

# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL. 18, No. 1

FEBRUARY, 1956



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

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

Better Beekeeping

Better Marketing

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# The New Zealand BEEKEEPER

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J. McFadzien, Editor.

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## HONEYBEES AND INSECTICIDES

The serious case of bee poisoning in Canterbury last September, which clearly demonstrated the new threat to beneficial insects, was followed in November by a gathering of all interested parties and a report of the meeting is published in this issue. The tone of the meeting was cordial and it was encouraging to the beekeepers' representatives to find that there was a general appreciation of the importance of pollinating agents in agriculture, and a unanimous desire for the protection of honeybees in particular.

The suggestion submitted by the beekeepers was given a favourable reception. It is a simple yet comprehensive plan which avoids the necessity for individual permits for each application. The precautions demanded are no greater than those already clearly set out in the recommendations of the Department, but it is a requirement that they be legally enforced.

The request for legal protection was prompted particularly by experience in Hawkes Bay, where fruit sprays caused an acute problem some years ago. In that area requests for voluntary co-operation were repeatedly found to be insufficient, and it was only with the introduction of legislation that the problem was finally solved.

In submitting its plan the beekeeping industry was anxious that the farming community should be allowed the maximum possible benefit from new insecticides with the minimum of interference, and the provisions of the plan are in fact already being carefully observed by 95 per cent. of the farmers concerned. Its endorsement by law would impress upon the remaining 5 per cent. the reasons for the restrictions and would ensure that the precautions of conscientious farmers are not being taken in vain.

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## VISITOR FROM PAKISTAN

An interesting visitor to New Zealand this summer is Dr. A. Qaiyum, Bee Specialist in the Department of Animal Husbandry in Pakistan. Dr. Qaiyum, who originally studied veterinary science, is investigating beekeeping methods in New Zealand under the Colombo Plan and on returning home he will be engaged in the development of the beekeeping industry in Pakistan.

Our visitor arrived in the Dominion in September and will be with us until April. He has been stationed with Mr T. E. Pearson, of Darfield, and has visited other beekeepers and attended field days between the West Coast and Southland. He will also be spending some time with Officers of the Department of Agriculture to study technical developments.

At present bees are kept in Pakistan on a limited scale. There are three species of honeybees: *Apis Dorsata*, *Apis Indica* and *Apis Florea*,

and of these *Apis Indica* is the most suitable for commercial honey production. It is rather smaller than the Italian bee and its chief disadvantage is its propensity to swarm. So far there are no brood diseases in Pakistan but there are wax moths and other pests which cause much trouble.

It is a pleasure to have Dr. Qaiyum in New Zealand, not least because of his courteous and charming manner. We hope he will have a successful and enjoyable visit and that the years ahead will bring steady progress to the industry in Pakistan.

## NOTICE BOARD

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Annual Dominion Conference will be held this year in Invercargill, on July 24, 25 and 26.

### SWAP OR SELL

We remind readers of our "Swap or Sell" column in which items of second-hand surplus equipment may be offered for sale or barter. The charge is 2/6 per insertion, the space not to exceed one inch.

### EXECUTIVE MEETING

A meeting of the General Executive is being held in Wellington on February 29th and March 1st.

### OBITUARY

#### Mr F. C. Baines

Mr Frederick Charles Baines has died at his home at Arkle's Bay. As a young man he trained for accountancy in England. He was also a professional singer.

He came to New Zealand for health reasons and took up beekeeping in Taranaki and Katikati, Bay of Plenty. Mr Baines became secretary of the New Zealand Beekeepers' Association and for some years edited the *Beekeepers' Journal*. He also wrote a book about bees. He was secretary at

different times to the Katikati, Whangarei, Kaipara and Northland dairy companies.

Mr Baines interested himself in church work and was a lay reader in the Church of England. His first wife predeceased him several years ago. Mr Baines remarried and leaves a widow and daughter.

#### Mr S. H. Shepherd

Mr S. H. Shepherd, who was a prominent beekeeper in Hawke's Bay from 1909 until his retirement in 1940, died after a short illness in October last, at the age of 81 years. Although Mr Shepherd had been in retirement for 15 years, after disposing of his business to Mr George Gordon, he retained a keen interest in the beekeeping activities of the district. He was a life member of the branch for many years, and as a token of members' esteem and respect, his 80th birthday was honoured at a Branch Field Day. Last October he was laid to rest by six Branch members. Hawke's Bay beekeepers owe much to the foundation work done by Harry Shepherd.

Mr Shepherd is survived by his wife, a daughter and two sons.

### BEYOND EVEREST

The November, 1955, issue of "The National Geographic Magazine" carries an article under the above heading by Sir Edmund Hillary. Accompanied by splendid photographs in colour, it describes the 1954 New Zealand expedition to the Himalayas.

## TALKS ON HONEYBEES

A series of three talks on honeybees by Mr I. W. Forster has in recent months been broadcast from a wide range of New Zealand stations. The talks, which featured the natural history and social life of the bees, were of particular interest to the layman and brought the story of honey and beekeeping before a large audience of listeners. As might have been expected from Mr Forster, the series was carefully prepared and well delivered.

## BEE SUPPLIES FIRM MOVES FROM DUNEDIN

The Alliance Bees Supplies Company, the largest manufacturer of beekeeping equipment in the Dominion, has moved from Dunedin to Christchurch. The announcement will be received with some regret, particularly by Otago beekeepers, as they have come to regard the well-known premises in Mason Street as a permanent and necessary part of the industry.

The "Alliance" was first established in 1878 and has played an important part in the development of New Zealand beekeeping, especially in the south. The name of Mr A. B. Callick will always be associated with the business in Dunedin. He joined the firm in 1904, became factory manager in 1908, and was the managing director from 1924 until his death in 1952. Mr Callick was one of the best known personalities in the industry and was held in the highest regard throughout the Dominion.

The decision to move the business has been made in the light of changing economic circumstances and with the object of providing the most efficient service to beekeepers generally.

## WASPS IN DUNEDIN

The wasps have arrived in Dunedin. Mr B. H. Wilton, a member of the Otago Branch, had removed a super of honey from a hive and noticed a few suspicious-looking insects hovering around it. He managed to capture

a couple and these were later identified as *Vespa Germanica*.

It was in 1945 that the wasps first appeared in New Zealand, and from the Hamilton district they spread rapidly over the North Island. In 1951 they arrived in Nelson and later in Lyttelton, but their advance has been slow in the south.

Recent reports indicate that the wasps in the North Island are now rather less troublesome than in the earlier years of the invasion.

## BOOK REVIEW

"Bee Stings and How to Avoid Them" is a 52-page book by H. M. Pearson, an English beekeeping expert. The physiology of the sting is described in detail, and the author then discusses methods of handling bees with the maximum of efficiency and pleasure and the minimum of trouble from stinging. The commercial honey producer might consider some of the suggestions rather impractical, e.g. "be sure there is ample food in the brood chamber when it is opened up"; but the subject generally is well covered and should be interesting and helpful to all beekeepers. The book is published by British Bee Publications Ltd., 1 Gough Square, London, E.C. 4. Price 4/6 net.

## SIR WILLIAM JORDAN

In the radio series "Portrait from Life" Sir William Jordan records that at the time when he was first elected to Parliament in 1922 he was engaged in honey blending with the H.P.A. In giving particulars in Wellington after his election for record purposes he gave his occupation as "honey blender." This was noted in shorthand and later appeared in print as "money-lender," a mistake which was somewhat embarrassing to him as a champion of the working man.

Sir William was associated with the honey industry for some years about that time, and after several terms in Parliament, as we all know, he won universal esteem as High Commissioner for New Zealand in London, a post he occupied throughout the war years.

## INSECTICIDE PROBLEM

Report of a meeting held in Christchurch on 30th November, 1955, to consider the problems associated with Insect Control in Farm Crops.

Mr P. W. Smallfield (Director, Extension Division, Department of Agriculture), presided over an attendance of 35, including the following representatives of the organisations indicated:—

Federated Farmers of N.Z. Inc.: Messrs G. A. Nutt, J. Brand, H. R. Gilbertson.

National Beekeepers' Association: Messrs J. W. Fraser, T. Pearson, H. Cloake.

N.Z. Grain, Seed and Produce Merchants' Federation: Messrs A. D. Reid and J. Johnston (apology from Mr C. S. Marshall).

N.Z. Horticultural Seedsmen's Association: Mr F. B. Garlick.

N.Z. Aviation Industries Assn.: Mr C. H. Brazier.

Civil Aviation Administration: Messrs F. Young, Arkley and Hudson.

Entomological Division: Messrs J. M. Kelsey and A. D. Lowe.

Horticulture Division: Messrs R. E. Binfield, R. Odinet, T. S. Winter and I. W. Forster.

Extension Division: Messrs P. W. Smallfield, J. H. Claridge, A. R. Dingwall and C. P. Whatman.

The Chairman opened the meeting by outlining the purpose for which it had been called. He was acting on behalf of the Director-General of Agriculture and would report to him on the outcome. He then indicated that he would call upon a representative of each organisation to present the views of that organisation, after which a general discussion would be permitted.

MR KELSEY outlined to the meeting the recommendations of his Division in regard to insect control in farm crops. (A copy of these recommendations follows.) He went on to give his views on how a system of individual permits for aerial application of insecticides might be operated.

