

# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

VOL. 18, No. 3

AUGUST, 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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VOL. 18, No. 3

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## ANNUAL REPORT

The past year has been an eventful one for beekeepers in many ways. The vagaries of Mother Nature provided ideal conditions and good crops in some parts of the country, while in other areas unseasonable weather resulted in poor crops and little or no return for the year's work. Beekeepers have come to accept this as one of the hazards of their uncertain profession, and while losses may be serious in certain instances, it is a calculated risk which we all understand before we start. During this year, however, the Beekeeping Industry has had to face a new man-made menace far more serious than anything the weather man hands out—a danger which does in fact threaten the very future of beekeeping in this country—**TOXIC PESTICIDES**. This and other problems have received the greatest possible consideration and attention from your Executive.

I shall endeavour to detail for you the most salient features of the Association's work during the past year.

### Conference Venues

As you are aware, this is the second successive Conference to be held in what might be termed remote areas of the South Island, and this has no doubt been a governing factor in the small representation of North Island Branches and members which is apparent today. While the reasons for holding this year's Conference in Invercargill are known to you all, the Executive have considered the venues of future Conferences with some care and recommends that in future, every alternate Conference be held in Wellington as the most convenient central point at which all Branches could be represented, and in other years in varying centres of major producing areas in both North and South Islands in rotation.

### Honey Marketing Authority Elections

Following the dissatisfaction which was expressed over the first election of the Authority due to the lack of clarity in the instructions to voters, the Executive took up the matter of ambiguous interpretation of instructions with the Returning Officer appointed in the elections held last year. Those who received voting papers for this last election will agree, I am sure, that the instructions on this occasion were clear and that the result could not be affected by a misunderstanding of the voting procedure.

The disfranchisement of some electors through irregularities in the rolls of persons qualified to vote is a matter which was taken up by the Authority this year and the Executive have been pleased to support their request for an amendment to the regulations to provide for Declaration Votes in any case where doubt exists as to qualification. Steps have also been taken by the Executive to have the regulations amended to provide for voting qualifications to be based on TWO years supply of honey to the Authority or TWO years purchases of Seals, as was originally intended.

### Subsidy Investigation

The request of last Conference that a case be prepared and submitted to the Minister for a subsidy on honey, has been pursued by the Executive, but with little success.

It will be recognised that before any approach could be made to the Minister it was essential that evidence of hardship be shown to support our

claims. It was in obtaining and compiling such documentary evidence that we were faced with our greatest difficulty. Reference was made to the pay-out figures of the Honey Marketing Authority for last year and the good services of the Department of Agriculture were enlisted to provide us with information concerning known cases of beekeepers who had been forced to dispose of their businesses through economic difficulties. Although a considerable amount of data was amassed, the lack of conclusive evidence of general economic hardship was such that the Executive felt unable to pursue the matter further.

### Honey Prices

In the case of bulk honey prices, an application for an increase up to 1/6 per lb. was lodged with the Price Tribunal immediately after the last Conference but to date it has been found impossible to obtain a reply other than that the matter is being investigated and that an Order will probably be made at an early date. In March of this year the General Secretary received a verbal intimation that a favourable reply could be expected by April at the latest, but despite this fact and repeated requests, confirmation has not been forthcoming.

### Proposed Removal of Price Control

At its last meeting the Executive received per medium of its representative on the Honey Marketing Authority, a verbal request for the support of the Honey Marketing Authority's proposed application for the removal of Price Control on Honey Sales. Although this matter was brought forward at short notice, the Executive gave lengthy consideration to the proposal. While some members felt that there was considerable merit in the suggestion there was a division of opinion on some major points, and in view of the strong opposition expressed at last Conference to this very same suggestion, further consideration was held over until this Conference.

### Transport Regulations

Further amendments to the Transport Regulations in 1955 affected Beekeepers operating vehicles of 6½ tons or more gross laden weight. A clarification of the position has been obtained from the Commissioner of Transport and was circulated to Branches and direct members earlier this year.

### Departmental Officer for Study in U.S.A.

At the direction of last Conference the Executive were pleased to take up this matter with the Department of Agriculture, and while the Department were unable to accede to our requests immediately, we have been assured that the matter will not be lost sight of.

### Toxic Pesticides

In my opening remarks, I referred to the serious position which has arisen with the introduction and use of new and highly toxic agricultural pesticides. When I say that the use of these materials constitutes the greatest danger ever to beekeeping in this country, I can assure you that I do not do so lightly, but with the fullest realisation of the position. The potency of newly-developed pesticides, the speed and ease with which they can be applied over large tracts of land, the expansion of aerial contracting, coupled with the agriculturists increasing reliance on chemical remedies, all spell disaster for the Beekeeping Industry unless application is controlled for the benefit of all interests. This has been clearly demonstrated in one recent instance where a beekeeper suffered a loss of bee stocks and damaged equipment valued in the vicinity of £1,000 as a result of the treatment of a few acres of crops.

Since this unfortunate occurrence your Executive have accorded the

pesticide problem priority attention and you will be aware of the immediate steps which were organised by the Department of Agriculture to educate users in the dangers associated with the new pesticides; information and warnings were circulated to Branches and Direct Members of the Association by the General Secretary; the Civil Aviation Regulations were invoked against aerial applicators to prevent further aerial spraying, and a meeting of all interested parties was held in Christchurch with the result that a "permit" system to control further applications of toxic pesticides was instituted. All these steps were of course temporary measures, but as such they did at least afford a measure of protection at a crucial period where before there was no protection at all.

In many respects we have been fortunate. Both the Minister and the farming community generally, appreciating the essential economic value of bees as pollinating agents indispensable to any country's agriculture, have displayed an urgent desire to see adequate and effective protective measures brought into being at the earliest possible date. It is recognised that the beekeeper's interest lies not in a blanket prohibition on the use of toxic pesticides but rather in the regulation of their use so that their application may be so timed as to be of benefit to the farmer without endangering the honey bee.

A number of meetings have been held with Departmental Officers and with the Minister on the question of more permanent measures, and I am pleased to be able to advise that legislative control of toxic pesticides will be an accomplished fact at an early date. While I am not in a position to divulge details of the proposed legislation, I can say that your Executive has been fully consulted and afforded the greatest facility and privilege by the Minister. The legislation which is planned is of a most comprehensive nature, and you may be assured that your Executive have given and will continue to give this matter its closest attention.

### Membership Position

Membership figures and trends have been regularly received throughout the year. It is with considerable pleasure that we can welcome the formation of the new Bay of Plenty Branch with headquarters at Tauranga. The Branch was formed by former members of South Auckland who were finding their distance from Hamilton somewhat burdensome, but since their inaugural meeting a number of new members have been enrolled. The stronger branches have generally maintained or improved their membership, but gains in this direction have been offset to some extent by losses at smaller branches who do not appear to be quite so well organised. Ways and means of encouraging increased membership will continue to receive attention in the new year.

### Secretarial

The initial one-year appointment of Mr R. A. Fraser expired in October last and your Executive were pleased to be able to secure a continuance of his services after that date. Appreciating the amount of time and effort involved in the secretarial duties, the salary of this officer has been reviewed on an increase to a more commensurate figure of £475 p.a.

### "N.Z. Beekeeper"

This organ continues to be one of the most worthwhile efforts of the Association. Conveying essential information and news to beekeepers throughout the Dominion, it is eagerly sought by novice and veteran alike. The quality of this quarterly production and the wealth of interest which it contains reflects credit on the Association and especially the Editor, Mr J. McFadzien. The steadily increasing number of overseas subscriptions for the Journal are in themselves a testimony to the considerable time and

effort which goes into the compilation of each issue. For many years the Editor has, through force of circumstances, been inadequately remunerated, but the Executive have this year been pleased to increase the honorarium to £125 p.a.—a move which will undoubtedly be supported by all members. Branch Notes continue to be an item which are read with interest and the efforts of Branch Press Officers and correspondents are greatly appreciated.

### The Department of Agriculture

The efforts and interest of the Department continue to be of invaluable assistance to the industry, and I am pleased to once again have the opportunity of thanking Mr A. M. W. Greig, Director of the Horticulture Division; Mr T. S. Winter, Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry; Mr I. Palmer-Jones, Research Officer; Mr C. R. Patterson, Agriculturist; and all Apiary Instructors for their highly-valued service throughout the year, and especially in connection with the Toxic Pesticide problem. We are living in an age of increasing specialisation and the necessity for having men of high calibre assisting the industry is of paramount importance. I feel that with our growing problems our need for even greater specialisation will grow also, and the day may not be far distant when the importance of beekeeping as an essential integral part of New Zealand agriculture will merit a separate Apiary Division of the Department.

### The Executive

During the year the Executive were unfortunate to lose the services of two valued members, Messrs T. E. Pearson and E. J. Kirk—Mr Pearson following his election to the Honey Marketing Authority, and Mr Kirk following the disposal of his beekeeping interests. The Executive appointed Mr R. V. Glasson, of West Coast, and Mr W. I. Haines, of Kaitaia, to fill these vacancies respectively.

I wish to thank my colleagues for their loyal interest and able assistance throughout the year. Without their combined endeavours we should not have achieved the good results which the year's work has produced.

In conclusion, I would state that while our Association has been stronger numerically, I feel that it has never been stronger in moral strength of spirit than it is today. The harmony within our ranks and the singleness of our resolution to ever seek Better Beekeeping and Better Marketing augurs well for our future.

E. D. WILLIAMS, President.

## NOTICE BOARD

### H.M.A. Election.

There will be no election of producer representatives for the Honey Marketing Authority this year. The next election takes place when two members retire in August, 1957.

### Marketing Authority

At a meeting of the Executive held in Invercargill after the 1956 Conference Mr J. W. Fraser was appointed as the Association's representative on the Honey Marketing Authority for the coming year.

### "Bees in Their Bonnets"

We have on hand a few copies of "Bees in Their Bonnets," and these are available to readers, from the Editor, at the price of 3/6 each, postage 3d. This 40-page booklet was compiled in 1948 by Mr W. J. Lennon and is an account of the history and some of the personalities of early beekeeping in Otago and Southland.

**THE RETIRING PRESIDENT**

The six consecutive years of service by Mr E. D. Williams in the office of Dominion President have been a noteworthy contribution to the life of the Association and the welfare of the industry. Mr Williams, or "Des" as he is so well known, is gifted with an easy and friendly manner which creates confidence at a meeting, and his unflinching sense of humour would often relieve the tension when feelings were running high. But to those who attended Conference regularly his sterner attributes of punctuality and firmness were also widely known and respected. As the representative of the Association in many spheres he brought credit to the industry.

At the close of the 1956 Conference

suitable tributes were paid to Mr Williams for his service as President, and as the Association's representative on the Honey Marketing Authority for the past two years.

**THE NEW PRESIDENT**

Mr J. W. Fraser, the new Dominion President, is one of the younger generation of beekeepers. At first he took up school teaching as a career but after serving overseas in the second World War he turned to commercial beekeeping in partnership with his brother in Southland. Mr Fraser is a confident speaker and a competent chairman and he is known for the energy and enthusiasm which he puts into any cause he espouses. He has served as Dominion Vice-President for the past two years.

**NEW PRICE ORDER**

Price Order No. 1664 (Honey) came into force on 29/6/56 and the Price Order No. 1591 is thereby revoked.

The prices of honey in retail containers remain unchanged. The maximum prices that may be charged or received for honey sold otherwise than in retail containers are as follows:—

	Maximum Price per pound at the rate of
	s. d.
(a) For honey, cut and wrapped	1 5½
(b) For other honey—	
(i) Sold by a producer to a consumer—	
(a) In lots of over 60lb.	1 1½
(b) In lots of 60lb. or less but more than 20lb.	1 2½
(c) In lots of 20lb. or less	1 4½
(ii) Sold by a producer to a packer, wholesaler, or retailer	1 1½
(iii) Sold by any person whomsoever to a wholesaler	1 1½
(iv) Sold by a wholesaler (not including a producer) to a retailer	1 2½
(v) Sold by a retailer	1 4½

**HONEY FOR ANTARCTICA**

The Executive has received a letter from the Ross Sea Committee expressing appreciation of the Association's offer to supply honey for the New Zealand Antarctic Expedition and stating that the requirements of the party would be 220 pounds. Steps are now being taken to supply this quantity in packages most convenient for the expedition.

**"GLEANINGS IN BEE CULTURE"**

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.

## OBITUARY

### Mr John Rentoul

One of the pioneers of the New Zealand honey industry, Mr John Rentoul, died in Matamata on May 14, aged 82.

A passenger list of one of the old windjammers 80 years ago shows an entry "J. Rentoul, eight months."

When a young man, Mr Rentoul went to the Western Australian gold-fields. Later, he qualified as a chemist and for some time was employed in opening branches for his firm in Australia.

He returned to New Zealand in 1901 and settled in Cheviot, North Canterbury, where he established himself as a chemist and vet.

Mr Rentoul became interested in bees and soon had 500 hives. By 1914 he was recognised to have one of the most successful apiaries in the country. This led to his appointment as manager of the Honey Producers' Association which was formed during World War I.

When New Zealand Honey Ltd. took over the work of the association, about 1932, Mr Rentoul became general manager. He had two trips to Europe and the East on honey marketing business.

After the absorption of New Zealand Honey Ltd. within the Internal Marketing Department in 1937, Mr Rentoul was appointed manager of the honey section until his retirement some years ago.

He served as producers' representative on the Honey Control Board, and for a time was president of the National Beekeepers' Association. He made some notable contributions to the methods of packaging and processing New Zealand honey.

Rentoul Park in Cheviot is named after Mr Rentoul in recognition of his long service to the district. He was a noted chess player, a landscape painter, and a keen trout and salmon fisherman. A Justice of the Peace, he was engaged in court work in Cheviot for many years.

On one of his trips to England, he

met Douglas, of Douglas Credit fame. That was during the slump, and he became convinced that the Douglas economic analysis was correct.

Mr Rentoul was one of the first to introduce Social Credit to New Zealand and was a keen worker for the cause until his final year.

Mr Rentoul is survived by a son and two daughters.

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## LONDON SHOW

27th July, 1956.

To the Editor "N.Z. Beekeeper."

Dear Sir,

Dairy Show — Olympia — London  
23rd-26th October, 1956

I have pleasure to enclose details of Honey Classes at the London Dairy Show which are open to exhibitors in the United Kingdom, British Empire and Commonwealth, together with relevant regulations which affect these classes.

