities, both by rail and road, presented a vast compact potential market. Australian honey had, during the war years and after, become well and favourably known in the U.K. and widespread investigation proved that the British people liked it. A fine factory, well equipped in every particular for the processing and packing of our honey had been established at a convenient centre in Luton. All that was required was a selling service and organisation adequate to the needs and potential output of the Luton factory. Apparently it is in this particular that the venture has broken down.

"Older apiarists will remember with mixed feelings, a similar venture, inaugurated something over twenty years ago, which, too, came to an untimely end on the sales side, and, it is said, out of the wreckage of that venture arose one of the largest honey packing concerns in the United Kingdom. Those who have contributed so much towards our Eastern State Co-operative Marketing plan (of which the Luton factory was an important and integral part), not only in time and thought, but also in considerable monetary contributions of levies to the Stabilisation Fund, will have rueful recollections of how greatly this fund has been depleted in underwriting the losses on Luton. The thought may arise in some quarters that, in the battle for sales, the interests of honey producers in Luton could have been sacrificed to sales policy in other directions. It would seem that the control and destiny of Australian honey in the U.K. will now largely revert to the honey importers and packers' associations in the U.K.

"The past two lean seasons of honey production in Australia have, to some extent, temporarily masked the imperative need of a long term export plan for Australian honey abroad, but it is my firm conviction that such seasons as '48-49 and '49-50 will come again when export will assume prime proportions, and it is my equally firm conviction that, when that time comes, the need of just such a proposition as Luton was designed to be, will be most acutely felt by those who will then be in charge of plans for the marketing of Australian honey abroad.

"The establishment of Luton was, in my opinion, the most important event in the annals of Australian honey marketing abroad. I find it impossible to conceal my regret at this outcome."

Veteran Passes On

One of the world's authorities on bee culture, Ernest R. Root, died on April 19th in his 91st year. Mr Root was the oldest son of the late A. I. Root, and had a lifetime association with the A. I. Root Company, Ohio. He was perhaps best known through his work as Editor of "*Gleanings in Bee Culture*" and author of "ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture."

Abandoned Apiaries

November 7th, 1952, marked the final chapter in an abandoned apiary situation which has existed in Goodhue County for a lengthy period of time. Mr C. D. Floyd, acting for the State of Minnesota, confiscated and sold at public auction a number of outyards comprised of bees and bee equipment which were abandoned and neglected by the owner.

Much diseased equipment and bees were also destroyed prior to the sale, and this should serve as a pattern to work with in other sections of the state where abandoned or neglected apiaries are found.

Goodhue County beekeepers should find this a big aid in disease control and should compliment Representative C. G. Langley for sponsoring the legislation which made this action possible.—*American Bee Journal.*

Dr. Gwenyth Wykes

Dr. Gwenyth R. Raw (nee Wykes) has been appointed Assistant Editor of "*Bee World.*" Prior to her recent marriage she did research work in nectar secretion in Australia, and studied at Rothamsted, England.

Cancer Research

The Sloan-Kettering Institute. New York, is conducting cancer research with royal jelly from honey-bees. American beekeepers are providing jelly to be used in the experimental work.

Jugoslavia

According to "*Journal Suisse,*" there are 800,000 colonies of bees in Jugoslavia, about four times the number we have in New Zealand. Of this total, only about half are in movable comb hives, the remainder being still in the box hives with fixed combs.

Thailand

The University of Bangkok has recently secured a number of nucleus colonies with breeding stock from Australia. They will be used to develop the bee industry in Thailand.

NUCLEUS HIVES IN COMMERCIAL APIARIES

By R. GODDARD, Apiary Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Tauranga

Beekeepers in many areas of New Zealand find it increasingly difficult to build up standard colonies to full strength in time for the main flow of nectar, often because wind and rain hamper them in their seasonal manipulations. On the other hand, a few beekeepers in favoured localities are embarrassed each year by the early strength of their colonies, and a large percentage of their time in spring is taken up carrying out swarm control measures. The judicious use of nucleus hives will help to overcome both these problems.

Apiary locations must be considered when a decision is made about the best time of year to make up nucleus colonies. As in all phases of beekeeping, planning is essential if good results are to be obtained, and the beekeeper must first consider how the bees are to be housed. A division board can be used in the standard super, thus making use of equipment which is readily available. When this type of nucleus hive is being constructed the entrances to be used by the bees should be at opposite ends of the super. An auger hole makes a satisfactory entrance. It is also advisable to tack the mat to the division board, thus preventing the bees from intermingling when the hive is opened for examination. These nuclei can be placed over division boards on top of standard hives, piled one on top of the other, or set out in the apiary. However, for ease of manipulation and for better results with mated queens the standard four-frame nucleus super is preferred by many beekeepers.