MR WHATMAN discussed the application of these recommendations on a practical basis. He was most concerned about the practical control of aphids in cruciferous crops in relation to the effect of the treatment on pollinating insects. He made three main points:

(1) There was being exhibited an inclination to treat crops unnecessarily.

(2) Publicity on a local basis was necessary to impress on all parties the recommendations made by the Entomological Division.

(3) He was of opinion that a permit system might be organised without serious difficulty.

MR WINTER reported upon his observations in those apiaries in proximity to flowering choux moellier crops which had been treated with Lindane this spring. Colonies within  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  mile of the crops had been seriously affected, while those further away had been affected to a less serious extent. He did not consider it a practicable proposition to shift hives at the time of the year when cruciferous crops were flowering. He outlined the steps being taken to meet a somewhat similar problem in Hastings orchards.

MR YOUNG stated that in the past his organisation had endeavoured to evaluate materials for aerial application according to the following properties: Explosive propensities, toxicity to operators, corrosiveness to aircraft structures, risk of poison to persons, and to permit applications accordingly.

Recent developments indicated that the aviation industry might be brought into disrepute unless C.A.A. took a more positive action regarding aerial applications.

Operators had therefore been instructed that spraying or dusting could not be undertaken without C.A.A. approval. This had not proved

effective, however, and a week or so earlier all general permits had been cancelled. It was now necessary as an interim measure to obtain prior approval for each individual application. Such approvals were given after consultation with Health and Agriculture Departments.

Mr Young stressed that this was an interim arrangement and stated that he would like to see a grouping of materials such as:

- (1) Those completely banned.
- (2) Those which might be dropped without particular precautions or prior approval.
- (3) Those which would require specific conditions and prior approval of application.

MR NUTT expressed a view against any procedure which prevents elasticity of operation on the farm. He favoured an approach involving action against operators for any damage caused rather than the necessity for prior permits for individual applications. He instanced examples in England of operators being able, by care, to spray satisfactorily, when any authority could only refuse a permit in the circumstances.

MR FRASER said that beekeepers had been concerned for some time at the increasing use of chemicals in agriculture, and were anxious to find a way to give the maximum aid to farmers with a minimum harm to apiarists.

For the control of insecticides his organisation suggested:

1. An Agricultural Poisons Control Authority whose function would be to specify materials which are toxic or dangerous to beneficial insects.
2. The introduction of legislation for the purpose of:
  - (a) Preventing application of specified materials to plants (which are attractive to bees) during the flowering period.
  - (b) Ensuring that specified materials are clearly labelled as to their properties.

Mr Fraser was of opinion that the simple statement "Don't spray when plants attractive to bees are in

flower" summarised the beekeeper's viewpoint.

MR JOHNSTON stated that his Federation would support publicity to the dangers associated with indiscriminate crop treatment, but favoured a degree of freedom in operation rather than licensing.

MR BRAZIER considered it necessary to draw a clear distinction between spraying and dusting, the former being the less dangerous method of application.

He did not favour a system of prior approval to treat because of the frequent necessity for urgency. He considered that the responsibility for damage be put fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the operator.

THE CHAIRMAN said that from the nature of the discussion there seemed to be general agreement that beneficial pollinating insects must be protected. There seemed to be three alternative courses of action:

1. A policy of instruction of an intensive nature and reliance on co-operation between the parties concerned.
2. A policy of education and co-operation backed by legislation governing the branding of containers and containing coercive powers to be used in particular cases.
3. A straight-out procedure of individual permission under regulation.

He asked for representatives to express themselves on these alternatives.

MR NUTT asked whether beekeepers at present had any recourse under common law.

MR FRASER replied that his association had investigated the question and had received a negative reply. In any case the beekeepers sought protection, not damages.

MR LOWE thought that there was a tendency on the part of the meeting to over-simplify the problem as he had observed it in the field. There was one simple rule only: there should be absolutely no bloom of any kind when treatment was undertaken. An informed person must make the decision at the time and place of the actual operation. He did not draw

the distinction between spraying and dusting made by Mr Brazier.

MR NUTT felt that the position regarding damage to bees must be more complex than the English position involving an attitude to hormone spraying and crop damage. His organisation would like to study the implications of the alternatives before committing itself.

MR BRAZIER favoured legislation only to cover the marking of containers and to provide for ability to recover damages through the courts. When a pilot was in the air he was in the best position to see the points where damage might occur. The operating company should finally be held responsible for any damage caused. He did not favour permits to apply insecticides.

MR D. H. BUTCHER (North Canterbury Federated Farmers) said that overall, bees might mean even more financially to farmers than to apiarists. They were not interested in legislation but were dependent upon advice from research workers, particularly regarding new materials which perhaps should not be released until fully tested.

MR G. G. TAYLOR (Agricultural Chemical Manufacturers' Association) said that a meeting of his Association was proposed to publicise the hazards involved in the use of these materials. It would be in general support of the views expressed by

other speakers, and would be prepared to consider the adoption of a codal practice regarding warnings to users.

MR GILBERTSON said that at a local meeting of farmers in Hastings the licensing of both pilots and distributors was favoured. They were concerned at the blanket prohibition on aerial spraying and dusting.

MR PEARSON said that as perhaps the person most affected to date, he was encouraged by the tone of the meeting. He emphasised the advantages to beekeepers of treated pastures and crops.

A discussion ensued upon the present system of issuing permits, which referred to aerial applications only. The Chairman expressed the opinion that the present permit system should continue to operate in the meantime. In reply to a question he indicated that it would be better at present for Instructors to issue local advice based on the general recommendations than for the recommendations as a whole to be published. He agreed that the general recommendations should be made available to the organisations represented at the meeting.

The Chairman concluded the meeting by stating that after a report to the Director-General, a summary of the alternatives would be sent to represented organisations for their considered opinion, and thanked those present for their attendance.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSECT CONTROL IN FARM CROPS

Warning: If any doubt exists about the suitability of conditions for treatment or the advisability of carrying out the treatment, consult the local office of the Department of Agriculture.

### A. Cruciferous Crops:

1. Grown for grazing purposes only:	Insecticide	Per acre dosage	Time of Treatment
(a) Springtails or aphis present - - - - -	Lindane	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	At least 2 weeks before grazing
(b) Springtails and aphis absent - - - - -	Lindane or DDT	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. 1 lb.	" " "
2. Grown only for seed:			
(a) Aphis present - - - - -	Lindane	$\frac{1}{2}$ —1 lb.	Autumn
(b) Aphis absent - - - - -	Lindane or DDT	$\frac{1}{2}$ —1 lb. 1 lb.	"
3. Grown initially for grazing, and ultimately for seed:			
(a) Aphis present - - - - -	Lindane	$\frac{1}{2}$ —1 lb.	This group should be autumn treated but is often left till spring. Spring treatment <i>must</i> be done before petal colour shows through calyx of earliest maturing buds
(b) Aphis absent - - - - -	Lindane or DDT	$\frac{1}{2}$ —1 lb. 1 lb.	

#### Special Considerations:

1. Apply only in still weather or where wind drift is adequately allowed for.
2. Do not apply where insecticide may fall on to: (a) Adjacent flowering clover or cruciferous crops; (b) flowering nectar, or pollen-bearing weeds (including hawkbit, dandelion, thistles, gorse fences) either in the crop or in adjacent paddocks; (c)

hives of honey bees in the vicinity.

3. Do not apply on any crops which show any flower or which show any sign of petal colour through the calyx of the earliest maturing buds.
4. Do not graze crops within two weeks of applying insecticides. The same precaution applies also for adjacent paddocks which might be affected by wind drift.

B. Grass grub and subterranean caterpillar - - - - -	Insecticide	Dosage	Time to Treat
	BHC or DDT	$\frac{1}{2}$ —2 lb. 1—2 lb.	When insect-pollinated plants are not in flower

#### Special Considerations:

1. Treatments must be broadcast, not drilled in.
2. Apply only to: (a) Close-grazed, dry pasture; (b) if it is not possible to wait for the close-grazed pasture to dry, stock should be kept off during

and after treatment until rain washes insecticides on to the ground.

3. Do not use spin topdressers or blowers.
4. Sprays of less than 500 gallons per acre must not be used.

C. Clover Case-bearer:

Chemical control is not recommended because the accessible stages of the caterpillars coincide with flowering of clovers, and pollinating agents would be destroyed with consequent seed yield losses.

D. Clover Thrips:

Chemical control is not recommended at the flowering stage of

clovers.

Burning of grass, wheat, oats and barley stubble, in which the thrips shelter, would destroy the overwintering stages of thrips, is recommended.

DDT as applied for grass grubs and subterranean caterpillars applied during the non-flowering period of clovers, would reduce numbers of thrips.

E. Cutworms - - - - -	Insecticide DDT or Lindane	Dosage 2 lb. 2 lb.	Time of Treatment
	DDT or Lindane in bran	1 lb. to 50 lb. bran	When no clover flowers are present

Special Considerations:

1. Apply only in still weather or where wind drift is adequately allowed for.
2. Apply when growth is dry so that insecticides fall off top growth on to the ground surface (between 10

a.m. and 4 p.m.).

3. If paddocks are being regularly retained for seed it would be advisable to treat when growth was at a minimum, just before shutting up.
4. Treat only in absence of pollinating insects.

