The New Zealand Beekeeper

FEBRUARY 1958

HILLARY AT THE SOUTH POLE

The National Beekeepers' Association

(Incorporated)

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THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

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Editorial

VISITORS FROM THE HOMELAND

During January and February New Zealand received two honoured guests in the Rt. Hon. Harold Macmillan, Prime Minister of Great Britain, and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

The visit of Mr. Macmillan was the first that has ever been made by a British Prime Minister during his term of office, and it demonstrated how modern transport can assist in strengthening the economic ties and the close understanding between the two countries. Mr. Macmillan received a cordial welcome in New Zealand and he brought an encouraging outlook upon the free pattern which is growing within the British Commonwealth and upon international relationships generally.

The Queen Mother, of course, visited New Zealand as the Duchess of York in 1927 when she won a warm place for herself in the hearts of New Zealanders. Since that time she has filled her high position with courage and devotion, and her return in 1958 brought pleasure to evervone in this country.

Our distinguished visitors from the Homeland have been an inspiration to the people of New Zealand, and they have done more than merely to strengthen the bonds of kinship within the Commonwealth. Their breadth of vision and high ideals are an influence for good in nourishing a feeling of goodwill toward the people of all nations.

Minister of Agriculture

Under the new Government the Ministry of Agriculture is in the hands of the Hon. C. F. Skinner. As Deputy Prime Minister Mr Skinner is one of the leaders in the present administration, and he is well known to the farming community generally, having been Minister of Lands in the previous Labour Government.

Mr. Skinner is also the Minister in charge of Marketing.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

The 17th International Beekeeping Congress will be held in Bologna and Rome from September 15 to 23, 1958.

Messrs Thos. Cook and Son are official travel agents for the Congress and they offer the services of their organisation to those desiring to attend.

Full information and advice on travel arrangements can be obtained from the New Zealand head office at 143 Featherston Street, Wellington (G.P.O. Box 1661), or at branch offices in other towns.

New Auckland Building

An article describing the new premises of the New Zealand Honey Marketing Authority in Auckland, together with plans and impressions of the building will be published in our next issue.

Mr. W. H. Chudley, Manager of the Authority, advises that at the end of January a good deal of work remained to be done and the completion date was still some time off.

Meeting with Ministers

The Dominion President, Mr. J. W. Fraser, and the General Secretary, Mr. R. A. Fraser, are to meet the Minister of Agriculture, and also the Minister of Industries and Commerce, towards the end of February. It is intended to discuss at these meetings the general position of the beekeeping industry with reference to toxic pesticides, research, price control and marketing.

The Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority, Mr. E. A. Field, has been invited to take part in the discussions.

Director-General Retires

Mr. E. J. Fawcett retired from the position of Director-General of Agriculture at the end of December.

Joining the Department in 1922, Mr. Fawcett was instructor in charge of the Gisborne-East Cape area from 1923 to 1925, when he was transferred to the head office of the Department as agricultural economist. In 1936 he was promoted to the position of technical liaison officer of the Department and represented it on various bodies. Mr. Fawcett became Assistant Director-General in 1938 and followed Mr. A. H. Cockayne as Director-General in 1943.

Mr. Fawcett was Government nominee on many farming organisations during recent years, and has been a leading figure in New Zealand's representation at overseas conferences dealing with agricultural trade.

The new Director-General is Mr. R. B. Tennent, formerly Deputy Director-General. Mr. Tennent has been with the Department since 1920 and is an authority on grassland farming. He has represented New Zealand overseas on many occasions and he returned recently after leading delegations to the F.A.O. Conference in Rome and to the first of annual discussions between New Zealand and Britain on agricultural and trade policies.

Resignation of Mr. Tarleton

The office employees of the New Zealand Packing Corporation joined the staff of the Honey Marketing Authority in bidding farewell to Mr. J. A. Tarleton who had resigned his position with the H.M.A. to take up an appointment as Manager of the Auckland Egg Floor.