Preparation of Nuclei

Before nuclei are made up the parent hive should be examined closely for any signs of American foul-brood (*Bacillus larvae*). Heavy outbreaks of foul-brood disease in commercial yards have been traced to ignorant or careless beekeepers who prepared nuclei from diseased colonies. Similarly, hives showing signs of *Nosema apis* disease (spring dwindling) should not be used.

A few days before it is desired to make a nuclei it is a good plan to open up the chosen colony and select the required number of capped brood combs, gently shake them free of bees, and place them above a queen excluder. The nurse bees will very soon be attracted to the brood above and in this manner supplies of brood and bees are quickly available when required and no time is lost searching for the queen. A minimum number of field bees also are taken to the newly formed nuclei.

Another method is to slip a queen excluder between the two brood chambers of the hive. After 3 or 4 days an inspection of the colony will show in which super the queen is confined.

In areas where there is a quick spring build-up of bees nucleus hives can be prepared without affecting colony strength substantially. Brood combs from the upper portion of a Demareed stock may be used for this purpose. Thus the preparation of nuclei and swarm control are carried out in the one operation. However, too much brood and too many bees should not be taken from the one hive, as this may mean sacrificing the current season's honey crop. Frames of brood may also be taken from weak colonies which would not normally build up sufficiently to catch the main honey flow. By this means the colony itself is reduced to the state of a nucleus. However, if it is not desired to weaken one hive, frames of brood and bees may be taken from several different hives, but care should be taken to see that the queens are not removed.

In a four-frame nucleus two frames of emerging brood and bees and a frame of pollen and honey with space left for a feeder are all that is necessary. When the nucleus has been prepared in this manner the entrance should be blocked with grass, or gauze if the weather is extremely hot, and should be kept closed for at least 24 hours. The nucleus can then be transferred to another yard or left on the original site, preferably away from the parent colony. Although most

field bees will probably return to their own hives, the nucleus will be of good strength if sufficient nurse bees were taken in the first instance.

Requeening

Most commercial beekeepers have their own methods of raising queens, but if spring requeening is carried out, it is a waste of time and bee force to have virgins mate from honey-producing hives. Before a nucleus is given a queen cell the bees should be fed liberally with sugar syrup. If this is done, good acceptance of the cell should be achieved. After the cell has hatched and the virgin is mated and laying she can be removed and introduced to the colony it is proposed to requeen. Another queen cell should be given to the nucleus immediately the queen has been removed. If a cell is not available, the nucleus will rear its own queen, but under this system the best type of queen may not be obtained.

As good queens are essential for successful commercial beekeeping, each queen should be examined carefully before she is removed from a nucleus and introduced to a honey-producing colony. She should be bred from good stock, be properly mated, and have a healthy appearance and a long, deep, moderately-tapered abdomen.

The following method of requeening with nucleus colonies is successful. Nucleus colonies are made up in the normal way and placed over division boards on top of every standard colony. Each nucleus is given a queen cell, and when the queens are mated and laying the division boards are removed and the nuclei united to the parent colonies by the paper method. The young queens will invariably seek out and kill the old queens.

If it is desired to retain a nucleus for future use, the division board can be replaced after a few days, provided that care is taken to ensure that the young queen is down below in the brood chamber. A further cell can then be given to the re-formed nucleus colony.

This method of requeening has many advantages and robbing is practically eliminated, but the greatest advantage is the saving in the time and hard work involved in searching for the old queen.

Advantages and Uses

Many commercial beekeepers raise nuclei in special yards which are generally used for queen rearing. This practice has its merits, but additional nuclei will prove of great value if distributed throughout each apiary in a ratio of not less than 20 per cent. of the standard colonies. Under these conditions a danger of robbing exists at certain periods, but the time saved in ease of work and transferring queens, cells and brood is incalculable.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of nuclei is an ever-ready supply of young queens. The basis of colony population is a queen capable of laying between 1600 and 1800 eggs daily during the flush of the brood-rearing season, and if the colony has ample stores and pollen and is not keeping pace with the other colonies, it should be requeened. The first spring inspection often reveals some queenless colonies, and consequently there is a fairly heavy demand for young queens. A complete nucleus can be united to any colony that has become queenless, as it is most unlikely, except in favoured localities, that queens can be reared successfully very early in the season. A queen placed in a hive at this stage usually means the saving of the colony.