Entry forms—a copy of which will be found at the foot of the enclosed extracts from the Prize Schedule—should be sent to me at the address given above, together with necessary entry fees, to arrive by not later than 4th September, 1956.

The actual exhibits for competition and display at the Show should be sent to the Secretary of the National Honey Show Ltd., 3 St. Mark's Place, London S.W. 19, England, so as to arrive by not later than 15th October, 1956.

I sincerely hope you will be prepared to assist the Association by circulating the extracts from the Prize Schedule and would take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation for your help and co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

F. R. FRANCIS,

Secretary.

(NOTE: Schedules and Entry Forms for the above Show are obtainable from the Editor.)



### BOOK REVIEW

In "Bees Are My Business," a 245-page book by Harry J. Whitcombe, is told an entertaining story of commercial beekeeping in California. Starting from scratch twenty years ago, the author has built up a successful business and the account of his adventures reflects the history of beekeeping over that period. In spite of the uncertainties in producing honey and package bees, and the hazards of poison sprays, he retained his confidence in the future, and he was one of the first to visualise the responsibility which would ultimately rest upon beekeepers in the service of pollination. At times he suffered heavy losses and he met strong prejudices on many sides but he persisted in developing the pollination trade, even leasing land to grow alfalfa seed on his own account, and his efforts did much to gain proper recognition for the industry.

Readers will enjoy the story of the Whitcombe family during their more difficult years, and of special interest to the layman are the descriptions of the honey bee society.

Our copy is from the publishers, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London.

### Australian Novel

Kylie Tennant, author of two prize-winning Australian novels, "Tiburón" and "The Battlers," besides several other novels and a short history of Australia, has scored another success with "The Honey Flow" (Macmillan and Co. Ltd., London). The story is founded on the travels and adventures of the migrant apiarists of New South Wales and Queensland. These beekeepers carry their hives for hundreds of miles by truck or train to places where the trees of the great eucalypt forests are in flower. They lead hard but picturesque and exciting lives, and, like the diggers of the gold rush days lured on by the hopes of a lucky strike, they are always hoping that they will find an extra good flow of honey at the next halting place. The story is as authentic as it is absorbing. Kylie Tennant was given a grant from the Australian Commonwealth

Literary Fund to collect the background material for her story.

—Review from "Southland Times."

### TRANSPORT REGULATIONS

P.O. Box 19, Foxton,  
22nd May, 1956.

The Commissioner of Transport,  
P.O. Box 6107, Te Aro,  
Wellington.

Dear Sir,

I wish to thank you for your letter in reply of 30th January, the text of which was circulated to all Branches and Direct Members of my Association.

Members have been considering your advice, especially in relation to vehicles of over 6½ tons gross laden weight, and grave concern has been expressed over licensing conditions for vehicles within this category.

It is noted that licenses to operate will not be granted to beekeepers who now purchase vehicles of this tonnage, and that those who are already operating vehicles of this class will be de-licensed on 1st December, 1958.

The operation of these Regulations will be of considerable detriment to the Beekeeping Industry. The Beekeeper's problems of transport are peculiar to no other primary industry. The particular nature of his business is such that he is required to carry substantial loads over long distances, in many cases on poor class back-country roads. Apiaries are scattered over a radius of up to 100 miles from the home apiaries in most instances; more in some cases, and this is necessary to obtain a quantity crop and honey of varying grades for blending and packing. It is therefore obvious that Beekeepers are obliged to travel long distances in carrying heavy loads of hive equipment, supplies for feeding during winter months, and bringing in combs for extraction during the honey flow. The use of a heavy vehicle for this work is unavoidably necessary, and it will be apparent to you that hired transport would be most unsatisfactory, both from the point of view of the type of goods being carried and the necessity for careful timing of various operations.

Small beekeeping units have become increasingly uneconomic over the past few years and to-day many small businesses are being bought out by established beekeepers who are expanding their operations. Where this takes place the need for a heavier vehicle may arise, and it is important that unnecessary restrictions are not placed in the way of this expansion of production.

The commercial production of honey has assumed a place of importance in the economy of this Dominion, over 900 tons being exported to the United Kingdom and the Continent during the past year. It is obvious that a beekeeper will not use a 7-ton vehicle where a 4-ton vehicle will do his work, but where the heavier vehicle is required it is important that he be permitted to obtain and operate it.

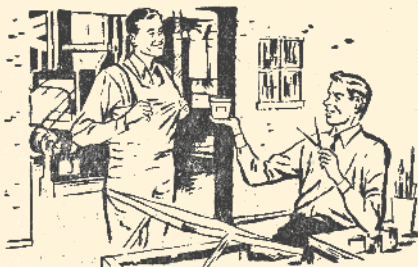
I convey hereunder the text of a resolution passed at a recent meeting of my Dominion Executive:—

"That this Executive seek an exemption from the Transport Regulations relating to the issue of Goods Licenses, or failing that, endeavour to



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obtain an assurance that Beekeepers' vehicles of 6½ tons or more gross laden weight will be re-licensed after 1st December, 1958."

I shall be pleased if you will give your most earnest consideration to this matter which is vital to the Beekeeping Industry, and I look forward to receiving your favourable reply at an early date.

Yours faithfully,  
R. A. FRASER,  
General Secretary.

Transport Department,  
P.O. Box 6107, Te Aro,  
Wellington, C.2.  
30th May, 1956.

The General Secretary,  
National Beekeepers' Association of  
N.Z. Incorporated,  
P.O. Box 19, Foxton.

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 22nd May, and wish to make clear the position concerning transport licenses for trucks and beekeepers.

In the case of trucks either under 6½ tons laden weight, or over that weight, but keeping within the 30 mile rail restriction, a transport license is not required by beekeepers carrying goods owned by them in connection with their business as beekeepers.

A three year automatic licence must in any case be granted if required for farmers' trucks (including those of beekeepers) legally in use as at 27th October, 1955, when the Transport Amendment Act 1955 was passed. The Licensing Authority is empowered to grant these licences without a public sitting. The effect is that a farmer (including a beekeeper) with a truck of laden weight over 6½ tons may continue to use the truck as he has done in the past until the 1st December, 1958, or until he parts with the vehicle. After that date a renewal of the licence may be applied for in the usual way if it is still desired to exceed the 30 mile rail restriction.

Concerning the result of an application for renewal of an automatic licence or for a licence other than an automatic licence, I regret that it is not possible for any assurance to be given as the matter is one entirely for the respective Licensing Authorities, having view to the public interest, with right of appeal to the Transport Appeal Authority. Full opportunity would be given for representations to be made by or on behalf of the applicant and considerations such as those set out in your letter would be given the fullest weight.

Yours faithfully,  
H. B. SMITH,  
Commissioner of Transport.

## CONTROL OF PESTICIDES

The control of pesticides during the coming spring months was given urgent consideration at the Executive meeting held in Invercargill on July 23rd. Present at the meeting by arrangement were Messrs A. M. W. Greig (Director of Horticulture), T.

S. Winter, T. Palmer-Jones, I. W. Forster, G. E. Gumbrell and R. Davidson.

Mr Greig indicated that the Agricultural Chemicals Bill would probably be effective from the beginning of next January, and the Regulations under the Act should be ready by that date. In the meantime the permit system covering aerial applications had been discontinued. Action was being taken to disseminate educational propaganda to prevent damage to bees during the next few months.

Mr Gumbrell quoted instances where conflicting propaganda had been issued, sometimes prejudicial to beekeepers, and members were unanimous that the re-introduction of the permit system, at least for aerial applications, was essential to safeguard the honeybees. It was also vitally important that the apiary staff should act as adjudicators in the issue of permits if the best use of pesticides was to be obtained.

In reply to questions Mr Greig suggested that any move to hasten the passing of the Agricultural Chemicals Bill could not be relied upon to cover the period of the spring months. He also thought it impracticable to introduce a permit system to cover ground applications in the immediate future.

After a general discussion it was decided to urge the re-introduction of permits for aerial applications in the meantime and to ask that Mr Forster be made available for the work of approving such permits during the vital spring period. Telegrams requesting immediate action in this direction were accordingly dispatched to the Minister of Aviation and the Minister of Agriculture, and the Executive agreed to press for at least the same measure of protection as was provided last year.

"THE INDIAN BEE JOURNAL,"  
official organ of the All India Beekeepers' Association. 15/- per year  
(International Money Order).

Address: Ramgarh, Dist. Nainital,  
U.P., India.

## OPOSSUM POISONING

Mr R. V. Glasson reported to the Executive meeting that baits of poisoned jam were now being extensively used both by the Forestry Department and by individuals in the campaign against opossums on the West Coast. Members remarked that the destruction of opossums was to the advantage of all, but it was agreed that the method outlined would constitute a serious danger to beekeepers at certain times. It was decided to take up the matter with the Departments of Agriculture and Forestry to see that the proper precautions be taken.

## INCREASED FLYING FOR AGRICULTURE

Figures showing a continuation in the growth of agricultural aviation are given in the annual report of the Aviation Industry Association of New Zealand.

In aerial top-dressing hours flown during the 12 months ended March 31, 1956, were 19.77 per cent. greater than in the previous 12 months; the number of flights 8.17 per cent. greater; the weight of fertiliser spread 45.15 per cent. greater; and the area treated 38.4 per cent. greater.

Increases over the previous year's figures for aerial spraying were: Hours flown, 25.68 per cent.; number of flights, 56.32 per cent.; quantity distributed, 71.4 per cent.

In aerial top-dressing the hours flown and the number of flights have not increased in the same ratio to the work done as they have in aerial spraying because in aerial top-dressing there has been a marked change from light to medium aircraft, carrying more material with fewer flights. For spraying light aircraft are still principally used.

The statistics for aerial top-dressing in the year ended last March 31 are:—Hours flown, 79,747; number of flights, 1,555,310; tons distributed, 404,933; acres treated, 3,853,169; number of operators, 56; aircraft engaged, 303.

In spraying 1505 hours were flown, 7850 flights made, and 374,811 gallons distributed.

## HELP FOR PAKISTAN

Eighteen specially selected breeder queen bees from three of New Zealand's leading beekeepers have been sent to Pakistan to form the basis of a breeding programme there. They are to be used in attempts now being made to improve honey production in the North-west Frontier Province to supplement the food supply and to provide for adequate pollination of agricultural crops.

The queen bees were sent 8700 miles, by air, each queen having an escort of 30 worker bees. Special food was provided for the whole journey and arrangements had to be made by the Department of Agriculture, which supervised the shipment, for express delivery.

This assistance to Pakistan under the Colombo Plan is only part of the help being given by New Zealand in improving beekeeping in that country. Apiary material is also being sent, and this includes a working model of a saw bench for the manufacture of hive parts which was built by C. R. Paterson, Department of Agriculture Apiculturist, with special attachments designed by A. W. Bennett, Department of Agriculture apiary instructor, Hamilton. A set of projector slides illustrating methods of manufacture, a wax cappings melter, and a complete mill for manufacturing wax bee comb foundation have also been assembled in Wellington for dispatch to Pakistan by the technical assistance unit of the Department of External Affairs.

## NEW INSECT KILLER

The United States Food and Drug Administration has approved for use on 11 crops a new type insect killer which is absorbed into a plant through its leaves or roots and makes the whole plant poisonous to the insects.

The tolerance limit set for use of the new chemical is so low that a human could conceivably drink the spray solution without harm. Truck

gardeners, orchardists and other commercial growers are receiving first deliveries of the chemical, which will not be available to home gardeners until officials are satisfied it can be handled at home safely.

The use of the chemical under strict

quantity and method of application limitations was approved for use on apples, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, musk melons, oranges, pears, potatoes, strawberries and walnuts.

## CONFERENCE REPORT

The 1956 Dominion Conference was held in Invercargill on July 24, 25 and 26. There was an attendance of about sixty members and delegates and the President (Mr E. D. Williams) was in the chair.

A letter was read from the Hon. K. J. Holyoake (Minister of Agriculture) apologising for his absence and wishing members a successful conference.

The Mayor of Invercargill (Mr A. L. Adamson) welcomed the visitors to the city, and the Conference was formally opened by Mr C. V. Hartley, immediate Past-President of the Federated Farmers, Southland.

The Conference was then addressed by Mr A. M. W. Greig (Director of the Horticulture Division) and Mr E. A. Field (Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority). In these talks the work of the Horticulture Division and the Marketing Authority during the past year were surveyed in some detail, and members were given a comprehensive picture of the present position in the industry.

The Annual Report and Balance Sheet were then read, and after some discussion were adopted.

### Remits

Remits from Branches were then brought before Conference, and the following decisions were made:—

*Journal:* "That the free issue of the Journal to non-members be discontinued and that it be made available only at not less than the cost of production plus postage." Speakers contended that the Journal was a more effective organ when its circulation covered all producers, and that the payment to the Association from seals revenue was to some extent a contribution from non-members. The motion was lost.

*Honey Grading:* "That where honey is tested for specific gravity the figure should be stated as a guide to suppliers." Carried.

*Honey Grading:* A remit from South Canterbury asking for payments to be made on a strictly pro rata basis was amended to read, "That it be a recommendation from this Conference that the Marketing Authority prepare a report for next Conference showing the comparative realisations from sales of different grades and colours," and in this form was carried.

*Contracts:* "That Conference recommend to the Honey Marketing Authority the abandonment of the contract system." Serious anomalies in the contract system as at present operated were pointed out, but a number of speakers supported the general principle of contracts as a factor in securing steady supplies to the Authority. The remit was lost.

*Freight:* "That beekeepers be debited with freight to the nearest port only." Lost.

*Packing Plant:* "That as the honey packing activities of the H.M.A. appear to be comparatively uneconomic this Conference recommends that a packing division be not included in the new building." In the discussion on this remit it was argued that changing circumstances might call for a resumption of packing at the depot on an extensive scale, and the motion was lost.

*Liquid Honey:* "That the Honey Marketing Authority accept a percentage of a supplier's honey in a started form." This remit was designed to assist producers in areas where slow granulation delayed the forwarding of honey to the pool. It was pointed out, however, that the



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**DOES YOUR DESIGN SELL YOUR HONEY?**

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**FOLEY BROS. (N.Z.) LTD., BRANDON HOUSE,  
FEATHERSTON STREET, WELLINGTON.**

**MONO (N.Z.) LTD.,**

**HIGHWAYS CORNER, PARNHUR, AUCKLAND.**

expense to the Authority in handling liquid honey could not be justified and it was suggested as an alternative that a system of advance payments would be satisfactory. The remit was lost.