F. Armyworms:	Insecticide	Dosage	Time of Treatment
(a) In pure stands - - - - -	DDT	½—1 lb.	When clovers are not in flower
(b) If crop is undersown with pasture mixes - - - - -	DDT	2 lb.	

Special Considerations:

1. Treat only when wind drift is absent or adequately provided for.
2. Apply dusts early in morning or after 4 p.m. to take advantage of

still weather, and also of the dews usually present at those times, to retain insecticide on foliage.

3. Treat only in absence of pollinating insects.

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## HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

### LETTER FROM CHAIRMAN

May I first of all on behalf of all members of the Authority and the Manager wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year. We for our part will continue to do all in our power to make it prosperous by obtaining the best possible prices for your honey in New Zealand or overseas.

The first meeting after the election re-elected me as Chairman and elected Mr Pearson as Deputy Chairman.

The Authority placed on record its appreciation of the services of Mr R. Davidson on the Authority, and welcomed Mr Tom Pearson as a new member. I know he will carry on and give service to his fellow producers.

### Contracts

Contracts have come in well. Last year we had contracts for 1189 tons. This year 1858 tons have been contracted for. The removal of the colour qualification should be of benefit to all suppliers under contract, and the only exceptions from the contract this year are birch, manuka, honey unsuitable for export and honey with specific gravity lower than 1.410. I know some of you are not in agreement with our decision to make a charge on liquid honey, but I think you will appreciate that storage and handling in Auckland of liquid honey until it is ready for export makes a heavy drain on the pool account.

### Additional Depots

We have been able to establish depots at New Plymouth, Timaru and Invercargill. These will be of help not only to producers but also to the Authority if export shipments can be arranged from these centres as anticipated. Unfortunately no suitable depot could be found at the Bluff.

### New Premises

We are endeavouring to complete new premises on the section we purchased in Auckland by January, 1957,

but I am not very optimistic that we will achieve our ambition owing to delays by various authorities which are beyond our control. You will remember I stated we had many problems to face before building, but the site was too good to lose and the price we paid was most reasonable. The tenants have vacated the four buildings on the site and they have been demolished in readiness for building operations.

### Conference Remits

All conference remits have been given consideration and you will notice most have been "carried out." Some beekeepers may still feel we should spend on advertising, but we cannot spend money on advertising in New Zealand at the expense of the payout to the supplier, nor does the need appear urgent at present.

Many beekeepers holding stocks of attractively packed honey last year found eventually that they cleared their stocks, helped no doubt, by the fact that the Authority was not pressing the local market. Under our present working conditions in Auckland and with the higher returns from overseas the local market outside Auckland is not so profitable to us.

### Overseas Market

In conclusion, I would say the prospects continue to look bright overseas for our honey. A renewal of Kimpton Bros.' contract has been arranged and they are anxious for supplies, having cleared practically all of last season's stocks. We have notified them of our contracts and they are doing their best for us on United Kingdom and European markets. Advice has already been received that sales for the new year have been made on a higher level than last year's record prices. If we have any anxiety, it is that we will not have enough light honey to meet the demand.

A continuity of supply will always be one of our problems.

E. A. FIELD, Chairman.

### OPENING OF ADDITIONAL DEPOTS

Beekeepers are advised that depôts have been established in the following centres and are now open for the receipt of honey:—

**NEW PLYMOUTH**—Messrs Kibby & Calgher Ltd., P.O. Box 24, New Plymouth. Honey delivered personally should be taken to the store at Beach Street, Fitzroy, but consignments by rail should be railed to New Plymouth (not Fitzroy).

**TIMARU**—N.Z. Express Co. Ltd., P.O. Box 152, Timaru.

**INVERCARGILL**—N.Z. Express Co. (Invercargill) Ltd., P.O. Box 38, Invercargill.

There are no facilities at the new depôts for casing honey and suppliers are asked to ensure that all honey is properly packed and cased before despatch. Freight should be paid by consignors.

### HONEY CONTRACTS, 1955-56 SEASON

(a) Contracts to supply fixed quantities (with 25% tolerance).

(b) Contracts to supply total production (less consumer sales at apiaries).

	(a)		(b)		Total
	T. C.	T. C.	T. C.	T. C.	T. C.
Auckland	53	13	57	10	111
Hamilton	297	10	213	5	510
Tauranga	58	0	171	0	229
Hastings	34	10	7	15	42
Palmerston N.	33	10	11	13	45
Taranaki	142	15	7	0	149

North Island 619 18 468 3 1088 1

	(a)		(b)		Total
	T. C.	T. C.	T. C.	T. C.	T. C.
Nelson-					
Greymouth	60	15	53	10	114
Christchurch	140	10	29	6	169
Oamaru	123	12	62	0	185
Invercargill	232	17	68	7	301

South Island 557 14 213 3 770 17

**TOTAL** 1117 12 681 6 1858 18

No. of Contracts: 248.

W. H. CHUDLEY, Manager.

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TO THE ELLERSLIE STATION.

FOR FULL PARTICULARS WRITE TO:

**T. W. R. NICHOLAS**

P.O. BOX 28 ::: PHONE 2368 ::: HAWERA

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HORTICULTURE DIVISION

Though it is too early in most districts to make a final estimate of the total crop of honey this year, the following summary of reports received from Apiary Inspectors at the end of January will give producers a fair idea of the likely position at the close of the season:—

### Auckland

Unseasonable high winds in December and early January adversely affected nectar secretion, but heavy rains, high temperatures and fine weather followed.

Pasture sources picked up well from which average to better than average crops are expected. Yields from Pohutukawa are lighter than usual and about average from Tea Tree. The overall prospect now is for a near average crop.

### North Auckland

Somewhat similar conditions to Auckland prevailed. Beekeepers in general have secured only about half the normal crop to date.

Comb honey producers in early and more sheltered locations have had some success but do not appear likely to produce a high output. The overall crop will be light.

### Tauranga

Ground sources including clovers bloomed profusely but a little later than usual.

Rewarewa was not as good as last season, when extra heavy crops were secured from this source. Below average crops will be produced this year except in Rotorua areas, where returns will be better.

### Hawera

The honey flow has been light and erratic from clovers following heavy rains in December and early January. The overall crop to date is not good but the stocks are in good strength, and if a late flow eventuates they will be in a position to cope with it.

At the moment below average crops seem likely.

### Palmerston North

Clover bloom is patchy, especially on the central Manawatu plains, but on inland high country it is good. Honey from pasture sources will have more colour than last season. It appears likely that the overall crop will be near average for the season.

### Hastings

Conditions have been favourable for nectar secretion. Clover was yielding steadily at the end of January but was past its peak. It is anticipated that crops will be good for the district and that the honey will be chiefly light in colour.

### Greymouth

Climatic conditions in Westland have been good, though more rainfall would have been beneficial. Rata is yielding well in some areas. Overall production in Westland from mixed sources will be about average.

Crops will be below average in Nelson and Marlborough owing to dry weather conditions.

### Christchurch

Prolonged drought conditions adversely affected the whole district. Colonies up to gathering strength early have done best this season. Crop returns are poor and very patchy, averaging from two supers per colony in some areas down to only three combs in other areas. South Canterbury has fared better than central and north Canterbury.

### Oamaru

Honey extracting operations at the end of January were well advanced. Crops in South Canterbury areas, in the Oamaru inspection district, and inland North Otago areas will be very light, and below average in coastal North Otago and Central Otago. The crop generally tends to be darker in

colour and fuller flavoured than usual owing to the influences of honey gathered early in the season from mixed sources.

### Hamilton

No report received at the end of January, but indications at the end of December were:—

Clover flowering well but very slow in yielding nectar. From Manuka below average and from Rewarewa less than previous year.

Prospects were for an overall crop below average unless conditions improved quickly.

### Invercargill

No report received at end of January.

### Prevention of Bee Poisoning

The following information has been supplied by the Hawkes Bay Bee Protection Committee covering measures taken to protect honey bees from possible spray poisoning in orchards during the past season ending about early 1955.

In view of the general effects of widespread publicity over the last few years publicity measures were curtailed to what can be classed as reminders to growers of their responsibilities. At the same time the position was closely watched in case increased publicity became necessary at short notice.

### Publicity Given

1. A "panel reminder" was inserted in the October issue of the "N.Z. Orchardist."
2. Public notice advertisements were inserted in local newspapers.
3. Reference was made to the responsibility of growers in two radio talks during October.
4. Circular letters outlining requirements were sent to all (four) fruit-growers new to the industry.

Officers of the Division were consulted by numerous growers as to whether their trees were in safe condition for spraying, which shows that fruitgrowers are fully aware of the need to be careful in the use of insecticidal sprays and are willing to co-operate.

During the usual observations made by officers of the Department over the danger period, no breaches of the regulations were observed and no bee mortality was reported by beekeepers during the season.

The Committee made no special recommendations at the close of the season, but indicated that the present trend towards the use of various new pre-blossom insecticides for woolly aphis and mite control will need watching.

T. S. WINTER,

Superintendent of Beekeeping Industry.

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### TAKEN FOR A RIDE

A swarm of bees, rather more individualistic than most, decided they would try out their own ideas about "migratory-beekeeping." They settled one fine morning on the under-carriage of an airplane parked at Dannevirke.

The pilot didn't like bees, so he decided to give them "the brush-off" by flying his plane to Hastings.