Nuclei can also be used to provide additional brood and bees to help build up colonies which are lagging behind the rest of the apiary. Often a frame of bees and brood added to a colony at the right time will mean the difference between a surplus crop of honey or just a hive of bees. Over-wintered nuclei can be used for making up winter losses. They are also invaluable for drawing out comb foundation, thus freeing the main colonies of this task and allowing them to get on with the main objective, that of producing a crop of surplus honey.

Checking Nuclei

Nuclei need to be checked regularly, and this involves more than merely finding the queen and seeing whether she is laying. Stores of pollen and

honey must be watched at all times and feeding carried out if necessary.

To save the nuclei from continued disturbance a block of wood with four sides painted different colours may be placed on the lid. The colour which is uppermost can then indicate to the beekeeper whether the nucleus is queenless, has been given a cell, has a virgin emerged, or has a queen laying. However, any system which enables a beekeeper to walk into a yard and know at a glance the general condition of his nuclei is invaluable.

—N.Z. Journal of Agriculture.

SUPERING

(By T. J. P. Williams)

Though many beekeepers regard the super as a box of combs for the storage of surplus honey, it plays a very important part in the apiary, for it eliminates any congestion of the brood nest and allows the bees room to invert the nectar brought in.

Supers should not, however, be added to the hive if nectar is not available, for this induces the queen to use the combs for brood rearing and the bees are inclined to store pollen in them. Moderate to strong colonies of bees will fully occupy at least two hive boxes in most localities at this time of year. The addition of a third super should be decided on according to the intensity of the honey flow and the strength of the hive. A good indication that the hive requires another super is when the bees begin to build out the frames along the top edges with new wax, giving them a fresh, white appearance. Before this super is added the hive should be rearranged so that there are seven or eight frames of brood in the bottom box and the remaining brood in the super above. If there are any frames of honey, they can be removed and placed in the middle of the new super and their place in the brood nest filled by good empty combs or, if these are not available, by frames fitted with full sheets of foundation wax. When the first super is put on it is best to fill it entirely or partially with drawn-out combs. If foundation wax only is used in the super, queen excluders should not be used, as the bees rarely travel through the excluders to work the foundation and will usually swarm. The bees may be induced to enter the super by placing in the middle of it a drawn comb which serves as a bait.

A fourth super should not be added until the third super is about three-quarters full of honey and has half the combs completely capped. Frames should be spaced evenly, eight to the super, as this enables the bees to build each comb beyond the width of the wooden frame and it is then easy to uncap the combs at honey-extracting time.

Some beekeepers may have been bothered during previous seasons by the bees joining the tops of the frames in the second box to the bottoms of the frames in the third box. The material that joins the supers is called burr comb. If a piece of cardboard the size of a saucer is placed between the supers on top of the frames in the second super, by the time the bees have gnawed it away they should have lost any desire to join the frames.

Securing Good Combs

It is necessary each year for the beekeeper to make provision for new combs, as these are needed the following spring for replacing combs containing too many drone cells or old, damaged combs. Summer is the ideal time to secure good combs by placing frames of foundation between drawn-out combs and leaving them with the colony for the storage of honey during the honey flow. They can then be extracted and stored away until required next spring.

Use of Queen Excluders

Queen excluders are often condemned as being a cause of swarming, but in most localities swarming usually ceases as soon as the main honey flow has begun. Excluders should not be used for general purposes until the bees are used to working in the supers and the honey flow is in full swing.

The advantages of the queen excluder are numerous. The queen is prevented from laying in the combs of the honey-storage super, the bees will store very little pollen above an

excluder, and the crop may be removed without the destruction of any brood.

Ventilation

As the weather is hottest at about this time, the provision of ventilation should receive consideration. If during hot days there are a number of bees at the entrance to the hive busy fanning to create a draught or clustering outside, it may be taken as an indication that they require more ventilation. This can be remedied by giving extra space at the entrance. The front of the hive may be lifted and two small blocks of wood about 1in. thick placed at the two corners.

When bees are ripening honey the air inside the hive becomes saturated with moisture, and they have to circulate currents of air through the hive to remove it by fanning at the hive entrance. Under these conditions hive mats absorb moisture and become quite wet, causing hive material to rot. This may be avoided by cutting the mat so that about an inch of the frames at each end is not covered, thus allowing the circulation of air in the hive to pass over the mat, keeping it dry.