*Containers:* "That this Conference draws attention to the increasing cost of cases and tins and requests the Marketing Authority to take action to have costs reduced or subsidised." Carried.

*Finance:* "That Conference request the Government to provide finance for the Honey Marketing Authority building at one per cent. through the Reserve Bank." Members contended strongly that the Government should assist the industry in acquiring an alternative building and urged that funds available from the Marketing Department should be used for this purpose. Carried.

*Finance:* "That Conference oppose the recommendation of the Monetary Commission to transfer the Honey Marketing Authority account from the Reserve Bank to a Trading Bank." Carried.

*Price Order:* "That the Executive take immediate action to obtain an increase to 1/6 per pound for honey supplied in customers' own containers." Carried.

*Price Control:* "That Conference desires price control on honey to be retained." There was strong opposition to this remit, especially on the grounds that the operations of the Marketing Authority were being needlessly hampered. At present the Authority is unable to secure payable returns from certain channels on the local market. Other speakers feared that the absence of a Price Order would affect the stability of the price level. On a delegates' vote being taken the remit was carried by 1090 votes to 427.

*Price Order:* "That in the event of Price Control being removed from Marketing Authority honey, that it also be removed from all other honey." Carried.

*Price Order:* "That the Executive make an approach to the Price Control Division in order to revive the case for an increase in the price of honey." Carried.

*Pesticides:* "That it is imperative that the Apiary Section of the Department of Agriculture be the sole arbitrators for the issuing of permits for the spraying of crops with pesticides as only those officers who have a comprehensive knowledge of locations and seasonal conditions of apiaries are capable of using their discretion to the benefit of the farming community." Examples were quoted where permits had been refused in cases where no danger to bees would have resulted. The remit was carried.

The Director of Horticulture (Mr Greig) announced to Conference that, subject to Government policy, he would provide Apiary staff as required to control a permit system during the coming season.

*Marketing Authority:* "That in the election for Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority, the Government nominee be ineligible to vote." Lost.

*Apiaries Act:* "That the Apiaries Act be amended to enable action to be taken to control the dumping of honey so that it is not accessible to bees." Carried.

*Apiary Sites:* "That Conference urges the Minister of Agriculture to introduce legislation to prohibit the setting down of apiaries within a distance of one mile from established apiaries." Lost.

*Part-time Inspection:* "That a recommendation be made to the Minister of Agriculture to make sufficient money available to extend the services of part-time Inspectors with a view to eradicating disease." Carried.

*Assistance for Instructors:* "That the Government be approached with a view to providing a new appointee with the same financial assistance for housing as Instructors on the permanent staff." Carried.

*Apiary Equipment:* "That the Government be urged to make provision in the estimates to enable experiments to be carried out by experts in the Apiculture section of the Department of Agriculture with a view to improving honeyhouse equipment." Carried.

*Research Officer:* "That urgent representations be made to the Department of Agriculture to have a

Beekeeping Research Officer stationed in the South Island." Speakers in support of the remit contended that the new responsibilities facing the industry and the new problems associated with pesticides and the pollination of seed crops called for active investigations to give both farmers and beekeepers up-to-the-minute information and advice. Carried.

*Bee Breeding:* "That since experiments in artificial insemination have not had the results hoped for, the Department of Agriculture be asked to consider the setting up of a Departmentally-controlled queen-rearing establishment." Carried. The original remit included the words "on Stewart Island," but this qualification was deleted to allow consideration being given to other sites.

*Apiary Staff:* "That the Executive discuss with the Minister the matter of providing every reasonable opportunity and facility to Apiary Instructors to qualify for the senior positions of Supervisors, and finally Director of the Horticulture Division." This remit was withdrawn after the meeting had heard an explanation from Mr Greig covering the present procedure in the Horticulture Division. The usual channels of promotion are open to all members of the staff.

*Heavy Trucks:* "That the Executive consult with others concerned to have the speed limit revised on trucks carrying H plates." Carried.

*Honey Mead:* "That the use of honey in wines and mead to be offered for sale be legalised." Carried.

*Visit to U.S.A.:* "That Conference again request the Department of Agriculture to take the earliest opportunity of sending an officer to U.S.A. to study at first hand methods of apiary management and commercial marketing of honey." Carried.

*Nectar-bearing Plants:* "That the matter of introducing honey-producing plants into New Zealand be investigated by the Department of Agriculture and the Forestry Department." Carried.

*Pollination:* "That Conference request the Department of Agriculture to conduct experiments in pollination, with the aim of determining statisti-

cally the value of bees and other pollinating insects." Carried.

*Hive Mats:* "That an improvement in the cut and quality of hive mats be investigated." Carried.

#### *Life Member*

The name of Mr A. A. Lennie, of Southland, was submitted to Conference with a recommendation from the Executive that he be elected a Life Member of the Association.

Mr Lennie received his training in beekeeping at Ruakura after having served in World War I. He joined the National Beekeepers' Association in 1922—34 years ago—and since then has taken an active part in beekeeping affairs and in promoting the interests of honey producers. He was for nine years President of the Southland Branch and served for two years on the National Executive. In 1923 he was appointed as one of the first part-time inspectors in Southland and he gave yeoman service by train and cycle, at a time when almost every second farm had a few hives of bees. Although never a commercial producer on the scale which is common to-day, yet he was a typical commercial beekeeper of his time, and it was through the men with his industrious and progressive outlook that the industry has advanced to the position it holds to-day.

Mr J. W. Fraser (Southland), in nominating Mr Lennie, traced his career in beekeeping, and mentioned his personal attributes of integrity and perseverance. He added that Mr Lennie's election would be a fitting tribute, in the anniversary year of the Southland Branch, to the vision and fortitude of the industry's pioneers in the south.

The nomination was seconded by Mr W. T. Herron (Gore), and other speakers who supported the nomination were Messrs L. F. Robins, W. W. Nelson and E. A. Field.

Mr A. A. Lennie was then elected a Life Member of the Association, amid acclamation.

In acknowledging his election Mr Lennie referred to the earlier days and mentioned some of his memorable experiences. "Every member has a duty to the industry," he said, "and I have done no more than any member



should have done." In thanking the Conference he extended his best wishes to the Association and to the industry.

### Election of Officers

There were two nominations for the office of President, Messrs J. W. Fraser and E. D. Williams, and on a ballot being taken Mr Fraser was declared elected.

Mr Williams congratulated Mr Fraser on his election and expressed his confidence that the new President would ably fill the position.

Mr Fraser then thanked the Conference and expressed his indebtedness for the experience he had had under Mr Williams' leadership.

The remaining elections were then

held, and officers for the coming year are as follows:—

President: Mr J. W. Fraser.

Vice-President: Mr E. D. Williams.

Executive: North Island—Messrs W. I. Haines and J. D. Lorimer; South Island—Messrs H. Cloake and G. E. Gumbrell.

Auditors: Messrs Moir, Campion and Mason were re-elected.

The Conference closed with a vote of thanks to Mr A. M. W. Greig and Mr T. S. Winter and other officers of the Horticulture Division for their assistance during Conference week, to the Southland and Gore Branches for their hospitality to visitors, and to all who had helped to make the 1956 Conference a success.

## HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

### ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN, MR E. A. FIELD, AT THE DOMINION CONFERENCE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since my last report to Conference the Honey Marketing Authority has had another successful year and has made substantial progress in setting up its own establishment.

During the year an election of producer members took place and we lost the valued services of Mr R. Davidson. He was not slow in letting us know when he disagreed with the decisions of the other members but he did so in good spirit and the Authority has placed on record its appreciation of his services during his term of office. I would like to take this opportunity of acknowledging the helpful contributions made by his successor, Mr T. E. Pearson, in our deliberations.

At the last Conference you passed a number of resolutions concerning the activities of the Authority. These were all given careful consideration and most of them have been agreed to and carried into effect. You may be assured that any further recommendations made by this Conference will be given the same careful attention. I think the history of honey marketing in the last decade would have been to the greater advantage of all producers had more notice been taken of the resolutions of your Conference and the recommendations of your Executive through these years.

### Production

You are aware that the 1954-55 season was a heavy production year. For the year ended 31st August, 1955, we received a record quantity of 2206 tons of honey, this being almost double the previous year's supply. The present year started off with considerable promise and contracts were received for the supply of 1858 tons. With normal receipts from non-contractors a supply in excess of last year's record was anticipated. Unfortunately the season did not come up to expectations, the South Island in particular being badly hit by prolonged drought conditions. The quantity

supplied up to 30th June of this year totalled 1614 tons. This is much better than was expected taking the drought conditions into account, and it is in fact the second highest quantity received in any one year by this Authority or any of the previous marketing organisations.

We have granted concessions to a number of contractors who were unable, owing to adverse production conditions, to fulfil their contracts. These concessions were conditional on the contractors concerned supplying to the Authority the whole of their production with the exception of sales to consumers at the apiary. In view of our experience this year I am beginning to doubt whether it is wise to continue the contract system. I note that this is on the agenda for discussion by Conference and I shall be very interested to hear the arguments for and against.

### Export Marketing

The agency arrangements with Messrs Kimpton Bros. for the U.K. and European markets have continued to work very satisfactorily and the agreement has been renewed for a further period. In negotiating the conditions for renewal the Authority decided not to ask for guaranteed minimum returns. Provision has been made for certain incentive payments to our agents, but they willingly agreed to accept a lower rate of remuneration than was paid under the previous agreement. Small quantities of honey are being sold to Singapore, Australia, India and other countries and a careful watch is being kept for satisfactory markets in any part of the world.

Overseas prices are continuing at a satisfactory level, although there has been a slight drop in the last few weeks. Our best honies are selling at 150/- to 155/- per cwt., C.I.F., and the lowest grades are realising approximately 80/- per cwt. less than these figures. The slight falling tendency in prices is not sufficient at the moment to cause us concern.

For the year ended 31st August, 1955, 1809 tons of honey were exported to the U.K. and Europe, the comparative figure for the ten months of the current year up to 30th June being 1070 tons.

Arrangements have been made by our agents for suitable bottling firms in the U.K. to pack N.Z. honey under the Imperial Bee label. The Authority receives the current bulk price for this class of honey. Messrs Kimpton Bros. advised recently that approximately 100 tons of honey have been packed under this procedure.

### Local Marketing

The Authority has continued to blend and sell Imperial Bee honey on the local market. Sales were made principally in the Auckland Province and the volume of sales for the current year has been maintained at the same level as the previous year. It is not economic to extend local sales outside Auckland as with added freight costs the nett return we would obtain would be lower than we receive on the export market. I think it a pity your Executive did not support an application for the removal of price control. For too long producers have not received their established costs of production plus a fair return for their investment. We should not have to sell honey at under cost of production in New Zealand when higher prices can be obtained overseas.

### Depots

In an effort to assist beekeepers and at the same time encourage the supply of honey to the Authority additional depots were opened during the year at New Plymouth, Timaru and Invercargill. It is our intention wherever possible to arrange overseas shipments direct from these ports. A satisfactory depot was not available at Bluff.

## Seals Revenue

The Seals levy is being collected at approximately the same rate as in previous years, the amount for ten months up to 30th June, 1956, being £13,850.

Cases of seals evasion are still coming to our notice and it has been necessary for us to refer some of these to our Solicitors for appropriate action. The enforcing of the seals regulations is a most unpleasant duty for us and I urge all beekeepers concerned to carry out the regulations and thus save the Authority any unnecessary expense.

## Premises

At the last Conference you carried a remit to the effect that the Authority should acquire premises in Auckland. The Authority agreed with this decision and has purchased a suitable site in Parnell approximately three-quarters of a mile from the Auckland wharves and railway station. The Building Controller has granted us permission to build and the Architects have completed the working drawings and specifications for our new factory. It has been designed principally for the assembling and storing of honey but at the same time provision has been made for grading facilities, blending and packing operations and office accommodation. The total cost of these premises is likely to be higher than anticipated a year or so ago, but bearing in mind the steady expansion of the industry, the low cost of the building section and the future of Auckland city it cannot be denied that this will be a great asset as soon as erected and also in the future.

## Financial Position

In accordance with the provisions of the Primary Products Marketing Act, 1953, we are required to submit an annual report to the Minister of Agriculture on the proceedings and operations of the Authority for the previous 12 months. The report for the year ended 31st August, 1955, has been duly submitted to the Minister and arrangements are being made for it to be published in the "Beekeeper." The annual accounts of the Authority will be published at the same time. It will interest you to know that since the last balance date we have paid £30,000 off our debt of £101,759 owing to the Government for stocks of honey and packing materials taken over when we assumed office.

## Obituary

It is probably not usual to refer to the death of an individual in a marketing address to your Conference, but I must make reference on this occasion to the passing of Mr John Rentoul. His loyal and able service to the problems of marketing in New Zealand and overseas over a long period of years will ever stand as a living memorial to him in the beekeeping industry. His wide knowledge and sound advice have been a great help to me and many others in the industry.

## General

My report would not be complete if I did not make mention of the continued interest and assistance the Authority has received from the Right Hon. K. J. Holyoake and the officers of his department. Their knowledge and interest are much appreciated and are of great assistance to us in our discussions and actions.

Our Manager, Mr Chudley, has carried out his duties faithfully and well, and to him I would like to extend my personal thanks for his loyalty and assistance as well as the thanks of the members of the Authority. When Mr Chudley was appointed he was a good accountant; he has since applied himself to learning about honey, beekeepers and the industry

generally and is today better fitted to deal with our special problems.

The Honey Grader and the members of our office and factory staff are deserving of praise for handling a large crop of honey under congested conditions.

My thanks are also extended to those members of the Authority who have continually helped me not only in meetings but in keeping producers acquainted with our progress.

I hope I am not exceeding my privilege while addressing your Conference to say that I believe many producers are being too parochial in their outlook concerning the industry. The members of the Honey Marketing Authority are elected not only to sell honey at the best price possible but at the same time to build on sound foundations for the future. When you consider the record amount of honey handled by us in the last two years, the plans made for the future and the fact that we have given you the highest nett return you have had for honey exported I think I can claim our record is good. You and members of the Authority have a good deal at stake in the honey industry. Let us take a lesson from the bees—work and plan each for the common good of all.

## REPORT TO MINISTER

15th June, 1956.