The bees felt that conditions were a bit draughty and having done a little exploring, they moved over into the wing where it joins with the under-carriage.

On touching down at Hastings, the bees felt like stepping outside and having a look for nectar, and getting their bearings.

The pilot thought he had left the worst behind, but on alighting he was flabbergast and decided to phone the Department of Agriculture.

A hole was cut through the fabric of the wing about the size of one shilling and cyanogas injected. It was a simple matter afterwards to stick on a patch with cellulose paint—and that was the end of their migratory-beekeeping.

"TINGLE."

## SOUTHLAND CENTENARY

Southland is one hundred years old this year, and organised beekeeping in the province is fifty years old. Honey has been produced, of course, since the early days, but it was not until 1906 that the Southland Association was formed, and later this body united with other provincial organisations to form the National Beekeepers' Association.

The progress of beekeeping in Southland makes an important chapter in the history of the craft, and some of the industry's best known pioneers lived in the far south. Among the more prominent were Mr James Allan, of Wyndham, first President of the National Beekeepers' Association; Mr Robert Gibb, of Menzies Ferry, first Secretary of the Southland Association, later Dominion President, and a notable commercial honey producer; and Mr Leslie Irwin, of Winton, who took a leading part in many producer organisations.

A valuable record of the pioneering days is contained in the book "Bees in their Bonnets," written in 1948 by Mr W. J. Lennon, at that time Editor of the "N.Z. Beekeeper." This book tells the story of early beekeeping in Otago and Southland.

In the Centennial year Mr J. W. Fraser, President of the Southland Branch, holds the office of Dominion Vice-President, and Mr W. T. Herron, a member of the Gore Branch, is a producer representative on the Honey Marketing Authority.

### Celebrations

The hundredth anniversary of the province is being fittingly observed in celebrations and pageantry and a lengthy series of national gatherings. At the procession to be held in mid-March beekeepers will be to the fore with a colourful float depicting the honey industry and its place in the life of the province. As a gesture of goodwill to the public, and with the assistance of Messrs Winstone Ltd. and Mono (N.Z.) Ltd., Southland producers have procured 4,000 attractive 1lb. cartons of honey for free distri-

bution from the float "with the compliments of the beekeepers of Southland." By courtesy of the Invercargill Licensing Trust, it has been arranged that any surplus cartons will be presented to hotel guests at the time of their departure from Southland.

### Field Day

The combined Field Day held at Winton under the auspices of the Gore and Southland Branches was an appropriate function with a notable gathering, and held in perfect summer weather. Among those present were visitors from many parts, including Mr T. Palmer-Jones, just returned to New Zealand from a world tour, and Dr A. Quaiyum, a beekeeping specialist from Pakistan.

Southland this year has experienced a scorching hot summer and a dry spell reaching drought proportions. Nevertheless, honey crops generally are fairly good, varying to light in the inland districts where conditions are more extreme.

### Milford Sound

On the day following the Field Day, in order to see some of the scenic attractions of the south, five bee men visited Milford Sound, travelling in a hospitable Southland car.

North from Invercargill the wide Southland plains were parched, something nobody thought could happen. The difficulty of the farmers, however, was not to fatten their lambs, but to keep them fat till their turn came at one of the three over-crowded freezing works operating in the province. Production in Southland has for some years been forging ahead of the facilities for handling it.

At Lumsden we turned west through clean run country to Lake Te Anau, beyond which lies fabulous Fiordland. Heading north we entered the Eglinton Valley and travelled through mountain and forest, past delightful Lakes Gunn and Fergus, to reach the divide. Here we looked down the Lower Hollyford Valley to-

## CHRYSLER WIRE

### QUEEN EXCLUDERS

We have pleasure in announcing that we have been appointed sole New Zealand Agents for the famous Chrysler wire queen excluders. Limited stocks will be arriving from Canada within the next few months and although a firm price cannot be quoted enquiries are invited from commercial producers.

## COMB FOUNDATION

Beeswax is still being accepted for conversion into comb foundation. Send your wax now!

## BEESWAX

Top market prices are being paid for clean beeswax. Any quantity acceptable and we pay freight by cheapest route on lots of 100 lbs. or more.

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wards Martins Bay, but our route was to the left via the Upper Hollyford, a narrow defile in the mountains.

We were able to stretch our legs while Roy made close-ups of some Rata flowers, and Trevor focussed his camera on lofty Christina, 8,675 feet. Near this place we surprised a fine stag, his antlers still in the velvet, standing on the road. Head in the air, he trotted ahead a short distance and hopped nervously into the bush.

At the top of the valley the way is barred by Homer Saddle, and we found ourselves surrounded by rock walls, with the sky to be seen somewhere up above if we had got out of the car to look for it. One can easily visualise how the avalanches, descending from the heights in the spring months, must make short work of any man-made furnishings in the valley.

Ahead of us was the entrance to the tunnel. At this point it seemed desirable to pause for a moment to read a few notices and survey the situation generally, but Jack switched on the lights without ceremony and drove boldly through the portal into the bowels of the earth. No doubt the tunnel will be nicely finished in due course; meanwhile it leaves a rather terrifying impression of threatening rock walls and ceiling, rough roadway, cascading water and Stygian darkness.

Out into the daylight again and there before us lay the Cleddau Valley, a narrow bush-clad valley leading down to the Sound. Approaching Milford the scene is dominated by Mitre Peak, a slab of rock rising 5,560 feet out of the water.

At the head of the Sound is the imposing Hotel Milford, and before it a debris-strewn tidal wave flat pushed out by the Cleddau and Arthur Rivers issuing from their respective canyons. We all inspected the £300,000 edifice, took a few photos for the record, and retired to a convenient place to boil the thermette. Alf gazed up curiously at the Sheerdowns, rising behind the hotel, a more brutal type of landscape than anything he had known in the Old Country.

After lunch we boarded the launch for a trip down the Sound, a breath-

taking experience. First spectacle is Bowen Fall, 530ft., one of many which tumble into the sea. The fall is out of sight from the jetty, but sometimes delivers to it a fine spray at the caprice of the wind. From the water Mitre Peak rather loses its prominence as many of the other mountains are not mere precipitous but perpendicular. At a place called The Overhang we sailed in close to the shore and passengers were able to look up 3,000 feet at a shoulder of the mountain directly overhead. A surprising amount of vegetation clings to the mountain sides, but along the waterline, washed by the vigorous tides, the shore is like a concrete wall plastered to a smooth finish.

Returning to Milford we found that the veteran launch, "Donald Sutherland," outward bound with a cargo of rotten potatoes, had been stranded on the mud flat a few chains from the jetty. The captain was disconsolately wading around his ship, ankle deep in the receding water.

Since reaching the Sound we had put up a stoic resistance to the sandflies, but we found that even the few local inhabitants were being troubled by them, so we weren't too long in making our get-away.

As we returned through the tunnel and headed for home the attraction which beckoned us to return was the tumbling rivers, of unbelievable clarity and full of wild west trout. Some day, my friends, we will answer the call.

So ended our Milford trip, but that wasn't all. We haven't mentioned our excursions, during the 360-mile trip, into the problems of honeyhouse technique, the export market, grading regulations, and the contract system — problems which were neatly resolved by five of the ablest and most practical men in the industry. It is a matter for regret that the minutes of the meeting have not been placed on record.

### Conference

Come to Invercargill in July, 1956. Southland beekeepers are preparing a warm welcome for visitors at their first Dominion Conference, and among

the events will be a Centennial Dinner on the opening night. Let us attend in person to convey our greetings on an historic occasion. Con-

gratulations to Southland on the achievements of their first hundred years and best wishes to the province for the years to come.



*Editor's Note: It is pleasing to have notes in this issue from Branches in most parts of the Dominion. The strength of the Association lies in the Branches and news of their activities stimulates interest among members. We thank contributors for their reports and we remind them that news items can be sent in at any time.*

### FAR NORTH

The Far North Branch held a meeting in the honey-house of Mr W. I. Haines on December 17th, when nine members attended.

After formal business various topics were discussed, including comb honey production and marketing, poisonous sprays, etc.

A panel of members, Messrs C. G. Rope, W. J. Thornton and W. I. Haines, gave a demonstration and explained their methods of wiring frames. This proved most interesting and it is intended to repeat this with other subjects at future meetings.

#### *Crop Report*

The Far North this year experienced the worst yields of pasture sources, due to the abnormal rainfall and cloudy conditions with high winds. Some areas have recorded only four days without rain in eight weeks and beekeepers had to use chains to get to their apiaries in January where normally they never use them in winter.

After a mild winter a wet spring with heavy rains and floods interfered

with queen rearing, and the supply of package bees was seriously delayed.

Pasture growth was phenomenal, and sandy areas held on longer than usual, but the weather remained bad and prospects of a good crop did not materialise and our extractors have retired for the season.

Beekeepers in Manuka areas got fair crops in early spring. The estimated crop for the season would be from two to two and a half tons per 100 hives.

—W. I. Haines.