—*N.Z. Journal of Agriculture.*

MOVING BEES

(From Circular 130 by G. F. Townsend and A. Adie, Department of Agriculture, Ontario Agricultural College)

Short Moves

When bees are moved for short distances they tend to return to their former location. To overcome this tendency colonies to be moved only a few yards should be changed a few feet at a time on successive days. If the bees are to be moved less than two miles they should be moved either in the very early spring or very late fall, at a time when little flight is taking place, or moved five to ten miles and about a month later returned to the new permanent location.

For moves of only a few miles the boxes and bottom should be fastened together with staples of lath or bound with steel strapping. The bees should be confined by a tuck-in screen at the entrance. Where the bees can be completely moved and set down in their new locations in the evening before dark, the colonies can be moved without any screening at all.

Long Moves

There are two methods by which bees may be moved long distances—either screened or with the entrances open.

Screening: Provision should be made for screening at both the top and bottom of each colony.

The screen at the top should cover the complete colony and allow a clustering space of 2in. or 3in. Cross supports should be provided to support the cluster above the frames and avoid jarring the cluster from its position. A tuck-in screen should be inserted at the entrance. If the weather is cold the lower entrance may be fastened up tight, using only the upper screen. In hot weather, however, it is necessary to provide both screens.

The bees should be stacked on the truck in such a manner that it will allow sufficient ventilation to all colonies. If non-spaced frames are used the colony entrance should face toward the front of the truck, to avoid swaying of the combs. It is advisable to fasten the centre frames in place by driving nails through the hand holds on each end of the colony. If the heads are allowed to protrude a little, the nails can readily be withdrawn. The weaker colonies should be placed in the centre of the load and the stronger ones on the outside. If the day is hot, with no showers expected, the floor of the truck should be soaked with water and arrangements made for spraying water on the load periodically during the trip. Very little honey should be left on the colonies as in case of overheating heavy losses of bees may be encountered. If it is necessary to stop for any reason, the motor of the truck should be left running if possible.

Loading should start so that the complete load will be on the truck before dark. A puff of smoke should be given to each colony before loading,

and several colonies should be left in each section of the yard to catch drifters. These may be placed on the load at the last. It is advisable to keep the truck moving until it reaches its destination. Unloading should be delayed until daybreak.

If the trip lasts more than one day, or if breakdown is encountered, the truck should be driven or towed before daybreak to a well isolated spot and the balance of the journey delayed until evening. The bees will fly freely and return to the load in the evening.

—*Canadian Bee Journal.*

An Army Order of 1809 laid it down that: "Soldiers are again positively prohibited to plunder bee-hives; any man found with a bee-hive in his possession will be punished."

Reflections

. . . from the Editor's Desk

District News

A reader has suggested that we appoint in each province a Journal correspondent who would furnish a news report or commentary for each issue. The idea is an excellent one. However, we already have a section devoted to Branch Notes which should be able to give an adequate news service, and Branch contributors are well fitted for the task because they speak with some authority and they are in close touch with local events. Let us, therefore, incorporate this idea in our Branch Notes by extending the reports to include not only news of Branch activities but also comments on weather and seasonal conditions, and any other matters of local interest.

Some contributors are already doing very good work for Branch Notes. We realise, however, that Secretaries have many calls on their time, so we suggest that where necessary the Branches should relieve them by appointing Branch Reporters as a separate office. Every member likes to know what is going on in other districts, so a local news service should be well worth the effort involved.

Publicity

In these days of collective schemes aiming at social and economic security it is refreshing to find somebody who is not deterred from helping himself by the fear that he might help others as well. Recently there has come to our notice a small brochure, "Honeyed Words," distributed by Fraser Brothers, of Bonnyrigg Apiary, Southland, which gives honey some very good publicity. It includes a few brief classical and historical references and some interesting educational notes on bees and honey. The material is attractively set out on good paper and contains no actual advertising, no prices being mentioned. Altogether, it makes easy reading and

is the sort of thing that will be passed around and discussed with interest in family circles.

Manuka Blight

"Prevent Forest Fires. Keep New Zealand Green." Along with this well-known dictum the N.Z. Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Council publish the following statement:—

Farmers sometimes introduce blight into Manuka to clear their land, and it performs this function very well. But blight, being a disease, will spread, and may involve forest land, for which Manuka is a vital nursery to regenerating trees, holding the land together until they mature. Uncontrolled Manuka blight will make land vulnerable to erosion and flood. Hence its danger, hence the need for the strictest precaution in its use.