The Right Hon. K. J. Holyoake,  
Minister of Agriculture,  
Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in submitting to you the second Annual Report on the proceedings and operations of the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority. This report covers the transactions for the year ended 31st August, 1955.

### Contract with Suppliers

Producers demonstrated their support of the organisation by contracting to supply increased quantities of honey, the comparative figures for 1953-54 and 1954-55 being as follows:

	1953-54	1954-55
North Island .....	349 tons	737 tons
South Island .....	449 tons	452 tons
	798 tons	1189 tons

### Honey Supplied to Authority

Production of honey took place at a high level during the year and a record quantity was supplied to the Authority. The bulk of these supplies came from the Auckland province and included 267 tons of Rewa Rewa honey, a honey which in previous seasons was difficult to sell.

The quantities supplied during the last two seasons were:

1953-54 .....	1125 tons	1954-55 .....	2206 tons
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### Marketing

The Authority continued to blend honey under the trade name "Imperial Bee" for sale on the local market, and in addition small quantities of this pack were sold overseas. Sales in New Zealand of both packed and bulk honey during the year totalled 283 tons; 1809 tons were exported to the United Kingdom and Europe and 28 tons to Singapore, India and other countries.

In December, 1954, an agency agreement was entered into with Messrs Kimpton Bros. (Red Carnation) Ltd., London, for this company to act as the Authority's sole agent for the United Kingdom and the Continent of Europe. The terms of the agreement provided for certain guaranteed returns and the division of any additional prices which might be received. Honey which did not come under the guarantee was to be sold on a straight-out commission basis.

Shortly before the agency discussions took place Messrs C. & E. Morton Ltd., who had for a number of years packed honey in the United Kingdom for the Marketing Division and later for the Authority, decided to cease their honey packing operations. The arrangements with this firm involved the blending of honey in New Zealand and packing into bulk containers and the reheating and repacking of the bulk supplies in the United Kingdom. These operations had proved to be extremely unprofitable and it was decided that all future consignments would be shipped without blending or repacking in New Zealand. At the same time the value of the "Imperial Bee" trademark was recognised and our new agents agreed to make arrangements with suitable bottling firms in the United Kingdom to purchase our honey in bulk, repack it at their own expense and sell it under the "Imperial Bee" label.

The agency arrangements worked very smoothly. Our agents were able not only to dispose of all honey made available to them (including the Rewa Rewa honey referred to above) but also to effect sales on a higher price level than existed previously. Owing to the buoyancy of the market they very generously agreed after the agency had been in operation for a few months to accept a smaller share of the excess over the guaranteed returns.

### Seals Revenue

The levy on honey sold by beekeepers who elected to serve local markets remained at approximately the same level as the previous year. The seals revenue for the two years was as follows:

1953-54	.....	£15,893	1954-55	.....	£15,377
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### Depots

During the year new arrangements were made in the South Island for the receipt and storing of honey and I would place on record the Authority's appreciation of the valuable services rendered by Messrs Spencer & Dunkley Ltd., at Dunedin; Messrs Horton, Bidwell & Co. Ltd., at Christchurch; and Messrs Greenhill & Co. Ltd., at Greymouth.

The policy of effecting shipments direct from the South Island depots to overseas markets was carried out wherever possible during the year.

### Payments to Suppliers

The advance payment on graded honey, which had been reduced to 8d per lb. pro rata for the 1953-54 season, was restored to the previous figure of 9d per lb. pro rata, and the advance payment on Manuka honey was increased to the previous amount of 7d per lb. The final payment for the season was fixed at 3½d per lb. for graded honey and 2½d per lb. for Manuka honey. These final payments were not quite covered by the revenue received during the year, but as the overseas market had shown a considerable improvement during the latter half of the year it was considered reasonable that some additional benefit should be passed on to suppliers. The maximum price paid by the Authority (i.e., for top quality honey supplied under contract) was 1/1 per lb., an increase of ½d over the previous period. The total payments by the Authority averaged over the whole supply worked out at approximately 11d per lb. This is approximately 2d per lb. less than the estimated cost of production.

### Annual Accounts

Copies of the Annual Accounts and Balance Sheet are attached. These disclose a balance of £67,326 in the Honey Revenue Account and a balance of £13,599 in the Seals Revenue Account. In view of the improvement in honey prices overseas it was decided to increase the stock valuations at the end of the period to cost or market value whichever was the lower. This involved the writing up of these stocks by approximately 3d per lb. and resulted in a corresponding increase in the honey revenue. At the same time provision was made for future fluctuations in stock values by transferring £28,000 to Stock Fluctuation Account. The Appropriation Account has been charged with the final payment to producers, the amount involved being £62,548.

After all the above items are taken into account the Appropriation Account shows a deficiency of £9,622. This amount has been transferred to the Accumulated Fund, leaving a balance in the fund of £4,658. The factory wages, rent and store expenses averaged out at approximately ½d for each lb. of honey supplied, while the office salaries, overhead and members' expenses amounted to another ½d per lb.

### New Premises

During the year the Authority decided at the request of the industry to establish itself in its own quarters in Auckland. Extensive inquiries were made throughout Auckland City and the suburbs and shortly before the end of the financial year a very desirable site was located at Parnell approximately three-quarters of a mile from the Auckland wharves and railway station. The purchase of this property has since been completed and the buildings on it which had previously been condemned have been demolished. Arrangements are now in hand for the erection of suitable premises.

### Acknowledgments

On behalf of the Authority I wish to express my appreciation of the interest which you have always displayed in our affairs and the assistance you have offered us. I acknowledge also the grading service and investigation work which the Department of Agriculture has continued to carry out for the benefit of the Authority and honey industry as a whole.

Yours faithfully,

E. A. FIELD, Chairman.

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COMB FOUNDATION**  
IS MANUFACTURED FROM THE FINEST OF PURE BEESWAX.  
YOUR OWN WAX CONVERTED OR EXCHANGED.  
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## NEW ZEALAND HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

## HONEY REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST, 1955

Honey Stocks on hand 1/9/54 (book valuations at that date)—							
New Zealand		£	s	d	£	s	d
Overseas							
		72,718	12	4			
		22,114	11	7			
Payments to Suppliers—					94,833	3	11
Initial Payments		158,156	1	8			
Contract Premiums		7,549	14	8			
					165,705	16	4
Freight and Cartage Inward					1,969	11	0
Store Costs—							
Rent, Refrigeration and Factory Expenses		5,016	18	0			
Storage and Handling Expenses		1,129	0	3			
Packing Materials		6,485	3	1			
Wages		6,037	1	8			
Depreciation on Factory Plant and Tools		63	5	7			
					18,731	8	7
Local Sales Expenses—							
Commission		216	13	3			
Freight and Cartage Outward		1,061	19	6			
					1,278	12	9
Export Expenses—							
Packing Materials		2,432	5	7			
Freight, Landing Charges and Cartage		19,972	8	1			
Commission		10,621	16	11			
Agent's Incentive Payments		3,631	4	11			
Packing Allowance		812	2	0			
Insurance		645	6	5			
London Administration & General Expenses		637	5	10			
Warehousing		245	17	5			
Provision for Contingencies		350	0	0			
					39,348	7	2
Administration—							
Office Rent and Services		835	0	0			
Printing and Stationery		196	13	2			
Salaries		5,544	8	0			
General Expenses		593	2	11			
Postages, Tolls, Telegrams and Cables		405	13	1			
Insurance		310	13	1			
Depreciation on Office Equipment		14	16	7			
					7,900	6	10
Marketing Authority—							
Members' Honoraria		1,200	0	0			
Members' Travelling Expenses		903	5	5			
Election Expenses		14	19	4			
					2,118	4	9
Balance Transferred to Appropriation Account					67,326	7	7
					£399,211	18	11





## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st AUGUST, 1955

## LIABILITIES

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Unpaid Purchase Money—						
Balance Due on Freehold Property .....				3,750	0	0
Sundry Creditors—						
Dept. of Agriculture—Honey Stocks .....	97,629	2	0			
Packing Materials .....	4,130	5	10			
Trade Creditors .....	2,388	13	0			
Honey Suppliers .....	61,017	1	3			
Provision for Contingencies .....	350	0	0			
				<hr/>		
				165,515	2	1
Stock Fluctuation Account .....				28,000	0	0
Accumulated Fund as at 31/8/54 .....	14,281	3	1			
Less Transferred to Appropriation Account .....	9,622	7	10			
				<hr/>		
				4,658	15	3
				<hr/>		
				£201,923	17	4
				<hr/>		

## ASSETS

	£	s	d	£	s	d
Freehold Premises .....				3,800	0	0
Bank—						
Reserve Bank of N.Z., Wellington .....	1,920	5	6			
Bank of New Zealand, Auckland .....	5,787	12	2			
				<hr/>		
				7,707	17	8
Honey Stocks .....				137,450	13	4
Packing Materials .....				2,175	2	5
Plant and Tools .....				288	14	9
Office Appliances .....				74	13	9
Stationery .....				124	0	4
Sundry Debtors—						
Overseas Agents .....	44,608	19	9			
Current Accounts .....	5,693	15	4			
				<hr/>		
				50,302	15	1
				<hr/>		
				£201,923	17	4
				<hr/>		

W. H. CHUDLEY, A.R.A.N.Z., Manager.

The Audit Office having made such examination as was considered necessary, certifies that in its opinion the above Balance Sheet and accompanying Accounts are correct.

C. R. J. ATKIN, Controller and Auditor-General.

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HORTICULTURE DIVISION

### ADDRESS BY MR A. M. W. GREIG, DIRECTOR, AT THE 1956 DOMINION CONFERENCE

Mr President,

This year is a jubilee year for Southland because it is 100 years since this city of Invercargill was founded. It is also a jubilee year for Southland beekeepers because it is 50 years since this Association was formed.

It is therefore appropriate first of all to make a review of beekeeping by decades for the past 50 years.

The first registration figures available are at March, 1918, when 4,474 persons registered apiaries with a total of 50,721 hives of bees.

By 1926 there were	7,100	apiaries	and	99,855	hives
" 1936       "       "	8,500	"	"	135,000	"
" 1946       "       "	10,457	"	"	140,700	"
" 31-5-55   "       "	11,166	"	"	180,409	"
				held by	5,237
					beekeepers.

So in the half century whilst the number of beekeepers has increased by 17% the number of hives they have operated has increased by 255%, or more than 2½ times. Today beekeepers with 30 hives and over operate 159,618 hives, or 83% of the total hives in the country.

There is a definite trend towards consolidation of hive holdings by commercial beekeepers, and also a movement of many apiaries to the more productive areas, where better grade honey is likely to be produced.

#### Production of Honey and Beeswax

The average annual production of honey and beeswax for the past five years has been 5,180 tons of honey and 166,600lbs. of beeswax. The record season was the one before last—that is, 1954-55—when 7,000 tons of honey and 245,000lbs. of beeswax were produced. This past season—1955-56—the production was below average, final figures being 4,600 tons of honey and 161,000lbs. of beeswax. Very difficult beekeeping conditions were experienced in most districts due either to unsettled conditions or the prolonged dry spell experienced in Canterbury and most of Otago. Beekeeping conditions were relatively better in this district—coastal Southland.

For the year ending 29th February, 1956, the Departmental Honey Grader, Mr R. S. Walsh, graded 34,470 cases of bulk honey, each case being 120lbs. net. This honey was received at the depots at Auckland, New Plymouth, Christchurch, Greymouth and Dunedin, and was 9,138 cases more than in the previous year. Bulk honey to the number of 1,286 cases could not be exported because of its low specific gravity. The quantity of honey which fails to reach the minimum grading standard is decreasing and was only 4 tons last year—a considerable improvement on the previous year, when 14½ tons were rejected.

#### Staff

During the past year a number of transfers of Apiary Instructors has taken place.

Mr F. Bartrum resigned to take up commercial beekeeping in Canterbury, and Mr L. A. M. Griffin was transferred from Hastings to Christchurch.

Mr S. Line, Apiary Instructor here at Invercargill for the past 7½ years, was transferred to Hastings, and Mr D. W. A. Seal, from Greymouth was transferred here to take Mr Line's place.

West Coast producers will be pleased to learn we have now appointed Mr R. G. Hobbs, of Palmerston North, to the position of Apiary Instructor, Greymouth, where he hopes to take up duty on 8th October. Mr Hobbs has had 23 years as a beekeeper, handled 1200 colonies, and for several years was Chairman of the Manawatu Branch of the National Beekeepers' Association.

An important step has now been taken by the Department in its service to the beekeeping industry, in the appointment of Miss L. H. McDowall as Botanist to the Horticulture Division. Pollen analyses of honey were previously carried out to a limited extent by Miss D. B. Filmer at Wallaceville and Mr W. F. Harris, then of Botany Division, D.S.I.R. Last year, Miss McDowall had a short period of training with Mr Harris, who had just returned from a trip overseas during which he collected much valuable information on the types of survey work undertaken in Switzerland, France and England.

A comprehensive survey of the New Zealand honey-producing districts has now been planned. This is necessarily a long-term project as the work of preparing reference pollen slides, district plant lists with information on flowering times, and examination of a number of normal honey types from each area has to be done in addition to Miss McDowall's other work on horticultural botany and plant quarantine. An initial survey has already been carried out in the South Canterbury-Central Otago district, and it is anticipated that the amount of basic work required will decrease in the remaining areas to be visited. As these surveys are completed, the Department will be in a stronger position to assist the industry in overcoming problems such as undesirable nectar sources, which may be wholly or partly elucidated by the use of botanical methods.

In my opinion the most important staff move last year was the overseas visit of the Bee Research Officer, Wallaceville, Mr T. Palmer-Jones. This is the first time, as far as I am aware, that a research worker who spends all his time on beekeeping problems has gone overseas and seen what his associates on kindred problems are doing. Mr Palmer-Jones was absent from New Zealand for eight months last year and in that period he visited Italy, Switzerland, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. He made some investigations on behalf of the Honey Marketing Authority, and the Government appreciates the grant made by the Authority towards the cost of these overseas investigations. Whilst in Britain, Mr Palmer-Jones met a number of people I had met in 1952, including Dr. C. G. Butler, Head of the Bee Department, Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, and Mr Milne, the senior advisory officer to beekeepers in England. In addition he visited Auchincruive, the West of Scotland Agricultural College in Ayrshire, near Burns' birthplace at Alloway, and these personal contacts made his departmental report of particular interest to me. I have read this report very carefully and I shall make frequent references to it in my remarks today because it is my opinion that his visit was well worth while and that he has brought back to New Zealand, not only techniques of use to him as a research worker, but also practical hints of use to beekeepers and to the Department's Apiary Instructors. He attended a summer school for beekeepers in West Sussex and a four-day course in Warwickshire for the Apiary Instructors of the United Kingdom.