### SOUTH AUCKLAND

#### *Crop Report*

Here in the Waikato a mid-January tally found most hives approaching the 3 ton per 100 mark with some areas not doing quite so well. Abundant spring moisture made us less concerned about excessive drying up than last year when November was so dry. Few beekeepers could extract much before Christmas, but from mid-December there has been a steady light flow. Even through the unusually cloudy, drizzly and windy three weeks over the holiday period we were surprised to find the honey still slowly building up. This was the period when we turned green with envy as each weather forecast announced, "An anti-cyclone covers the South Island—a tropical cyclone is centred 300 miles north of Auckland," and we erroneously thought the South Island had done it again! Another bumper crop!

The flow here shows every indication of continuing, and the colour is quite good. Providing we get rain soon followed by another good dry spell the crop could be above average, but if the flow peters out in the next week or so, then probably the overall result will be close to an average yield.

—R. Chandler, 24/1/56.

### TARANAKI

The Taranaki Branch has been almost in abeyance for several years, at one stage falling as low as four members. However, last year, perhaps because of good honey crops, much more interest was shown and now, with one exception, all the commercial beekeepers in the province are members, as well as several others.

Regarding the current honey season, spring rainfall was heavy with consequent lush pasture growth, and with fine weather in December prospects for a good honey crop were very bright. However, strong winds which depleted the field bee strength and the failure of the clover to flower well caused the flow to be light except in North Taranaki, where good early crops were showing. The season has slowly improved, and with the clover now flowering well, good crops may be harvested providing we have some continued fine weather. The all-over prospect seems to be far lighter crops than last year, possibly below average.

—J. M. Mail.

### HAWKE'S BAY

#### Field Day

Our Field Day was this year held at the Tomoana Show Grounds. This had several advantages. Firstly, the surroundings impressed our new Apiary Instructor, Sid Line, with the wealth and splendour of Hawke's Bay, without disclosing that beekeeping is the poor relation in the district's agriculture.

Secondly, it provided a suitable building in which Mr C. R. Paterson, Government Apiculturist, and Mr Bennett, his assistant, were able to show, to an appreciative audience,

lantern slides on various aspects of beekeeping in N.Z. For comfort the building could have been a little wider, or the beekeepers a little narrower.

A further advantage in departing from the general practice of holding the Field Days at some beekeeper's home, was that this year we all shared the privilege of being allowed to let our places remain as untidy as usual.

Opening remarks by the President, Mr M. Leete, followed by a few words from the Apiary Instructor, and from the local M.P., Mr Keating, set the ball rolling. The lantern lecture proved to be a most educational session of general interest to beekeepers. It seems that more of these lectures would do much for the development of the beekeeping industry.

A break for welcome refreshments provided by the ladies was followed by a demonstration on the manufacture of beehive parts. The plant used for this demonstration was brought from Hamilton by Messrs Bennett and Paterson, and we were able to see the actual process of manufacture of all parts of the beehive. High class material was produced, and no doubt the knowledge gained will be applied by many beekeepers of Hawke's Bay.

It was a good Field Day, and our thanks to Mr Paterson and Mr Bennett for their valuable contribution were extended by Mr Leete.

#### Honey Crop

More than enough rain this season has proved much better than the very dry seasons. There is a prospect of 3 or 4 tons per hundred hives. The position can be affected considerably by whether the bees live on revenue or capital during February.

—P. Berry, 31/1/56.

### BAY OF PLENTY

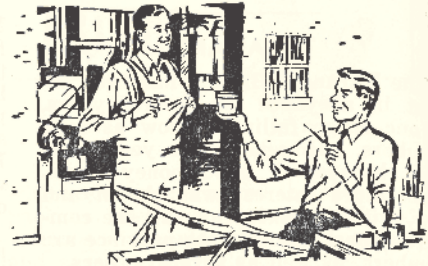
A Branch formation meeting was held in Tauranga on 8th December and was well attended by domestic and commercial producers of the district. With the amount of active beekeeping and honey production that is being carried out in this district producers thought that the time was ripe for such a move.

In the past, producers in this local-



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ity were included in the South Auckland Branch, Hamilton, and usually had to travel to that centre to attend meetings. Many happy times have been spent with our South Auckland members, and we hope that these occasions may continue, especially in the way of combined Field Days, etc.

The meeting was conducted with the approval of the General Secretary of the N.B.A., and some 20 beekeepers were present. Mr C. R. Paterson, Apiculturist, Hamilton, and the Apiary Instructor, Mr D. A. Briscoe, were also in attendance.

Mr L. G. Corlett took the chair, and in a happy atmosphere accepted nominations for the election of officers, these resulting as follows:—Chairman, Mr G. Corlett; Secretary-Treasurer, Mr R. Parkes; Committee, Messrs K. Harrison, E. C. Warr and M. D. H. Barrow.

General business was then attended to and several interesting matters were dealt with.

Following the general business, Mr Paterson showed colour slides of the methods used in the grading of N.Z. honey. Some photographs of nectar-bearing sources were also screened, and although this series is yet to be completed those shown proved very instructive and interesting.

Mr Briscoe congratulated members on the initiative taken in forming a branch and wished them well.

Long after thanks were extended and the meeting closed, members continued discussions as only a real beekeeper knows how, and it was felt that everyone present had experienced an enjoyable evening.

### January Meeting

A well attended meeting was held in Tauranga on 24th January, 1956, to hear an address on marketing of honey, by Mr Wallace Nelson, producer representative on the Honey Marketing Authority.

Mr G. Corlett, President of the Branch, occupied the chair.

In introducing the speaker, Mr Corlett said that Mr Nelson had served on the executive body of every marketing organisation over the past twenty-five years and until recently he had operated over 1,000 hives, and no one was more qualified to understand the

problem of the honey producer.

Mr Nelson's address dealt mainly with the export market, and he spoke in very appreciative terms of the services rendered the industry by the overseas agents, Messrs Kimpton Bros. Ltd., of London. In this connection Mr Nelson said:

"At the time of appointing Messrs Kimpton Bros. some fifteen months ago our overseas business amounted to an uncertain demand for a few hundred tons annually at prices well below local parity. In one year Messrs Kimpton Bros. sold over two thousand tons at a steadily increasing price for all grades exported, and the latest sales show a return very close to local parity, with certain grades equal to local parity. When Colonel Kimpton visited us some fifteen months ago (incidentally, at his own expense) he entered into certain commitments with the Authority and it can now be said that his firm has accomplished far more for us than was promised by Colonel Kimpton or anticipated by the Authority. This relates to both the volume of honey marketed and the price obtained for it. Our honey has been introduced to trading channels overseas where it was formerly unknown and repeat orders have come from these new sources of interest in our honey.

"In Germany our agents found an outlet for 450 tons, spread over ten months of trading. This represented sales to forty different buyers in that country. The price realised on the last consignment to Germany was 12/6 a cwt. higher than we got for a better grade some six months ago.

"Our agents have frankly admitted that the factors that have made possible their success with our honey are our honey grading regulations, coupled with the export control regulations. It is obvious that any weakening of these regulations would react against the interest of the industry as a whole.

"I am happy to say that the Marketing Authority has just concluded a further two year agency agreement with Messrs Kimpton Bros. on terms which I am sure everyone will regard as favourable to us.

"All this may sound encouraging,

but it must be realised that the price support policy of the U.S.A. applies to honey as it does to other primary products, and consequently we have just as much cause for anxiety as our friends in the dairy industry. Our agents are not magicians and they cannot be expected to maintain a satisfactory price level overseas should American honey, heavily subsidised by the American taxpayer, be dumped on to the European market at cut rate prices well below cost of production."

Mr Nelson went on to say that sales of the Authority's brands on the local market over the past twelve months have declined to half the tonnage of that sold the previous year. The Authority cannot afford to allow its local business to become a mere sideline to its overseas trading. It must not be forgotten that our local consumption accounts for approximately two-thirds of our total production. In the interest of both producers and consumers, the Authority will be required in future to increase its local business.

—J. H. Corlett.

### WEST COAST

From talks to various branch members I think the crop this season will be of good quality and for most average quantity.

Some—particularly those working the Otira area and a few other high portions—have definite prospects of above average quantity of rata.

A Field Day at the home of Mr and Mrs D. Dunwoodie, Karoro, on the 21st January was well attended, a noticeable feature being the number of young folk. Mr Paterson and Mr Bennet, of Hamilton, gave a most instructive and practical demonstration regarding the safe use of a saw bench for making beekeepers' woodwork. The safety methods were very sound and had to be seen to be appreciated. Comments by Mr Bennet, who has had extensive, practical, overseas experience, added to an otherwise very educative demonstration, most ably explained by Mr Paterson.

The quality and quantity of refreshments provided by our hostess,

Mrs Dunwoodie, set a standard a few may equal but none better.

A welcome and interesting visitor was Dr Quiyum, of Pakistan. He gave a short address in which he drew a clear verbal picture of apiary work and conditions in his home land.

Lantern slides compered by Mr Paterson were both interesting and educative, as many slides were of flora not common to the south. Unfortunately, the climatic conditions were too hot for our personal comfort.

The final to an already full and enjoyable afternoon was a demonstration by Mr W. Baty and his brother in the use of an ingenious barrow designed to take the heavy portion of the spring work. From chat overheard, it won't be long before there are others of similar design here on the Coast.

—T. Holland.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY

A successful Field Day was held in November at the home apiary of Mr J. G. McKenzie, Bathgate's Road.

About 40 beekeepers were present, the weather was fine and all enjoyed the interesting programme arranged.