It is gratifying to find such an attitude in these responsible authorities. Our only comment is that we fail to see how the blight can be used at all, if there is a need for "the strictest precaution".

Dither !

The word "Honey" doesn't always mean something nice to eat, but fortunately it always seems to mean something nice. As an example, we quote from the widely published advertisement of a noted cosmetic house. "HONEY!" it exclaims to the world in fervent lettering. Yes, it is their NEW American lipstick colour. "But it's not only teenagers who are 'head over heels' in love with this stunning new lipstick shade. 'Honey' is everybody's favourite—because its light-hearted, golden red adds a vivid touch of vivacious youth."

Imagine the feelings of an honest beekeeper when he reads that this lipstick is also available in the following shades: Heart Throb, Rascal Red, Black Blaze, Dark Secret, Dither, Blue Fire and Beau Bait!

A Poem

What are the standards, if any, in art? For our part, we do not recognise any final authority on the subject, though we have a profound respect for the verdict of Time which is usually withheld for a hundred years or so. Consequently we have no hesitation in appraising a contemporary work of art, no matter what form it takes.

In this case it is a poem. Entitled "The Bees of Westerham," it is printed and published by the author, David Bone, and appears in an attractive 18-page booklet. The poem describes the English countryside with some colonies of bees providing a centre of interest and a few human emotions intruding themselves. Grammatically, Mr Bone draws rather heavily on his poetic license, and at times he takes a somewhat erratic course between the commonplace and the sublime. However, the poem does find beauty in simplicity, and in this respect it is ahead of some works we have heard recently where the writer has chosen poetry as a medium for some abstruse philosophy.

"The Bees of Westerham" presents a pleasing word picture of an English rural setting and would probably give a city dweller (or anyone else, in the winter time) a yearning for sunny skies and open spaces. It is obtainable from the author at 6 Perth Road, Beckenham, Kent, price 2/9 English currency.

CORRESPONDENCE

TO THE EDITOR

Sir,—In the May issue of the *N.Z. Beekeeper*, page 6, there was reported an interview between Mr Holyoake, Minister of Marketing, the Executive of the N.B.A., and the Honey Marketing Committee, on the question of nomination qualifications for election to the Honey Marketing Committee.

The report states that, after the Minister had suggested that he replace Mr Beard, who was retiring, with a Government appointee to be nominated by the National Beekeepers' Association, I refused to accept the proposal and then subsequently changed my mind.

The fact is I stated to the Minister that the matter of appointing a representative to replace Mr Beard was a decision for the Minister himself, and

on behalf of the Committee I thanked the Minister for consulting the Committee.

I advised the Minister that the Committee would give his proposal immediate consideration. As the Committee was leaving the room I told the Minister in the hearing of both Messrs Field and Williams, that I personally would appreciate having Mr Beard's position filled by a representative from the National Executive.

When the Honey Marketing Committee met to consider the Minister's proposal I personally moved that it be accepted. This was agreed to unanimously by the Committee.

The subsequent letter from the Committee formally recording acceptance of the proposal was not written by me, as stated in the *Journal*. The letter in question was written by Mr Bridle as Chairman of the Committee and delivered personally by him to the Minister.—Yours, etc.,

WALLACE NELSON,
Producer Member,
Honey Marketing Committee.

Editor's Note:— Our report was based on an Appendix to the Minutes of the Executive Meeting and both the Appendix and the Minutes were confirmed at the following meeting of the Executive.

With reference to the letter from the Committee, the Minister had indicated that the communication was from Mr. Nelson. Actually, as Mr. Nelson states, the letter, though it conveyed the decision of the producer representatives, was written by Mr. Bridle.

HEDGEHOGS AND BEES

Sir,—I have kept bees for some years now and would like to know if any of your readers have experienced trouble with hedgehogs eating bees.

Some time ago I discovered several of the animals, in broad daylight, whipping the bees from off the landing stages of the hives, "nineteen to the dozen," as it is said.

How great was my loss is difficult to estimate, but judging by the amount of droppings around the hives the animals must have devoured thousands of bees. The droppings appeared to be solid bees.

I am also puzzled as to how hedgehogs can stand up to the effects of bee stings internally, as I understand that the poison sac and sting remain active for some time after being separated from the bee.

Perhaps some naturalist could throw light on the matter.

I am hoping this letter could be published in the *Journal* for the benefit of other beekeepers, and it would be interesting to hear of instances of a like nature.—Yours, etc.,

H. VICTOR WILLIAM.
Donnellys Crossing R.D.,
Dargaville.

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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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