### Advisory Work

During the past year, 114 lectures and demonstrations covering a wide range of subject related to beekeeping were given by members of the apiary section. Nineteen well illustrated articles appeared in the "Journal of Agriculture" and 12 radio talks were given. In addition a two-day farm

school for North Island beekeepers was held in Hamilton in August, 1955, the theme being "Advanced Methods in Apiary Management and Honey Harvesting."

To investigate another local problem, Mr Palmer-Jones when in Devonshire visited Buckfast Abbey, close to Dartmoor. There he met Brother Adam, an efficient beekeeper who has specialised in producing and extracting heather honey, which in many ways resembles New Zealand manuka honey, especially in being difficult to extract.

### Apidictor

One very interesting piece of equipment seen by Mr Palmer-Jones and one which may have definite value to commercial beekeepers in this country is the apidictor, an instrument designed by a sound engineer, Mr E. F. Woods, of the British Broadcasting Corporation, which he claims will detect preparations for swarming in bee hives. Every year commercial beekeepers are involved in a laborious job dismantling and examining their hives regularly in order to prevent swarming, as this weakens the hives, thus reducing the honey crop. An apidictor consists of a microphone which is inserted into the hive entrance and this picks up the special sounds the bees make in a hive when preparing to swarm. These sounds, picked up by the microphone, are relayed to the beekeeper through an amplifying and screening equipment, and thus the beekeeper knows which of the hives in his apiary require attention. By arrangement with Mr Woods, two of these apidictors are now in New Zealand for experiments this coming spring. If successful I'm sure the apidictor will be of great value to commercial beekeepers in New Zealand.

### Inspection of Apiaries

It is pleasing to note that American foulbrood, the most serious bee disease in New Zealand, is now reduced in the main honey producing areas to less than 1.8%, and in some areas it was present in less than  $\frac{1}{2}$ % of the hives inspected. This situation is largely due to the policy of destruction of diseased bees and sterilisation of the remaining hive equipment, combined with the regular inspection carried out by Apiary Instructors and part-time Inspectors. Four thousand five hundred and ninety-nine visits of instruction and inspection for disease were made last year. This coming spring the work will be continued, and the emphasis will be on those areas where the disease is comparatively most troublesome.

Whilst on the subject of bee diseases, I must make reference to acarine. This disease, regarded as the most serious of all bee diseases, is at present unknown in this country. Without treatment a hive suffering from acarine is certain to die in one or two years. We do not permit the entry of honey bees into New Zealand from countries where acarine is known to exist, and when queen bees are imported the attendant bees are dissected and examined at Wallaceville for signs of the disease before the queens are sent on to the importer. This system is normally perfectly satisfactory but is not proof against an individual who deliberately sets out to evade it. If all bee importers adhere to the existing bee quarantine procedure through the Wallaceville Research Station we may remain free of this disease for an indefinite period. However, with the speed of modern fast air travel a passenger could easily smuggle in a queen bee from Britain. One instance of this type has already occurred where a queen bee had been brought in, without passing through the quarantine procedure and had been established for some months in a hive before it was discovered and the hive destroyed.

Despite all precautions it is possible that acarine disease could be discovered in New Zealand and it is vitally important that an eradication campaign should have been prepared before such an occurrence and be implemented promptly. Mr Palmer-Jones has discussed this subject overseas and I should appreciate the opportunity to discuss departmental

proposals with your Executive during the coming year so that we could co-operatively tackle such a problem efficiently and promptly. Let me emphasise again that with bee quarantine, and in the eradication of a new and serious disease such as acarine, the co-operation of every person interested in beekeeping is essential—first of all to keep New Zealand free from this disease, and secondly, if it does occur, to eradicate it as promptly as possible.

### Agricultural Chemicals

Whilst overseas we asked Mr Palmer-Jones to see how the increasing use of agricultural chemicals toxic to honey bees was affecting beekeeping in various countries and what steps were being taken to protect bees and beekeepers.

In Italy Mr Palmer-Jones reports that insecticides are becoming a menace to bees and are being applied from the air.

In Arizona, U.S.A., bee mortality has been caused by dusting cotton, lucerne and melons with insecticides. In Arizona the application of insecticides is controlled by a board consisting of representatives of farmers, university (research and advisory work) and the beekeepers.

In California last year, 4,000,000 acres were dusted with what they call pesticides, of which 12,000 were registered.

As you know, samples of bees are occasionally sent to Wallaceville, where the Toxicology Section determines whether or not they have died through the use of agricultural chemicals.

The chemical analyses necessary are laborious and recently simple biological tests using living creatures have been developed overseas with a view to decreasing the time required.

These tests will not tell what particular poison killed the bees but simply that they were poisoned. But they can be applied first and so prevent the chemist wasting time looking for poisons which do not exist.

Two of these new biological tests which Mr Palmer-Jones learned about overseas depend on the use of crickets and shrimps. The use of the cricket as a test insect for insecticides was first developed at Bures-sur-Yvette, the bee research station about 18 miles out of Paris. There it was found that very young crickets are best as these are extremely susceptible to all insecticides which affect bees. This is the standard test now used in Italy, where the crickets are fed with pollen suspected to have been poisoned. Two crickets in turn are fed with the pollen and if both die it is held that the pollen had been poisoned.

Another biological test which is regarded as an improvement on crickets is the use being made in the United States with brine shrimps for the detection of bee poisoning through the use of insecticides. Brine shrimps have the advantage of being extremely easy to keep alive and being very sensitive to insecticides. Bees suspected to have been affected by insecticides are ground up, treated with certain chemicals, and then one to three shrimps are added to the solution. If after two hours the shrimps are unable to swim down in the tube or are dead it is considered to be positive proof that insecticides were present on the dead bees.

### Research and Experimental Work

To illustrate that research work is international it should be mentioned that many French honeys do not granulate; when once heated they usually remain liquid. They frequently contain excess moisture, rendering them liable to ferment, and great interest was shown in the New Zealand work done by Messrs C. R. Patterson and Palmer-Jones on removing such moisture by means of a vacuum moisture extractor.

One of the strange uses being made of bees was seen in France—the extraction of bee stings. A commercial beekeeper there spends the winter

extracting venom from bee stings and sells it to firms making up preparations for treating rheumatism. In one season he removes 1½ million stings.

### Research

After visiting all these research and experimental stations overseas, Mr Palmer-Jones makes a comparison between research facilities and the value of the beekeeping industries in these countries and New Zealand.

Although both New Zealand and Switzerland have beekeeping industries of approximately equal value, Swiss expenditure on beekeeping research is estimated to be five times that of New Zealand.

In England at the Rothamsted Bee Department there is a staff of 20, comprising 6 professional workers, an apiarist and 13 others. In Scotland there are 2 professional workers and 1 apiculturist engaged in research. The United Kingdom tonnage of honey is estimated at only 1,200 tons, or about one-fifth New Zealand production.

In New Zealand today bee research and experimental work can be said to be confined to 3½ workers (1 research officer and 1 technician at Wallaceville, ½ horticultural botanist, Wellington, and 1 apiculturist at Hamilton). This is inadequate by overseas standards and some increase is necessary if the efficiency of the New Zealand beekeeping industry is to be maintained and more time devoted at Wallaceville to diagnostic work and treatment of bee diseases.

I know that the first question the Government will ask when a subject such as this is raised is, What are the beekeepers going to do about it? Is it your opinion that more staff time and money should be devoted to bee research? If so, what is the National Beekeepers' Association prepared to do in financing part of the cost involved?

### National Diploma in Beekeeping

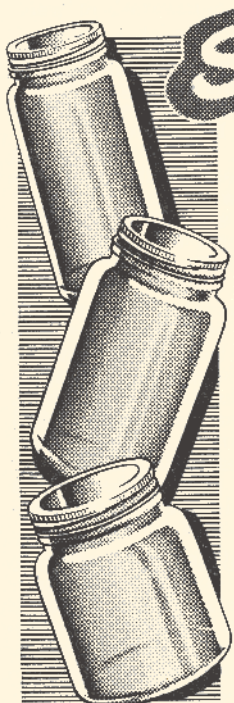
A few years ago I mentioned that I thought the time was ripe for the institution in New Zealand of a National Diploma in Beekeeping. During the past year in consultation with your Executive some real progress has been made in this direction. It is now hoped that the Royal New Zealand Institute of Horticulture will sponsor such a move. This institute is authorised by statute to grant diplomas in horticulture, and the definition of horticulture includes work in parks and reserves and nurseries, fruit growing, market gardening and school gardening. If a small amendment were made to the Institutes Act it could issue a diploma or certificate in beekeeping. Working on parallel lines to the diplomas it has already issued, authority would be sought for the granting of an honorary diploma to beekeepers being persons of 40 years of age and over, who had practised beekeeping for not less than 20 years. A fee of £2/2/- per applicant would probably be charged, and I hope that in this Jubilee year, this proposal will have the unqualified support of the National Beekeepers' Association and that it will encourage eligible beekeepers to apply for this qualification, which may thereby become recognised as the hallmark of a qualified practical beekeeper. The syllabus of subjects and examiners for the various stages will be drafted by Mr T. S. Winter, in consultation with your Executive, and I hope also that a reasonable number of younger beekeepers who cannot obtain the honorary qualification, will study for the examinations and sit each year.

I commend this move to the Conference for its favourable consideration.

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### SOUTH AUCKLAND

Problems facing the beekeeping industry were discussed at the annual meeting of the South Auckland Branch at Hamilton. It is an historic year in the life of the Branch which recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

There was considerable discussion of the disastrous losses suffered by beekeepers in the Canterbury district as the result of the spraying of honey-bearing plants by toxic pesticides. The Dominion Conference, to be held in July in Invercargill, is to ask the Horticultural Division to investigate the possibility of introducing nectar-bearing flora into the country to replace that being sprayed.

Several speakers referred to the importance of the honey bee to the country's economy. The welfare of the farmer and the orchardist, as well as the grower of all seeds, it was stated, depended to a large extent on honey bees to pollinate their crops.

To-day in the Hamilton district there were 32,000 hives and the average annual production from the area was 1200 tons of honey. The Dominion's production, it was stated, should reach 8000 tons in a favourable season. Of this amount 1500 to 2000 tons had ready markets overseas, while the remainder was sold in New Zealand.

### THE EARLY DAYS

At the luncheon adjournment Mr T. H. Pearson, the oldest member of the South Auckland Branch, related many amusing incidents in the life of a beekeeper in the early days. Mr Pearson's father was the first president of the Association and the

speaker read extracts from the minute book as far back as 1908. He mentioned the problem attached to the harnessing of a horse to a cartload of wild bees and honey.

In the preparation of honey for market in the early days the practice was to extract the honey into shallow vats and leave them exposed to allow for evaporation to take out the moisture. The honey was then packed.

### CANTERBURY

Branch officers for the year 1956-57 are as follows:—President, Mr R. I. Woods; Vice-Presidents, Messrs C. Hill, J. K. Bray and T. E. Pearson; Committee, Messrs R. Newton, P. R. Robins and E. W. Elliott; Press Officer, Mr K. Ecroyd.

### DUNEDIN CONVENTION

The Annual Convention of Otago and Southland Beekeepers was held in Dunedin on June 5th. At the business session in the afternoon there was a good and representative attendance, including five visitors from Canterbury. Mr N. Glass was elected to the chair, and in welcoming those present he extended a special welcome to Mr D. W. A. Seal, the new Apiary Instructor at Invercargill. The meeting also took the opportunity of sending a telegram of good wishes to the daughter of a well-known member, Mr C. Griffin, of Woodlands, whose wedding was to take place that day.

The speakers for the afternoon were Mr J. W. Fraser, Dominion Vice-President of the Association, and Mr W. T. Herron, of the Honey Market-

ing Authority. The affairs of the industry were expounded at some length and an animated and enlightening discussion took place on the various matters raised. The speakers were accorded a vote of thanks for their efforts.

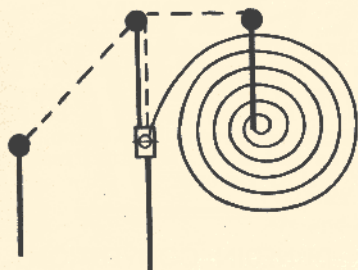
The Convention concluded with a social evening, and the speaker was Mr I. W. Forster. Taking "Pollination" as his subject, Mr Forster dealt first of all with general aspects of plant reproduction by pollination, and later with the particular problems of red clover and lucerne seed production. The important points emerging from the address were the growing importance of honeybees in pollination work and the need for more research

in this field to obtain the most effective co-operation between farmers and beekeepers. The remainder of the programme was taken up by two very fine colour films presented by Mr B. T. Cloake, the first on "Beekeeping" and the second a travel film taken by Mr Cloake during his recent trip overseas. Mr A. J. Shaw was in the chair.

The Dunedin Winter Show was of a high standard this year and attracted a record attendance. The Department of Agriculture staged an attractive beekeeping display, but unfortunately there were only a few entries in the competitive classes. This was no doubt partly due to the difficult season which had been experienced by honey producers.

## NOTES FOR BEGINNERS

By "Skeep"



The above diagram may be an open book to some of you, to others perhaps not, and so for those interested enough to work things out, I have, like a quiz, placed the answer at the end of my Notes.

### SEASONAL WORK

#### Preliminary

Within a few weeks it will be time to become active in the apiaries again. A minor operation but very instructive and important, is the partial lifting of each hive to check the stores. Those light in weight you mark for priority inspection at the first opportunity.

#### First Inspection

The first thorough examination should take place about the second week in September, weather permitting, and there are quite a number of things will need investigation.

Is there in the hive sufficient supply of honey and pollen? (Honey, at least 30lbs.).

Are there sufficient bees in the hive?

Have combs deteriorated at all?

Is the hive queen-right?

Is the hive entrance clear of refuse, to allow free passage in and out for bees?

Is the hive itself in good condition? Are repairs needed? Any replacements? Painting, etc.?

On this first inspection you will in some way record all hives needing immediate attention. Hives showing no brood (queenless). Hives that have only drone-brood, in patchy and irregular form (drone-laying queen). Hives with small number of worker-bees, and showing only a frame or two of brood, and that uneven in appearance (very poor or old queen). For a temporary build-up give each of these hives a frame or two of hatch-

ing brood from good-conditioned hives.