The president of the South Canterbury branch, Mr H. Cloake, of Timaru, opened the meeting and gave a talk and demonstration of his experiences at queen raising, using the baby nuclei system. This was followed with interest and numerous questions answered.

After lunch, an inspection of hives was made in the apiary and several beekeepers demonstrated their method of removing surplus honey from the hives.

#### *Honey Crop*

Owing to exceptionally dry conditions from December onwards crops are below average around Waimate, about three tons per hundred being the yield from best areas. Further north from Timaru crops are down to half this amount, and in some cases are a total failure.

—J. G. McKenzie.

(Editor's Note: Mr McKenzie forgot to mention the sparkling new ranch waggon which graced the pre-

mises at the Field Day. We wish him many thousands of miles of happy motoring.)

### NORTH OTAGO

Unfortunately, I have to report a phenomenally bad season in North Otago. During November prospects looked very promising for a favourable season. The white clover flowering was about one month earlier than normal. As a result of a very dry December the flowering period of white clover was very short. It is fairly safe to predict that yields will not be more than half average season expectation.

The season has been disastrous for package bee purchasers, particularly as these arrived late. My own experience is that the packages have sufficient stores for over-wintering.

At the last meeting of the Branch it was decided to hold a Field Day on Saturday, 25th February, arrangement of place and programme to be left to the President and Secretary. Members have little to fear as regards the weather.

—John Spite.

### OTAGO

At the November meeting we had a talk to part-time beekeepers by Mr Kevin Ecroyd. The speaker dealt with production methods, small scale harvesting equipment, and disposal of surplus honey, making one of the most practical and instructive addresses we have ever had in the Branch.

In order to "see ourselves as others see us" we print a letter of acknowledgment from Mr Line following his transfer to Hastings:—

Dear Mr McFadzien,

In reply to your kindly letter of 26th November, I appreciate your good wishes for my future work with beekeepers in my new territory.

I much regret the parting with friendships that have been gradually built up during the pleasant years in South Otago, and "old acquaintance will not be forgot."

Over the years, I have grown to know many roads and some rickety bridges, and became fond of the landscape that seemed part of my home. There is that strange wilderness of rock, plateau and tussock towards Middlemarch, in contrast to the flowering kowhai of Eastern Taieri; or the undulating areas of clover beyond the

Clutha, flowering as white as a snowfall; but over all the province—the friendly faces I leave behind.

The co-operation of Branch members I have greatly appreciated, and to work with them and share their company has been well worth while, and often encouraging to myself.

I wish the Branch a continued spirit of good fellowship, good field days, and the best of honey.

Yours faithfully,

SEFTON LINE.

Fair to medium would be a suitable appraisal of the honey crop in this area. It has been the hottest and one of the driest summers on record, magnificent holiday weather. The country generally has become badly parched, especially on the lighter soils, but in most cases the bees have been able to pick up a crop of honey before the drought took charge.

—J. McFadzien.

### SOUTHLAND

Gore and Southland branches of the National Beekeepers' Association held a combined field day at the apiary of Mr C. M. Cunningham, Winton, on a recent Saturday. Visitors were present from South Canterbury, Dunedin, south and west Otago, England, and Dr A. Quaiyum, bee specialist in the department of Animal Husbandry in Pakistan, who is visiting New Zealand to study beekeeping, under the Colombo Plan.

Mr A. V. Hartley, president of Federated Farmers (Southland), expressed pleasure at being present, and referred to the progress of agricultural development in Southland, and the opportunities given for expansion in the beekeeping industry. Farmers were well aware of the importance and value of the bees, because of the pollination service they rendered, and beekeepers could be assured of the fullest support and co-operation in their efforts to secure adequate protection for bees against the improper application of toxic insecticides and sprays.

Mr T. Palmer-Jones, research officer at the Animal Research Station, Wallaceville, just returned from a tour of Britain, the Continent and the United States, gave an interesting talk on beekeeping research in the countries he had visited—Italy, Switzerland, France, England and Scot-

land—where research was generally ahead of anything done in this country, though methods of hive management and honey production by commercial producers were not.

Messrs Paterson and Bennett, apiary instructors, Hamilton, gave a demonstration of the manufacture of hive equipment, and showed a series of coloured slides dealing with nectar secretion.

Introducing Dr Quiyum, Mr J. W. Fraser, president of the Southland branch, assured him of the interest Southland beekeepers would take in following the course of development of the beekeeping industry in Pakistan, and expressed the pleasure beekeepers in this country felt at the opportunity of being able to be of assistance to a sister Commonwealth State.

Dr Quiyam referred to the difficulties being met in Pakistan in establishing apiculture on a commercial scale. He was appreciative of the hospitality and help he had been offered in this country.

A meeting of commercial producers followed the field day. The meeting was addressed by Mr J. W. Fraser, Dominion vice-president, Mr H. Cloake, Timaru, of the national executive, and Mr W. Herron, producer representative on the Honey Marketing Authority.

—“Southland Times.”

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A 64-page monthly Bee Magazine, generously illustrated, featuring timely articles on beekeeping practices in the U.S. Rates: One year, \$2.50; two years, \$4.50; three years, \$6.50. Sample copy on request.—The A. I. Root Co., Medina, Ohio.

### FRONT PAGE VERSE

(The following poem appeared in the “Southland Times” as part of a regular advertisement which specialises in fragments of verse.)

The men in Southland who exploit  
The busy worker bees  
On Saturday a field day held  
In comfort and in ease—  
And beemen came from everywhere  
(With some from overseas).  
And in the balmy summer sun  
Which brightens up their lives  
They listened to addresses on  
The bees that live in hives—  
The bee delivers lectures too,  
As home its point it drives.  
The interest in working bees  
Just never seems to fail,  
With demonstrators on the job  
(And no one wears a veil!)—  
The point about the lectures is  
The sting is in the tail.

---

### HAMILTON INSTRUCTION COURSE

(The following report was received just too late for inclusion in our November issue.)

On the 10th and 11th of August, the Department of Agriculture held in Hamilton the first Beekeeping Instruction Course that has ever been held in the North Island, for the benefit of all beekeepers.

The course was opened by Mr A. M. W. Greig, Director of the Horticulture Division, who gave an excellent address on the history of beekeeping in New Zealand, with special reference to Mr Hopkins' work in Turua and later with the Department of Agriculture. He also made mention of the policy that had been adopted in the Beekeeping Section of his Department, which encouraged the various officers to specialise in the study of those particular branches of beekeeping in which they were most interested. The results of this policy were fully illustrated during the course, and it was obvious that by allowing these men



to develop their own natural ability, each in his own field, the Department was producing information of tremendous importance to the industry.

Mr C. R. Paterson, the Department Apiculturist, upon whom a major share of the organisation of the course had fallen, due to his office and his residence in Hamilton, took the chair and introduced Mr I. Foster, who lectured on The Selection of Breeding Strains of Bees, The cause of great discussion was his revelation of the sure method of breeding from a proven queen's mother as opposed to the prevalent risky policy of breeding from the proven queen herself.

Mr Paterson followed with a description of cool rooms suitable for beekeepers, and made special mention of the danger of having too high a humidity present. His advice was to test with a wet and dry thermometer. If the humidity was found to be above 60 one should get the cooling pipes in the blower unit shortened, so that they will ice up more readily and thus moisture will be removed from the room when the ice melts and runs outside.

During the luncheon adjournment (lunch was available on the premises) there was a demonstration of an air pressure hive or super loader and also several "gadgets" on display.

Mr R. Walsh led off the afternoon with a very interesting address on the preparation of honey for the Marketing Authority and the grading methods he used there. Due to the changed conditions in the shipment of honey overseas, from blended honey to straight lines as prepared by the producer, he asked suppliers to put at least 3 per cent. of starter in the honey so that the Authority would not be embarrassed by having to wait for honey to granulate before they could ship it.

Mr Paterson concluded the first day's lectures with a description of methods of apiary management and dealt in detail with one version of the Two Queen System, after which many questions were asked and answered.

In the evening the South Auckland Branch held a meeting for the discussion of marketing matters. The Branch President, Mr F. Holt, pre-

sided and gave a thought-provoking opening address. The following speakers were introduced: The President of the N.B.A., Mr E. D. Williams; the Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority, Mr E. A. Field; members of the Authority, Mr W. Nelson and Mr R. Davidson. Mr Herron was also on the platform, and Mr Chudley, manager of the Auckland Depot, was present. Mr Jim Barber eventually made a very good point of great value to the industry but which is too involved to go into here.

Following the above, two films were shown, "The Honey Bee" and "Modern Bee Breeding." Both were excellent.

On the second day the morning was devoted firstly to Mr Forster's lecture on "The Pollination of Economic Crops," at the conclusion of which we were all thoroughly well equipped to deal with any farmer who might complain about an apiary, and it was gratifying to hear that Mr Forster had given the lecture to meetings of farmers.

The remainder of the morning was spent watching Mr A. Bennett, the Hamilton Apiary Instructor, give a very efficient demonstration of making beekeeping equipment with a circular saw bench that he had designed for the purpose. There were many offers for the sawbench, but it is to be used in demonstrations for various branches of the Association.

At this stage the course was officially closed on account of the nature of the afternoon programme. Mr Greig thanked Mr Winter, Mr Paterson and all those responsible for the organisation and presentation of the different items.

In the afternoon two honey houses were visited. Mr J. D. Hishon, of Morrinsville, had been working night and day for some weeks previously to have his alterations finished in time, and an exceedingly good job he had made of them. Some of us had recoiled in horror at the thought of pushing a tank of honey into a cool room, but Jim had made the arrangement look as if it was quite the natural thing to do.

F. M. Winstone Ltd. had brought a new packing machine, which did



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**HIGHWAYS CORNER, PARNURE, AUCKLAND.**

everything bar put the seals on, and demonstrated it successfully with honey passing through it at the rate of half a ton per hour. Price £800. Members of the Marketing Authority seemed interested—others were intrigued.

Afternoon tea was a sumptuous affair, provided largely by the efforts of Mrs Hishon, Mrs Paterson and friends.

The bus and a procession of cars then moved on to J. B. Mackisack's honey house at Waitoa, where we were met by scrupulously kept grounds, buildings and appliances. Here must surely be New Zealand's Empire State Building of supers of combs—30 high! Mac has always been willing to try new methods—is

also not without his own original ideas—consequently he has the most modern equipment in the country and is usually the first to get it.

Here groups stood around chatting up to the last minute, to the consternation of the bus driver, and there seemed a general air of regret that the whole "show" was over. The course contained education in lectures and demonstrations, information on marketing, incentives for higher production, and humour and good fellowship right throughout.

It was such an unqualified success that it can definitely be referred to as the *First* North Island Beekeeping Instruction Course.

—R.R.C.

## NOTES FOR BEGINNERS

By "Skep"

Without stressing sentiment over-much, I like to think that at least the majority of Beekeepers are in the occupation, not purely for monetary return, although that of course is the primary factor. And I am convinced any who have this as their sole object will miss a great lot of the joy and pride in their work with these wonderful little creatures.

One might say there are endless avenues of interest in the history, culture, habits and products of the Honey Bee.

*History:* Their age-old records.

*Production:* Their perfection of food supply.

*Culture:* Their work and its glorious and free nature.

Because of limitation of space, I mention these three headings only, and will deal with the first one in this issue, taking the other two respectively in later numbers.

*History:* Legend and old fables have it that the Bee and her valued food supply is from time immemorial. And as far as authentic records show, we have several mentions in the oldest known writings, The Bible.

Some 3,700 years ago Jacob sent a present to Egypt of "a little balm, a little honey, spices, myrrh, nuts and almonds."

Honey in these early times was well known as a food and medicine, while wax, too, was used extensively, for candles and as a medium for pliable mouldings, while both honey and wax would be valuable as trading mediums. There was practically no other sweetening agency in the world; nothing else but honey for all purposes, and it is consistently mentioned in the old monkish chronicles and curious cooking books that have survived from the middle ages.

Long before Caesar set foot in England, in the old wild songs of the Welsh bards, Britain is called the Isle of Honey, and very early writers speak of the bee hives in the British villages of the day.

## TOPICAL PROBLEMS

### Letters to the Editor

#### DISTRIBUTION OF BEES

Sir,—It is noticeable that neither the honey nor the humble bee is as plentiful in remote districts as it used to be forty years ago. Some immediate research work into the distribution and lives

of bees should be undertaken.

Members of the Federated Farmers could help by making voluntary observations.—Yours etc.,

RETIRED FARMER, Henderson.

#### BEES HAVE A JOB TO DO

Sir,—A correspondent expresses concern at the shortage of honey bees in this area. As a commercial apiarist of 35 years' standing I am amazed at the number of farmers who do not fully realise the importance of bees on their farms for pollination purposes.

A farmer may pour on tons of manure each year but without bees in the vicinity the job is by no means complete. Bees are a "must" for pollination, particularly with white clover.

I would suggest the farmer get in touch with the beekeeper operating in his district or the Department of Agriculture. Either will be in a position to advise as to whether or not farms are being adequately covered.—Yours, etc.,

I. E. PULLIN, Mt. Roskill.

The above informative letters appeared in "The N.Z. Herald" in November, 1955, and I think you will agree with me that Mr Pullin met the question timely and ably.

It is good that you, my reader, be interested in all such subjects with the object that, where a united voice is the approach to the right source or authority, effective measures may result.

I know from experience that the Government Lands Department is alive to the importance of having good coverage of bees to fertilise clover on the thousands of acres of new land that is being brought in throughout N.Z. from year to year. The question is: Are the majority of individual land owners alive to the value of the Honey Bee? At least Mr Pullin thinks not, and I believe substantially he is correct.

I am persuaded that you who look forward to a possible life interest in bees will not just content yourselves in the production of honey, but will be aware of the necessity of pulling your weight, when and where required, on all matters relating to the progress and benefit of the industry.

Also this subject has a much wider application than merely the education of the respective landowners, for during the past 20 to 30 years vast areas of the North Island, at least, have lost their clover coverage to such an extent that some Beekeepers have given up the occupation and many large producers are being forced to move their bees to new areas, thus necessi-

tating extensive and expensive travelling, in some cases running into hundreds of miles. One may well ask: Is there a solution to this problem?

#### Seasonal Work

*Extracting:* February, no doubt, will find most Beekeepers in the process of extracting the honey crop. While in parts of New Zealand the main crop for the season will have been gathered by the bees, in other parts they may still be busy storing during the month of February. Weather conditions largely govern this matter. Years ago "Skep" had certain apiaries gather up to three-quarters super per hive, of penny-royal honey, as late as the middle of March. It is advisable to get the main crop of honey off the hives as early as possible to obviate excessive robbing. Also this warm period, February-March, is ideal for extracting. Honey will not adhere to the combs, it will flow freely, cappings will drain well, and if you strain your honey while extracting, the warm honey will pass through the straining material better than when cool. (But should you have room and equipment for heating the honey, then the need for early extraction is not so urgent.) There is the danger, that soon after the flow is over and the cooler weather sets in, the bees soon start on the combs, in the top supers, and shift the honey to brood chamber, storing some and using some for unnecessary breeding. Hence your honey crop begins to dwindle.

#### Granulation

It is going to be rather difficult for beginners to meet the new rule of the N.Z. Honey Marketing Authority, the penalty of 3d per lb. for honey sent in ungranulated. In most cases the honey will be extracted in the early months of the year, and the weather too warm for granulation, therefore it will be wise to look earnestly into the matter of using starter honey, quality of same, how and when to mix, and the best means of making the starter effective.

Even with a starter, the warm weather of February-March will cause many disappointments. For

best granulation, temperatures of 50 deg. to 55 deg. Fah. are considered necessary. In this connection a cool room of some sort is practically a necessity, and your ingenuity can be put to the test of contriving the most effective method within your means.

### Summarising, February, April, March, Early May

February: Extracting, requeening.  
 March: Extracting, requeening, general inspection, putting hives right for winter.

April-May: Adjusting hives for winter, sorting up combs and supers and storing; securing them from rats, mice, moths. Cleaning and storing extractor gear, and tanks that will not be in use. Rendering down cappings and wax from old combs.

### Jottings

Where you have failed to bring certain hives up to cropping standard, plan to obviate this next season.

Certain operations put into effect during the autumn will pay dividends the following season, chiefly two (others you may discover for yourselves): 1, requeening all, or as many hives as possible; 2, during your extracting operations put by ample combs to be held over in the shed for spring feeding.

---

## NOSEMA

By "Buck Spinifex"

I must explain that I have only 24 hives and about 100 nuclei. You see, I fancy myself as a bit of a wizard at queer rearing and thought I would raise a few lovely big fat queens and become famous all over the world. Well, after I had got to work and raised some beauties I got a nasty shock when I noticed a few apparently healthy bees scampering over the ground and pretending that they were alcoholics anonymous. This was a nasty discovery indeed. Gone were the thoughts of becoming a world-famous queen-breeder. I realised that I could not sell any queens when this malady was making itself so painfully evident! Sometimes I am

proudly shown my friends' apiaries and notice a few "hoppers" and un- wisely remark that they have nosema. To which my hosts generally reply that they are old, worn-out workers with worn wings and can't fly. I always let it go at that and say, "Oh, no one ever owns up to having nosema in their apiary except me." I sometimes feel that I should enlarge on my observations, but so far I have been able to observe a discreet silence. It would be rather cruel to tell them the cold truth seeing that they are so proud of their bees.

Well, my first reaction to my discovery was to experiment with different treatments, and so far I have tried one or two with results which are perhaps encouraging but by no means conclusive.

I wish someone would tell me what should be done.

(*Editor's Note:* It appears that cases of Nosema, though seldom severe, are fairly general in New Zealand. Latest information concerning the disease is obtainable through the Department of Agriculture.

Reference in overseas journals suggest two approaches to the Nosema problem. The first is to prevent the trouble by maintaining hygienic conditions within the hive. For instance, removing the queen, or long confinement while travelling, or anything else which causes the bees to panic and excrete within the hive, is likely to aggravate the disease. Similarly, leaking feeders are a danger as the bees, in cleaning up the syrup, are likely to pick up infected matter from the floorboard.

The second approach is the search for a cure, and promising results are being obtained with the antibiotic fumagillin. Research is continuing along this line.)

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## A DIRGE

The farmer said to the merchant,  
There's some aphids on my chow;  
The merchant said to the farmer,  
You must clean it up somehow.