**Important:** About eight days after this, inspect these combs for queen cells, destroying any the bees may have built, for if these cells are allowed to hatch the difficulties of requeening are greatly enhanced. Meanwhile arrange to supply them with a young laying queen as early as possible.

### Second Inspection

Now, particularly should the bees be gathering honey, thus not inclined to rob; bottom boards should be cleaned by scraping off foreign matter; entrances properly adjusted; surrounds of the hives cleared of any surplus grass or scrub; hives showing shortage of stores give a frame of honey; and the weak hives give a further build-up.

### Hive Increase

During the winter months you have no doubt decided on your hive increase for the coming season, and have made up the necessary equipment for this increase. If not started, or only partially ready, I would advise you to expedite this work as much as possible, as the months soon slip by. Seasons vary rather much, and you do not want to be caught in a condition of shortage at a critical period.

Increase may be made by dividing strong stocks early in the spring, say, at the end of September, with a young laying queen introduced into the half which is without a queen. Alternatively strong hives may be split into say four nuclei, and if created early, and built up with occasional spare frames of brood, and ample honey, will each become strong enough for the honey flow. Another method is to procure packet bees by mail. When buying queens or packet bees, it is essential to make early application.

### Honey Stores

At all times covering the spring period it is most essential to have ample supplies of feed in the hives, right up to the time the honey flow commences. But it is advisable to control supply as it is needed by the bees, for surplus feed in the hive causes waste of stores, excess laying

by the queen at the wrong time, with probability of unnecessary swarming, just when you can least afford the resultant loss of field bees.

### Conditioning for the Crop

Your goal is, of course, a good honey crop, and all your planning, expense and labour over the year will be of little avail if your hives have not the needful abundance of worker and young bees, ready for the period when the honey flow is likely to begin, say by the middle of December. During the following six weeks, the mortality of the bees is such, through pressure of foraging, that the whole working strength is wiped out; hence it is very necessary to have this abundance of young bees at this period, with ample hatching brood backing up the great army of workers.

The order of replacement is thus: The workers of from 10 to 15 days or over do the foraging, the younger bees have the duty of feeding the grubs in the cells, all general house-keeping, and baby-sitting so to speak. As the field workers die off at a very quick rate, the nurse bees then do the field work, and their place is taken by the erstwhile cell babies.

You may count yourself a competent bee master, and expect a good return, if by early December your apiaries show three-storeyed hives well packed with bees throughout, ample stores, with from 8 to 15 frames of brood covering all stages from egg to hatching bees.

Summarising September, October, November:

**SEPTEMBER:** Early, quick preliminary check-over.

Later, thorough inspections.

In suitable districts, if needed, prepare for increase and productions of young queens.

Adjust feed stores in all hives.

Check up on all gear to be used for increasing and for honey crop.

**OCTOBER:** Continue inspection.

Requeen needy stocks.

Pay special attention to feeding.

**NOVEMBER:** Make special adjustment to have bees up to peak for

honey flow, and super where needed.

Special care over food required to keep hives at full strength.

Guard against swarming, or loss of strength in any way.

### The Behaviour of the Honey Bee in the Field

Now revert to my introduction and the diagram, which demonstrates certain findings on the behaviour of bees from C. G. Butler's "The Honey Bee," and will, I venture to say, probably be news to most beekeepers, beginners and experienced.

Consider the centre oblong to be a hive of bees in a field, the line leading straight up as running due north for 100 yards, the dot to be a tray containing bee feed, the dotted line indicating the flight of the bees from hive to tray, which has been in this north position for a few days, the bees flying freely between hive and tray. Should the tray be lifted gently while many bees are busy feeding, and carried due east as illustrated for 100 yards, the bees, when they rise from the tray, instead of flying diagonally to the hive, will fly direct south for 100 yards, then not being able to locate their hive, will make searching flights in the form of a series of concentric circles of ever-increasing size, interspersed with figures of eight, until they eventually find the hive.

Furthermore, if the dish, with the bees upon it is removed from the original point, and placed on the roof of the hive itself, even so the majority of the bees will fail to recognise their own hive, and again fly off in a southerly direction.

Eventually, of course, whatever direction the tray is moved, after a period, the bees become accustomed to the new position.

All beekeepers should be interested in this behaviour of bees, particularly the more advanced men, who use the method of outdoor feeding in manipulation of their hives.

---

The really good old days were when the Government lived within its income and without ours.

### ANNIVERSARY DINNER

On the evening of the first day of Conference a Dinner was held at the beautifully appointed Elmwood Gardens to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Southland Branch and the 21st of the Gore Branch. Exactly one hundred people sat down to the bountiful spread, and Mr J. W. Fraser, Chairman of the Southland Branch, was the Master of Ceremonies.

Regrets were expressed that Mr W. Caldwell (Roslyn Bush), the oldest member of the Association, was unable to attend. Mr Caldwell has kept bees ever since joining the Southland Branch.

The toast list was:—

"The Queen"; "The National Beekeepers' Association" (Mr A. A. Lennie—Mr R. A. Fraser, Dominion Secretary); "Gore and Southland Branches" (Mr E. D. Williams—Mr L. K. Griffin, Southland, and Mr W. T. Herron, Gore); "Apiary Section, Horticulture Division, Department of Agriculture" (Mr J. W. Fraser—Mr W. B. Bray, original South Island instructor, Mr T. S. Winter, superintendent, Beekeeping industry, and Mr A. M. W. Greig, Director Horticulture Division); "Guests" (Mr A. V. Hartley, Federated Farmers, Mr J. L. Grimaldi, "Southland Times").

Items were given by Mrs N. Glass and Mr L. Adamson. The accompanist was Mr N. Armstrong.

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### BEEES AT THE RACES

A swarm of bees took possession of a tree at Woodend Racecourse and caused the stewards to decide that because of danger to horses and riders, the race should be shortened by half a furlong. None of those concerned objected.

The race could well have become a punter's dream. Imagine the nag we'd backed, instead of leisurely tailing the field, getting a sting or two, and hurtling on to win the race.

—"Australian Bee Journal."



### SOUTH AUCKLAND BEEKEEPERS

A GROUP AT THE FIFTIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF SOUTH AUCKLAND BRANCH

Front Row: D. Lorimer (President), E. D. Williams (Dominion President), T. H. Pearson (oldest member), and F. D. Holt (Immediate Past President).

Second Row: W. Trownson, P. A. Hillary, W. Nelson, and H. Geddes.

Third Row: G. Hill, W. Ernest, G. Gow, J. Jay, J. R. Barber, and D. Carey.

Fourth Row: A. L. Pearson, H. Moffat, J. Hishon, L. Baker, and T. Wheeler.

Fifth Row: —, L. Holt, R. Goddard, C. R. Paterson.

Back Row: S. Wheeler, A. Deadman, K. Geddes, —, A. R. Bates.



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## NOTES FROM CONFERENCE

Invercargill turned on fine weather for the whole of Conference week; one or two mornings brought a nip to the air, but it would have been called pleasant weather in any part of New Zealand. The city was still gay with Centennial decorations and there was a festive note arising from big football on the two adjacent Saturdays. In the first match Southland overthrew their traditional enemies from Otago, and in the second they put up a brave showing against the Springboks.

\* \* \*

As for Conference week itself, it was beekeeping week in Southland. The local papers heralded the event with generous headlines and gave a day to day report of the business done. Topical talks were given over the radio by Mr J. W. Fraser (Southland) and Mrs J. Horn (Central Otago)—both experienced broadcasters, by beekeepers' standards—and the debates on two remits were recorded to provide material for use at subsequent farmers' sessions. And Mr E. D. Williams was the guest speaker at the weekly meeting of the Invercargill Rotary Club, his topic being bees and beekeeping.

\* \* \*

The Sunday preceding Conference was a momentous day in the south—the closing of the Roxburgh Dam, the halting of the river, and the filling of the lake. A few beekeepers joined the throng which converged from all points of the compass to watch the stranglhold being applied to the mighty Clutha. And there it was: the dam looking neat and solid in its finished state, the quiet lake half filling the gorge, the downstream riverbed a series of long, still pools. Nothing spectacular, not a word of protest from the river, perhaps a quiet smile at the feverish efforts of the goldminers.

One such goldminer, one Doug Hamilton, of North Otago, with more than a passing knowledge of the game, came well prepared, and descended into the riverbed to make his pile. During Conference week Doug would produce a handful of sand and draw attention, under a strong light,

to the presence of the glittering metal—a colour! Shades of Julius Vogel!

\* \* \*

Principal speaker at the Anniversary Dinner was Mr W. B. Bray. Mr Bray is so well known to-day that it is almost unbelievable that he was also one of the leading men of the industry in 1908. In that year he was appointed Apiary Instructor for the whole of the South Island. He was only 19 years of age, and Mr Isaac Hopkins, the Government Apiarist, was reluctant to appoint a youth of such tender years to the onerous position. "I'm not too young," said young Bray, "and anyway, I'm improving every day!"

\* \* \*

At an evening meeting during Conference Mr T. Palmer-Jones showed a series of colour slides with a commentary on his recent visit overseas. The illustrations showed life in many lands, and especially the institutions devoted to research in apiculture at which Mr Palmer-Jones had studied during the course of his trip. Those present were impressed with the amount of work being done to advance the beekeeping craft, even in some countries which are not prominent in the commercial production of honey.

\* \* \*

A welcome visitor at the Conference was the Hon. R. Hanan, Minister of Health and Member for Invercargill. Mr Hanan was unable to be present at the opening ceremony but attended later and briefly addressed the gathering.

Mr Hanan pointed out that he had some knowledge of beekeeping, and certainly an interest in the work, as he was a domestic beekeeper of over twenty years standing. He felt sure there was an interesting future for the industry both in honey production and in the service of seed fertilisation. In this connection he urged producers to stand by their organisation, which was doing a great deal for their interests by presenting the united and authoritative viewpoint of the industry.

\* \* \*

Congratulations to Mr T. J. L. Broadley, of Paeroa, who travelled perhaps further than anyone else to attend Conference in an unofficial

capacity. Attendance at meetings is the acid test of loyalty among members, and Mr Broadley's presence in person, and his contributions to the debates, helped to make the Invercargill meeting a Dominion Conference.

\* \* \*

It was a matter for regret that Mr R. V. Glasson, after serving conscientiously on the Executive since his appointment nine months ago, felt unable to accept nomination for the coming year. Perhaps when the Glasson boys are a few years older and Ralph assumes the role of Director-in-Chief at the Glasson Apiaries he will have more time available for Executive duties!

\* \* \*

A well-known Southland beekeeper, Mr John Glass, made the best possible use of his visit to Invercargill. After, no doubt, a suitable period of reconnaissance, John entered the hallowed precincts of Station 4YZ and carried off the radio announcer, Miss Margaret Scobie. The engagement was only a few hours old at the Anniversary Dinner so the bride-to-be was the subject of an unexpected toast—and one which was received with great enthusiasm. In his reply John remarked that he would always have a means of remembering the date of his engagement; but Mr Bob Davidson, who had called for the toast, corrected him to say that he would always have a means of remembering the date of the Dinner! Best wishes to John and Margaret.

## OUR SOUTHERN PILGRIMAGE

We headed south to old Invercargill,  
Not knowing what we might find,  
But the countryside was looking delightful,  
The weather was pleasant and kind.

Though some topics were serious and dangerous  
And hot tempers at times to flames were fanned,  
When the waitress threw a dish of pears at the  
President  
We're assured that the assault was not planned.

We honoured the beekeeping pioneers of South-  
land,  
The hospitality and the speeches were fine,  
Some quoted Shakespeare and Omar Khayyam,  
Some gave verse written by Sefton Line.

Bill Bray told us of his early experiences,  
And lots of famous beekeepers he named:  
How Presidents of the National Beekeepers' Asso-  
ciation  
Often walk about naked and quite unashamed.

When one hard school was a glass short for the  
round,  
Though their behaviour we can hardly condone,  
It was not a bad suggestion from a ginger-ale  
drinker  
To use the mouth-piece of the telephone.

Maybe it was only coincidence  
That on the very last night of the show  
The porter got the footwear all mixed up,  
And didn't know at which door each should go.

Such things are of course sent to try us,  
Though hardly a position to make one enthuse,  
It shouldn't worry a captain of industry  
Going down to breakfast in two left foot shoes.  
—"Box-Hive Bertie."

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## A PROBLEM

Here is a problem for the mathematician, economist and philosopher. It arises from the operation of a central marketing organisation, complicated by the seal levy, price control and the contract system.

The subject was raised toward the close of Conference when Mr T. F. Penrose brought forward under "general business" the following motion: "That it be a recommendation to the H.M.A. that honey be sold from the depots to packers in areas where the market is under-supplied." The motion was ruled out of order, but by general consent a few opinions were aired before the matter was dropped, and the following were among the points raised:—

In some areas of low crop returns (e.g., Canterbury) there may be a shortage of honey for local require-

ments before the end of the year. In such areas, however, honey is held at present in the depots of the H.M.A. Had it not been for the contract system this honey might have been diverted onto the local market, instead of entering the depots. It is suggested that the H.M.A. has a duty to supply these areas, but that it would be more beneficial to suppliers to sell honey to packers from the depots, and to collect the penny per pound in seal revenue, than to pack the required amount in Auckland and pay freight to the districts concerned.

Some suppliers object on principle to their crops being sold from the depots to neighbouring producer-packers, and it is contended that such sales tend to skim off the best quality honey, to the detriment of the overseas market.

What do readers think?

---

## ROAMING ABROAD WITH BOB CHANDLER

On the island of Trinidad there are about 1000 hives owned by approximately 20 beekeepers. Crops vary greatly, from one to ten tons per hundred hives. The main sources of supply are the logwood and mango trees, which produce a dark honey with a most unusual flavour for which the Trinidadians have cultivated a taste. All the honey produced is sold locally, liquid, in glass jars. There is a complete embargo on foreign honey and consequently, since there has been an exceptionally poor crop this year, it appears certain that honey will soon be very short in Trinidad. The price is nearly the same as in New Zealand.

I went up into the mountains ten miles south of the Port of Spain to visit the monks who live in the Monastery of St. Benedict and who own one-third of the hives on Trinidad. The honey house was set in the most picturesque surroundings high on the side of the mountain overlooking vast plains of rice, cocoa, fruit and sugarcane, which stretched away down

south to the famous lake of pitch and the oilfields some 50 miles distant.