The D.S.I.R. said to the farmer,  
It will be to your gain  
To rid your crop of aphids  
With a good dose of Lindane.

So the farmer said to the Airways,  
Get cracking then you must;  
And the Airways said to the pilot,  
Go forth and drop some dust.

The queen bee said to the worker,  
There's some pollen, go and get it;  
But when she saw her hive half dead,  
She said, "You shouldn't have e't it."

With the bees half annihilated,  
Everyone said, "Not so good I fear";  
What the beekeeper said I'm afraid,  
though,  
We just simply can't print here.

—Box-hive Bertie.

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## WORLD NEWS

### International Congress

The XVI International Beekeeping Congress is scheduled to be held in Vienna on August 12th to 18th, 1956.

### Crops in Britain

There is just no other word for it (says "The Scottish Beekeeper"), 1955 has proved a bumper year. We know of no district in the British Isles where honey has not been produced abundantly. Pleasing, too, is the fact that the honey is, generally, of the highest quality.

### Australia

Mr Alan M. Frost, who has been an Apiary Inspector for three years with the Victorian Department of Agriculture, is resigning to take up a position as Manager of Walworth Industries' Honey Factory at Euroa in north-eastern Victoria. — "Australasian Beekeeper."

### World Champions

According to Robert B. Willson, writing in "Gleanings," the world's greatest single beekeeping business is Miel Carlota, operating in Mexico. To

substantiate this claim, the following particulars are given:—

1. 12,000 colonies of bees.
2. 210 apiaries.
3. A crop of over 1000 tons of honey last season.
4. A five-storey steel and concrete honeyhouse, with a capacity to extract 22,000 pounds of honey per hour.
5. Queen production at the rate of up to 25,000 per year.
6. A shop to turn out 200 hive bodies a day complete with covers, bottom boards, frames and foundation.
7. Easily the world's greatest royal jelly business.

### U.S.A.

The 1955 United States honey crop has been estimated at 243,100,000 pounds with an average colony production of 46.4 pounds. This is 12 per cent. greater than in 1954, produced by 4 per cent. fewer bees.

---

## DETECTION OF A FAILING QUEEN

**Brood Indications:** One of the first indications of a failing queen in a colony is shrinking of the brood area to half normal size. Another indication is "scattered brood." In other words, the brood is not in a compact mass, but in more or less scattered and disconnected areas on the same comb. Sometimes at the end of her usefulness, the queen begins to lay drone eggs. Under such conditions, drone brood in one, three or four cell groups will be spotted in the brood area.

**Age of Queen:** A young queen has a sheen on the thorax, whereas an old queen has a darker, dull appearance. The hairs on the thorax and other parts of the body of an old queen have been broken off by the activity of the worker bees, thus giving an old queen a darker and duller appearance. The hind margins and outer tips of the wings become tattered and broken as age progresses. As a queen becomes older, she has a tendency to move more slowly. She also has a

tendency to evade the worker.

An expression sometimes used by beekeepers is that the workers follow the queen "begging for eggs."

**Declining Honey Production:** If a colony were headed by a certain queen, the honey production would be less, due to a reduction in bees after the first two years and, after another year or two, the honey production of this colony would be much less than an average crop, other conditions being favourable.

**Swarming Tendency:** There is an axiom in beekeeping as follows: "A queen produced in this colony this year will not swarm this year." This is indicative of the fact that as a queen progresses in age and as colony population each year reaches its peak, new queens are produced and there is a tendency for the colony to swarm.

### Requeening Colonies

**Why Requeen Colonies?** Colonies may need requeening because of queenlessness and replacement of a poor strain or race of bees. Queens sometimes are killed by the beekeeper during the examination of colonies. At other times queens may die of old age or be superseded by young queens.

—R. L. PARKER, in "Gleanings."

---

### APIARY IDENTIFICATION

South Dakota State law requires some sort of identification marker at each bee yard to be attached to a hive at the end of a row, such as a water-proof card so that the inspector and others may know who is the owner, number of colonies, location, and range. This is so any one may have the desired information without consulting the owner. This serves the same purpose as a license plate on a car.

A good scheme for this marker is a small clear glass jar such as a round one pound honey jar with screw cap. Use a thin white cardboard that is the length of the inside of the jar and as wide as the jar. Write the description on the card and roll it into a loose cylinder. If not rolled too tight it will expand when inside the jar so that one may read it through the

glass. Screw the cap on tight, then use a soft wire around the jar neck and tack the wire to the hive. The owner can easily take the card out to change anything on it without detaching the jar.

It is permanent, and water, dust, wind, weather, and bug tight. The card will not be smeared in winter when bees are taking their cleansing flight. The glass is easily cleaned on the outside and easily seen when tacked on the upper front of the hive.

Another scheme I use to number each colony for my own convenience, is to save up a number of out-of-date car license plates. With tin snips I cut the numbers off vertically and assemble them in order from No. 1 on up to as many colonies as I have. The numbers fit nicely on the outer rim of telescoping covers tacked on each end. Each cover stays with each colony regardless of whether the hive bodies are changed. It's a nuisance to paint the numbers on hive bodies. These numbers are enamelled, won't rust, are neat, and can be changed easily and seen at quite a distance.

—W. A. DRIVER, in "Gleanings."

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### HOW AIRCRAFT INCREASE FARM OUTPUT

Greater supplies of fertiliser, preferably produced in Southland, are urgently needed for the progress of aerial topdressing, Mr Harvey Forrest told the Invercargill Rotary Club recently.

In a survey of the aerial topdressing industry, Mr Forrest said that it was established mainly as the result of alarm which spread in 1947 about erosion in the hill country. The Soil Conservation Council then conducted an investigation with the civil aviation industry to see what could be done to stimulate the growth of grass on the higher levels.

The trials which followed produced information that still held good--notably the discovery that the fertiliser was best dropped from a height of between 300 and 400 feet. The industry had a small beginning in 1948. The next year, 1000 tons were dropped by seven aircraft. In 1950, 5000 tons



were dropped by 15 machines. By 1952 the figures were 88,000 tons and 88 machines; and in 1954 over 200,000 tons were dropped by over 200 machines. The latest figures were not yet available, but it was believed that the rate was now 300,000 tons a year—about a quarter of the total amount of superphosphate manufactured in the country.

### 6,000,000 More Sheep

Aerial topdressing had increased the number of sheep grazed by over 6,000,000, and had probably added £20 million a year to the national income.

Charges were based on hours of flying. In 1950 there were just over 2000 hours of flying with 2½ tons dropped an hour. Now, the rate was probably 3½ tons an hour. The charges worked out at about 6/6 an acre. Trials had been made with larger planes capable of carrying up to five tons at one time, but the high capital cost of these machines—as much as £90,000 in the case of a Bristol freighter—was against their use.

Until recently none of the planes used had been specially designed for the work, and this had called for improvisation. But now the Americans had produced the Fletcher. Of these, a dozen or 15 were now in use, and orders had been placed for about 200. This was giving the industry a great boost. The Fletcher plane could carry 15cwt., and was priced about £6500 at the moment.

At present, said Mr Forrest, all the fertiliser used was commercial superphosphate, which was finer than the ideal and did not run freely when damp. It was only a matter of time before a granular type was developed.

The spreading of lime from the air was not economic at present, but the planes had been used for rabbit poisoning, and now they were topdressing areas that had been cleared of the pest. A growth of such weeds as thistles had followed the stimulated growth, and it would be necessary to devise ways of spraying from the air. Soon there was to be a trial in the Catlins district of dropping poison baits for pigs.

# ITALIAN QUEENS

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### New Techniques

Entirely new flying techniques had been developed, and planes were using runways with slopes of 30 degrees, even with tussocks in the way. Speed in coverage had also been increased. The future was bound up with fertiliser supplies. Most of the country now being treated had never been sown before, and there were 15 million acres that had barely been touched.

This kind of flying was not considered unduly hazardous, said Mr Forrest. The accident rate was being steadily reduced and was down to one accident to 45,000 landings or take-offs.

It was a mistake to imagine that aerial topdressing was only for hill country. About 60 per cent. of the country covered could have been topdressed with tractor and trailer. An advantage was that the planes could deal with flat country too wet for surface vehicles to work on, breakages of tile drains were avoided, and the work could be done speedily. Only this week two aircraft had spread 50 tons of fertiliser at Dacre between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. When granulated fertiliser was available, the machines could operate even in windy weather, because drift of the superphosphate could be avoided. Thus there would be more flying time per aircraft per year.

—“Southland Times.”

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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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*Alliance*  
*Quality*

**IMPORTANT!!**

***WE HAVE CHANGED OUR ADDRESS***

This Company's operations are now being conducted from Christchurch. This move we are sure is in the best interests of customers and ourselves alike.

The reasons:—

1. Uncertain and inadequate timber supply in Otago.
2. High cost of timber.
3. High general overhead costs.
4. To centralise with consequent economies the manufacture of beekeepers' supplies in New Zealand.

The anticipated results:—

1. An abundant supply of all bee supplies at all times.
2. The maintenance and improvement where possible of the quality of our products.
3. Some concessions and/or price reductions if and when possible.

**PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS!**

**— The Alliance Bee Supplies Co. Ltd.,**

Telegrams:  
"BEEWARE" CHRISTCHURCH.

25 Sawyers Arms Road,  
Papanui,  
CHRISTCHURCH, N.W.2.