In one room of the honey house I was amazed to see a large number of 44-gallon drums which are used for storing honey! The problem of remelting is partly overcome by the fact that the temperature never drops low enough to set the honey really hard, so that it may be poured and scraped from the drums before going into the electric melter. The extracting methods are modern but packing into jars and bottles with narrow necks is still done laboriously from the tanks by hand; labour is relatively cheap. The standard of cleanliness is very high.

A very good quality beeswax is produced by a straining process which culminates in the use of filter papers! A bleaching powder is added to whiten the wax, which is used to make the large candles for the monastery.

There are no important diseases in the island, which fact, together with protection of the local industry, is responsible for the Trinidadian bee-

keepers opposing the importation of honey. There is also very little swarming problem, which I found surprising in view of the heat, although requeening and early supering are given a high priority. Italian bees are used. The main flow continues from February to August; there is no winter as we know it—only the rainy season which comes in the spring.

Those New Zealand queen breeders who feel envious of a nine months' mating season will be interested to know that there is a certain bird, little bigger than a sparrow, which has developed a liking for drones and queens, though it does not touch workers. Believe it or not, when virgins are ready to get mated an issue of arms and ammunition is made from the armoury to the staff, who then take station to combat the menace!

All in all, I spent a very pleasant hour and a half which was completed by the presentation of samples of honey and beeswax and the savouring of varieties of mead. I felt a strong kinship for this monk, whose shirt was so familiarly wet with perspiration, as he placed the palms of his hands together in front of him, nodded towards the Port of Spain and smiled as he said, "You know, down there, they think we just sit up here and pray like this all day!" But it was easy to see by the pride he took in his work that he was happy in his knowledge of the truth.

Gardener's lament: It will soon be too hot to do what it was too cold to do during the winter.

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## MORE VOLCANIC NEWS

(By J. R. Barber, Pio-Pio)

Some months ago the Editor had an article entitled "Volcanic News," giving a visitor's impressions on a visit to Ruapehu. This beekeeper mentioned the fertile plains, and I wondered if he realised just what it was that gave the purple glow, that lasts so long into the winter, to the countryside. For I had been through this National Park region a number of times, and had thought it absolutely desolate, till the time arrived in early March to see the whole countryside a glowing mass of blossom, the famous Scotch Heather. It was a glorious sight, and although as sceptical as most beekeepers of 25 years experience of finding a bonanza, I could not resist deciding then and there to try it out, and moved six hives into it, much too late, but was able to secure a small sample of Scotch Heather honey, enough to show how very different it was from the average N.Zedder's idea of it.

So by the following January, with seven sites cleared and with permission from the Forestry Division arranged, on New Year's Day I gathered 20 hives together, mostly swarms and backward ones, and made a picnic trip with the family to set out the first site. The very first of the Ling Heather was in flower, with lovely clumps of purple Bell Heather every here and there, and the bees could be seen at work almost right away. In a week these hives had nearly filled one half super with comb honey, and as there would be plenty of blossom for ten weeks I thought one could not fail to secure a bumper crop.

Alas, all that glitters is not gold; the weather broke for a fortnight, but nevertheless I moved 100 hives at the beginning of February. They were stripped to the excluder and moved in one storey full of bees and brood, and I waited for results. The weather could hardly have been better, unless Heather could be affected by an extremely dry summer. Every hive did about the same, one super of comb honey gathered in the first fortnight after moving, then no force of

bees to gather any more. It appeared as though the bees had banged the brood-nest full, preventing the queen producing more bees, or the queens were worn out with a prior effort, or it was just the natural thing to do at that time of the year, or it was foolish for an Englishman to try to make a profit out of anything Scotch—the Editor may know which, especially if the last item.

[We suggest getting some queen bees from Otago!—Editor.]

The honey was interesting. All of it had a very characteristic flavour, for which one acquired a definite liking, though at first taste one wondered. It has a very full flavour, a comb in a room will fill the room with a pleasant aroma. The blossom and foliage is dainty and extremely attractive. It lasts, inside, for two months and has an indefinable charm which makes one understand the sentimental attraction it has for the Scots. I am almost becoming Scotch about it myself. The early honey extracts with little trouble, the later needs a pricker like our Manuka. Unfortunately it contains some Rata, which causes considerable granulation in the comb, though the flavour of Heather is so pungent that it pervades all of it. The financial result was not good; it was very interesting, but the same work done in Autumn requeening in my own district would have paid better dividends.

So to the next season, and try again. The wintering was all right, but the very late spring meant absolutely regular feeding, one and two combs per month till mid-November, when they seem to manage. A number were lost by not having an August inspection—it is 80 miles each way and I hoped for the best. There were no swarming worries. The weather was poor but the rain seems to have helped, or perhaps it was no moving, or all extracting combs. The majority have gathered one super for extracting, surplus, the good ones two, they have had the minimum of attention,

just a spring inspection, then regular feeding.

The fertile plains—I wonder. I went to bring home the first truck load of honey to find masses of flame. The Lands and Survey Department were bringing into pasture the first 2000 acres and had fired it. My poor bees, 20 hives nearly reached by the blaze. I saw a truck labelled Nat. Park, and asked the man—I presumed Nat.—if he would lend me his axe to cut a firebreak. He said he was in an awkward position about it, and I did not understand till he added that if he had not got his axe they might give him an extra twelve months. He was from the nearby gaol at Wai-keria. I said I would battle along to save the honey, and this I did, but also moved all the hives to a small spot denuded of vegetation by a flood. I hope the fire did not get them; as I write it is raining in torrents, so perhaps if the fire did not get them the water will.

The cheerful convict sinner finally said that if I was stuck to come out again and they would help me, and when I did come out I gave him a large piece of burr comb, from which he removed pieces for each of his ten pals, and the last I saw of them they were all licking at their pieces like bears at the zoo. I once gave my children dark comb honey for the honey bears at the zoo. The resemblance was amusing, but the bears ate wooden sections and all, which I doubt whether the men would have done, so possibly civilisation leaves its mark, after all.

I had a chat with the warden. He told me they all had only short terms to go, but since then one has escaped and evaded capture for weeks. I wonder if he was fortified by Scotch Heather honey—what a food—Everest climbing and all.

I was sorry to see the lovely wild plants go up in smoke. Here's to the fertile plains.

## A YEAR WITH BEES

(By F. A. Skinner, South Otago)

Last year I purchased 200 hives from my brother, who now finds his time fully taken up with farming, and I was very keen to get the best out of my bees. It is nice to be walking through a field and see one's willing workers gathering honey.

I received a bit of a set-back when I checked them for foul-brood early in the spring, finding twenty-five cases. These hives I destroyed, saving only the boxes, floors and lids. I traced the source of contamination to a wild hive.

I was a bit down on hives now so I decided to do some increasing. I had learnt from dabbling in queen rearing that the bees are pretty good at managing their own queen rearing affairs.

Most of the hives were wintered in three full depths, owing to being fed with boxes of manuka honey. This was my procedure for increasing,

hardly according to the text books. Every hive was split, or rather a box of brood was taken off each hive and laid alongside the parent hive. The queenless parts wasted no time in making themselves brand new queens. These new hives were placed on old super bags of which I have an abundance from my father's farm. I gained sixty hives this way, more than making up for my foul-brood losses.

These nuclei were bundled on to my old International truck and run out to boost my stricken apiaries. I found they were easily handled by gripping either end of the sacks under the hives. I stacked them on four high and by the time I had roofs and lids on I had quite a load. The nuclei were duly set in rows in their appointed places and set up as hives.

In the shed a lot of manuka honey had been accumulating for years. Each nucleus received about half a box of this honey and this brought

them up to two storeys—they looked more like hives now. After a few weeks a dozen or so were not making the grade so I doubled up these weak ones.

You might be curious to know how these new hives did, as the season here in the south is considered too short to give the bees time for a build up. I was hoping for a lateish season to offset this, but as it turned out the season was very early. The bees were in good heart though and it was not long before I had some impressive skyscrapers. The season was a very long one and the bees seemed to be getting a bit of honey right along. I believe in giving the hives plenty of room as an encouragement to the bees (and also it is good psychology for the beekeeper, I think). Two or three hives actually reached the dizzy height of seven storeys.

About the beginning of February I declared the season closed. I set forth in my armour, equipped with a hive-jack, smoker, hive-tool and fifty odd bee-escape boards. I jacked the hives apart down about two storeys and slipped in my boards—easier said than done.

Next morning I loaded up the old 15cwt. truck to capacity. The overload springs were hooped the wrong way. Forty boxes were reckoned a load, so I made two trips a day, one in the morning and one after dinner. All this honey was stacked in the honeyhouse. After two weeks I only had narrow lanes between high boxes of honey in which to manoeuvre in the honeyhouse.

At this stage I was all set to start extracting. I gave my old stationary engine the once over. She seemed to have caught a chill or something during the winter as she was lifeless. I fussed over her for a day or two, grinding valves, drying out the magnet, cleaning out the carburettor; still she had no compression—a rather serious complaint. In desperation I cut a new gasket; that worked the hat trick. Then I had a serious bout of belt trouble. I just couldn't get going for belts flying off. Every known concoction of sugar, resin and olive oil was tried. (My predecessor used hot tar with considerable success.) I condemned the power transmission as poorly engineered. I dreamed of V belts and pulleys and after a bit of trouble made my dreams come true. (By the way, an unrealised dream is power in the honeyhouse; maybe next season.)

At last I was away after several false starts. The honey really started to flow. Every night forty odd boxes went on to the heating rack for the morrow's extracting, the diesel heater was set going and the pipes heated up. Three days' extracting was about all I could manage before things became too gummed up to move. I use a 21-frame semi-radial, and while this is turning I uncap flat out with my plane. I extract one side, then the other; I have dropped the three-sided system. A honey pump clears the honey from the extractor and puts it into the honey tank. This tank holds about 2½ tons.

After about four weeks extracting and tinning off I reached the grand goal of ten tons.

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## THE PESTICIDE PROBLEM

A BROADCAST ADDRESS BY  
G. E. GUMBRELL

The advent of pesticides into our Agricultural and Horticultural economy has brought with it many problems, and in this short talk I will endeavour to put the position as it is now and seems likely to affect the farming economy of this country,

Science advances quickly in the pesticide field once certain reactors are established, and while spectacular results are often obtained in experiments, even scientists themselves are reluctant to forecast what the long-termed effect will be. However, we can only proceed in what, after careful consideration, we presume to be a forward direction.

New Zealand has probably lagged behind in the application of pesticides. In 1953-54 25,658 gallons were applied, but by 1955-56 this had increased to 365,000 gallons, and the future indicates that further huge increases are to be expected.

The Conference of the National Beekeepers' Association being held in this city has numerous items on its agenda, but one of the most important is the remit on the use and application of pesticides.

D.T. and B.H.C. have been used for some years for the control of grass grub and porina, and thanks to the activities and advice of the Government Departmental Officers concerned, very little damage to *bees* has occurred. What has happened to ladybirds and other beneficial insects and how close the tie-up is between aphid infestation, mosaic disease in turnips and the like is a question for our research officers to answer. In the past we have often been warned that to depart from biological control upsets the balance of nature and humble man is apt to have his calculations upset. I make this observation and leave it at that.

The spring of 1955 witnessed the first large scale disaster to honey bees from the application of a pesticide. The immediate effect was to kill not only the aphid, but all the insects that were pollinating the crop. The loss to the beekeeper ran into over four

figures, but the loss in pollination service to the farming community in that area cannot be accurately estimated; it would certainly greatly exceed the beekeepers' loss.

The position was so serious that there was an immediate conference of top level Departmental Officers on the spot, and as a "stop gap" measure, a permit system was evolved to prevent a repetition of the disaster.

The beekeeping and farming industries have, at all times, been kept closely posted on the matter and the Minister of Agriculture has promised that an Act will be introduced to control the application and use of pesticides. The various farming organisations concerned have received assurance that their Executives will have the opportunity of perusing the subject matter of the Act before it becomes law. This all takes time and it is the immediate future that is worrying the beekeeping industry as the permit system evolved last year is no longer in operation.

As a member of the South Canterbury Provincial Executive of Federated Farmers, I am fully conscious of the feelings of seed growers who have assured me that they also fully realise the potential dangers and are eager to protect the bees and pollinating insects on whose effective function their future welfare depends.

So much for the facts; what is the proposition for the coming season? It is this—the Beekeeping Industry requests that the permit system be re-introduced until such time as the new Agricultural Chemicals Act can come into force. The said permit system to be under the control of the Apiary Act. This provision is vital and is asked for, not, as might be supposed, to put the beekeeper in a favoured position, but to ensure that farmers are not refused permits when they should get them. Beekeeping is a highly specialised industry and *only* a qualified apiarist is competent to adjudicate in such an important matter as this.

Beekeepers and farmers are inter-dependent one upon the other. In the long run, one cannot suffer without the other, and a prosperous, healthy agriculture is our greatest asset.

It is of interest to note that, the estimated value of clover and lucerne seed produced in N.Z. is approximately £1,730,000, and of brassica close on £150,000. These amounts do not take into account the very much greater amount of clover seed that is set by honey bees and merely falls to the ground to regenerate in due course. If this is valued, the total would be truly astronomical.

In conclusion, it would be well to try to visualise the future. The known pesticides will no doubt be outdated and succeeded by other preparations whose toxic qualities will be truly fantastic.

Let us give our research and departmental officers every help and co-operate one with the other to ensure that nothing is done which will be to the detriment of this fair country.

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## WORLD NEWS

### International Congress

The 1956 International Congress was to be held in Vienna, Austria, on August 12th to 18th.

### Australia

Two well-known Australian beekeepers, Messrs A. Eastley and M. Charlton, are at present on a four-months' visit to the United States, where they are investigating the business management of apiaries, honey extracting and apiary equipment, bee breeding programmes, pollination projects, treatment of bee diseases, honey packing and marketing, and other aspects of commercial beekeeping. Their visit is being assisted by the Federal Council of Australian Apiarists' Associations and the N.S.W. Department of Agriculture, to whom they will furnish a full report of their observations and conclusions, and it is felt that the tour may be of inestimable value to apiculture in Australia.

### United States

The U.S.A. Department of Agriculture recently announced that the 1956 honey crop will be supported at an average price of 9.7 cents a pound,

which is 70 per cent. of the current parity price. Price support for honey within a range of 60 to 90 per cent. of parity is mandatory under the Agriculture Act of 1949.

The support programme provides for farm-storage loans and purchase agreements and is intended to give interim financial assistance to beekeepers, thus enabling them to market their honey in an orderly manner. In making the announcement the Department again urges beekeepers to increase their efforts towards utilising bees in pollination of important pasture, seed, vegetable and fruit crops on a remunerative basis.

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## THE STUDY OF BEES

*(From an address by T. S. Winter at the Southland Anniversary Dinner)*

Let us take a brief look at the honey bee and something of her work in life.

Speaking in general terms, the length of life of worker-bees is measured not so much by days or weeks as by the amount of work they do. During the period when nectar is being gathered abundantly, they literally work themselves to death and the population of the colony is appreciably decreased unless brood is being reared heavily. During such a period the average length of life of worker bees is barely six weeks, while in periods when less work is necessary the life is lengthened. Those bees which emerge in the early autumn are the ones which live until the following spring.

The life of the bee is dependent upon nectar, pollen and water, and the first two can be derived only from plants and flowers.

A flourishing colony of bees contains 40,000 to 50,000 bees, and each hive of bees needs about 400 lbs of honey and 40 lbs of pollen per annum to supply them with food and warmth and for the production of beeswax for their combs.

The honey sac of a bee has a capacity of about 0.025 cubic centimetres; this means that 20,000 flights of a bee are required for collection of a pound of nectar, or 80,000 flights for collecting a pound of honey.

Nectar is the principal source of carbohydrate in the food of the honey bee and pollen is the source of all other foods required by the bee.

Investigations by Nolan have shown that a strong colony rears about 200,000 bees per annum. It has also been estimated by reliable investigators that 10 bee loads of pollen are required to raise one bee, so that it would take 2,000,000 loads to rear the brood in one colony of bees each year.

The importance of honey bees as pollinators of economic crops can therefore be well imagined.

In my job I am often asked why people take up beekeeping and what is required to become a successful beekeeper.

First I would say there is a rare fascination in the study of insect life particularly the honey bee, which is ever presenting the most pleasurable surprises to those who study it.

The fundamentals of successful beekeeping are the same the world over, but no single method of colony management, including the regular timing

of comb and brood manipulations, is suitable for all locations because of the variable seasonal conditions and the variety of nectar and pollen sources in different areas. The beekeeper must therefore study these things as they affect the life and daily habits of his bees under varying conditions. He must also be capable of applying this knowledge to the needs of his bees with perfect timing of management operations if he is to succeed. Beekeeping is not an easy occupation.

Looking back at the pioneers of modern beekeeping, also at many of the successful beekeepers of to-day, it is clear that they were men who accepted hardship provided they suffered no master and who regarded the study of bees combined with hard work out in the open infinitely preferable to controlled safety in any paid job. I think it also appropriate to say that commercial beekeepers are in the main a set of independent, dignified men who are in beekeeping not only for profit but also as a way of life.

## PACKAGE BEES

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## SMOKER MODIFICATION

How often have you reached for your smoker and found it had gone out because you did not work the bellows every so often? Or the fire had died down so much that you had to work the bellows vigorously before it would pour out sufficient smoke again?

After years of this sort of annoyance I have finally solved the problem.

Hot air rises, cold air from below takes its place. But the cold air does not seem to enter freely through the blast tube under the grate unless the bellows is worked. How to get enough air to come in below the grate was the question.

When I punched some small holes in the bottom of the smoker I found the answer. The smoker once lighted will burn slowly for hours, yet when the bellows is squeezed it immediately will pour out smoke. It's the constant supply of oxygen that keeps the fuel smoldering without having to work the bellows until finally it will burn itself out, leaving some white ashes.

Here is how to fix your own smoker. Turn it upside down. Lay a coin in the centre of the bottom. Draw a line around it. Now mark that circle in eight places evenly divided. With a hammer and ice pick gently punch eight holes. Make them small, they can always be enlarged. Load up your smoker and enjoy a smoke as you never have enjoyed one before.

If you feel afraid of spoiling your smoker by punching these holes, a

few drops of solder will close them again. But you never will.

—C. J. Koover, in "Gleanings."

## FLAVOUR IN HONEY

By C. C. MacKinnon, in "Canadian Bee Journal"

During the past few years the ambition of our industry has been to put on the market a clean, uniform pack. We have learned to strain, pasturise, filter and seed until finally we have developed a product which can best be described as a sweet tasting lard. Our glass packs are sparkling clear, beautiful to look at, and taste like sweet syrup. Now many beekeepers may think my description an exaggeration; to them I would suggest with utmost earnestness that you buy a sample of three or four packs and place on your own table, eat them.

An analysis of why our packs are this way, and what remedies are available, should be of interest. Honey is fragile food. If allowed to stand uncovered for a short time its aroma and delicate taste escape. If we heat it we accelerate this taste deterioration by destroying the enzymes, changing the colour, driving off the volatile alcohols and perfumes, and causing a chemical change in the honey so that it will never granulate normally. After seeding, in this new abnormal granulated state it has a shelf life of two to three months after which it breaks down into a most unappealing mess. It can be re-

## QUEENS - NUCLEI

A limited number of untested quality queens will be available as from October 15 — weather permitting.

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processed, regranulated and resold. Natural granulated honey merely softens and then hardens with colder temperatures.

When trying to prepare honey at its tastiest for exhibition purposes we recognise this delicate nature of honey, and in order to capture all of its goodness we are instructed to press it out of the comb, strain it and bottle it promptly.

It must be packed within 24 hours from time of extracting.

During extracting, tanks and extractors and the entire system would have to be tightly closed to prevent evaporation of the volatile flavours.

It would also mean that extracting would have to be done soon after the bees had gathered the honey. Honey stored for some time in combs and then extracted has already lost most of its aroma. The wax capping is not efficient as a flavour retaining seal.

If we can capture and uphold the bouquet which we all know and love in fresh honey the demand would be overwhelming, all people love good food. At the moment we can capture this flavour but we cannot hold it.

This brings us to our second objective, namely, to develop a package and a method of packing which will hold this flavour. Our present packages all breathe, when it cools at night the tins suck in a little air through the friction lids. In the morning the warming results in flavour laden air being expelled. This cycle is repeated every time there is a temperature change and soon there is no flavour left to expel. Possibly simple canning with permanently sealed cans would do it. At the moment all of our repacked and processed honey has no aroma to begin with so this problem of flavour deterioration actually applies only to honey that had flavour to begin with. To perfect such a process will take some experimenting. If the C.B.C. were to offer a \$5000.00 prize to the individual or individuals developing a flavour retaining package something might be forthcoming.

Until a method is devised of repacking honey without using heat these suggestions will not find favour with

either packers or co-operators. But as both a producer and packer I feel it is imperative for us to find a way whereby we can see a tastier honey. The producer will have to deliver to the packer a flavour-sealed can of fancy honey and the packer will have to use a new method for packing this.

If we continue our present processing and filtering trend it is bound to result ultimately in eliminating the taste of honey from our product. If we want higher prices for our honey then taste is our No. 1 salesman.

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## Reflections

... from the Editor's Desk

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### Journal Articles

From time to time we have the good fortune to be able to publish original articles by New Zealand beekeepers. They are always more interesting than items from overseas sources, and if of a technical nature they are also more valuable because they are related to our own conditions and because New Zealand beekeepers generally are progressive and efficient.

In this issue readers will find three contributions by local beekeepers dealing with aspects of beekeeping at points as far apart as Trinidad, National Park and South Otago. There is nothing pretentious about them and they are written in an easy, simple and direct style. But they make excellent reading and they show what can be done. If every beekeeper would follow their example and put pen to paper occasionally (even once in a lifetime!) this Journal would become a lively and interesting magazine.

In the meantime we thank our three contributors and also those others who have written for us in the past.

### Mating of Queens

In an article in "Bee World" (January, 1956) F. Ruttner gives a review of recent investigations into the mating behaviour and the process of insemination of the honeybee.

Since 1771, when one Anton Jansche correctly described and identified the mating sign (i.e., the organs of the drone adhering to the queen) it has been taken for granted that the queen mates only once. In recent years, however, a number of independent investigations have indicated that multiple matings are the general rule. It appears that usually each queen makes two or more mating flights, and, in addition, it is now widely accepted that she may mate with several drones during the one flight. These conclusions have been reached in some cases by close observation of mating flights and in others by checking the characteristics of the progeny.

The new light now being thrown on mating procedure may help us to understand variations in inherited factors which can be rather baffling to the beekeeper. At the same time it illustrates the problems which confront the queen breeder when he seeks to improve his stock by selection.

An interesting point is that the ability of the queen to lay fertilised or unfertilised eggs (producing workers or drones) as required, has not yet been satisfactorily explained. For many years it was believed that pressure by the cell walls on the queen's abdomen (in the case of a worker cell) resulted automatically in the laying of a fertilised egg, but this "pressure theory" has now been abandoned as untenable.

### Queen Substance

Lately the Bee Journals have been giving publicity to Dr C. G. Butler's discovery of "queen substance" and its function in the life of the colony. Dr Butler is head of the Bee Department at Rothamsted Experimental Station.

We all know that the queen has a strong influence among the bees. If she is removed from the hive there is an immediate loss of colony morale and cohesion and the bees begin to show definite reactions, especially the desire to raise queen cells. How is this influence of the queen so effectively transmitted or dispersed among the colony population? Has she an odour which permeates the hive, or is it the finely tuned behaviour of the bees which tells of her presence?

Dr Butler believes that the members of a colony receive an actual substance—"queen substance"—from the queen. A few bees obtain this substance, probably by licking the queen's body, and share it with their fellow bees. The ceaseless movement and food exchange which occur in every colony are considered adequate to ensure a continuous and complete distribution, and it is believed that every bee in a colony "feels satisfied"—queenright—as long as she receives a share of this queen substance from time to time. An adequate supply prevents workers from attempting to produce further queens, and alternatively a deficiency in the amount available, or some breakdown in its collection or distribution, may account for actions such as supersedure or swarming. The queen substance has not yet been actually identified, but it may be part of the waxy substance with which a queen's body is covered.

Dr Butler's theory is remarkable, but the relationship between queen and worker bees is itself almost incredible. The concept of queen substance brings a new outlook to the study of bee behaviour which may have a bearing on queen rearing and queen introduction and other aspects of commercial beekeeping.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### PRICE CONTROL

TO THE EDITOR

Sir,—Price control over the sale of essential commodities is a war-time legacy designed to protect the consumer against exploitation under conditions of shortage. The effectiveness of these control regulations, even in wartime, could be seriously challenged. It is clear, however, that whatever justification may have existed for their enactment, their continued application ten years following the cessation of hostilities, places the beekeeper at a distinct disadvantage compared with other sections of workers.

Let us compare the beekeepers' lot with other workers governed by Arbitration Court award wages. The Arbitration Court decrees the MINI-

MUM wage that must be paid to various groups of workers. These workers are free to accept as high as employers are prepared to pay above the basic Arbitration rate. Indeed, nearly all wage-earners today are receiving above award rates.

How long does anyone imagine industrial peace would continue in this country if the Arbitration awards represented the maximum that could legally be paid to workers? There would be unparalleled industrial upheaval. Yet strange to relate, the beekeepers actually see merit in a pronouncement governing their wage returns that would meet with derision by wage earners as a whole. It has been said that the price order represents a "standard" and price "stability," but it has never been logically explained how this alleged stability operates to the advantage of the producer.

The production of honey cannot be regulated like factory-produced articles and it follows therefore that the beekeeper is unable to employ the business technique of the manufacturer, who ensures price stability for his production by the simple process of regulating the supply within the limit of demand.

The decision of Conference in favour of the continued operation of the price order has confronted the Marketing Authority with a major problem. Owing to unfavourable seasons the volume of honey received is about half that of the previous season. The position is made still worse when we are told that from our meagre stocks, earmarked for export, we must draw to meet consumer demand on the local market, made less profitable than export by the Tribunal price order.

The result will be a lower return to the supplier and the undermining of our overseas distributing service that has succeeded in creating a demand for our honey never before equalled in the history of the industry. Let us hope that the National Executive will appreciate the seriousness of the position and recognise that many delegates cast their votes on instructions from branches with insufficient knowledge of the position.—I am, etc.,

WALLACE NELSON.

## Price Control

TO THE EDITOR

Sir,—When a beekeeper sends in his honey to the Honey Marketing Authority he expects that body to secure the best returns possible for him.

The passing of two remits at the Conference contradictory to each other has created a situation that does not reflect to our credit as a body of producers.

One remit carried on a delegates' vote gave a majority decision in favour of price control being continued. The other remit, carried unanimously, by an open vote of Conference, read, "That in the event of price control being removed from H.M.A. honey that the order also be removed from all other honey."

In view of certain local vacuums for honey that are said to be developing, the passing of the remit on the delegates' vote may create a position that will be fraught with great difficulty from the Authority's point of view. Price control has been mainly responsible for creating a position where the Authority may show a loss on sales to the zones of shortage. Compared to export and suppliers pay-out must suffer.

The inflation in the Dominion in recent years has not been reflected in a corresponding inflation of returns to beekeepers. The result is that our export market, free from price control, is returning higher prices in many lines than is allowed locally. The probability of this situation arising was foreseen some months ago by the Authority. An application was made to the Tribunal for the removal of control over the Authority's packs.

The Authority will no doubt accept it as an obligation to release a limited amount in districts where it is apparent the consuming public is going short. It would be unreasonable to expect the Authority to meet demands for other than honey to fill the vacuum. Steps must be taken to see that such honey is not supplied to areas where ample local supplies exist.

Yours faithfully,

W. T. HERRON.

2/8/56.

## Classified Advertisements

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Applications on P.S.C. Form 17A close with the Secretary, Public Service Commission, 14th September, 1956. Assistance given to married appointee who would be required to move his household.

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**"THE N.Z. BEEKEEPER"**

This Journal is issued free to all beekeepers in New Zealand having 30 or more registered hives, and to others who are members of the National Beekeepers' Association.

Literary contributions and advertisements must be in the hands of the Editor, Mr J. McFadzien, 29 Nottingham Crescent, Calton Hill, Dunedin, S.W.1, not later than the first of month of publication.

Nom-de-plume letters must be signed by the writer and address given, not necessarily for publication, but as proof of good faith. Letters accepted for publication do not necessarily express the views of the Editor.

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