On behalf of his colleagues a representative of the Packing Corporation who had served under Mr. Tarleton overseas spoke in eulogistic terms of Mr. Tarleton and reference was made to the high regard in which he had been held by the troops under him. Mr. Tarleton held the rank of major and was acting-colonel at the time of his army retirement.

Mr. Chudley spoke on behalf of the H.M.A. staff and expressed his personal appreciation of the helpful guidance and assistance he had received from Mr. Tarleton on taking his appointment as Manager of the H.M.A. On behalf of those present Mr. Chudley presented Mr. Tarleton with a very handsome fountain pen.

Mr. W. Nelson, representing the H.M.A., expressed regret over losing the services of Mr. Tarleton. Mr. Nelson mentioned the fact that Mr. Tarleton had been in the service of the industry for over twenty-five years continuously. During that period he had on more than one occasion declined promotion in other spheres because of his interest in the honey industry. Mr. Nelson concluded: "I know all members of the Authority will regret Mr. Tarleton's resignation and on their behalf I wish him every success in the responsible position he has just accepted.

Royal Jelly Used in Cosmetics

"Royal jelly," the concentrated food of queen bees and the latest find of the rejuvenating and cosmetic experts, is being produced commercially in New Zealand. Some of it, valued at about £500 per lb, is being exported by air.

A hive of worker bees with their queen is on display in an Auckland shop window to draw attention to the use of "royal jelly" in a locally prepared cosmetic cream.

No positive claims are made for the rejuvenating properties of the "royal jelly" apart from the fact that queen bees thrive on it and live much longer than the other bees in the hive.

—Press Association, 4/12/57.

Obituary

Mr. John Walton

The death occurred in the Kaitaia Hospital on October 18, 1957, of Mr. John Walton. He came to this country from England via Canada in 1906 and worked for a time at his trade as blacksmith in the Hutt workshops. Coming north in 1908 he took up beekeeping at Fern Flat under the guidance of the late Mr. Hancox. In 1909 he bought land in Ororu and established his well-known apiary there having 150 hives in the one apiary and several out-apiaries as well. He retired about nine years ago but always remained keenly interested in bees and beekeeping.

In 1917 he married Miss Laura Shaw, of Mangonui, who was also a beekeeper.

John was always a strong advocate of orderly marketing and worked hard on these lines. He was a member of the H.P.A. and other organisations and knew the trials of early beekeeping.

During adverse times he travelled the four northern counties selling his honey and was widely and respectfully known as the "Honey Man". It was his proud boast that he never cut prices and never lost a customer. He was a great advocate of food value of honey and did much work in advocating its uses.

He was of strictly sober habits and a keen and loyal worker for the Methodist Church to whom he left the whole of his assets.

He and Mrs. Walton, who died nine years earlier, made many generous gifts to the church and to their many friends who they were always ready to help in times of need.

Book Review

" Introducing Queen Bees "

This 20-page booklet by G. H. Keen is published by The Australasian Beekeeper. Mr Keen, who has had a lengthy experience of beekeeping in New Zealand, describes the different methods which can be used in introducing queens with comments on their effectiveness under varying conditions. He also deals briefly with queen raising, emphasising the value of good queens in every hive for successful honey production, and including some useful suggestions in hive management.

"Introducing Queen Bees" is obtainable from the author, 25 Barton Street, Woolston, Christchurch; price 1/6 post paid.

" The Diseases of Bees "

" The Diseases of Bees " has been compiled from a series of articles published in "The Australasian Beekeeper." The author, Mr. W. H. Aughterson, a young law student and amateur beekeeper of Victoria, has selected the most authoritative information on bee diseases, previously published works being duly acknowledged, and added his own comments to bring the apiarist a better insight into diseases likely to affect his bees than can usually be found in books covering the general subject of beekeeping.

This book is well illustrated with excellent photographs from the United States Department of Agriculture and American text books and line drawings by A. J. Giblet, for which due acknowledgments are made. A descriptive history of each of the 13 diseases dealt with is followed with a description of the symptoms and recommendations for control.

Special reference is made to Australian conditions and regulations in force in that country. In New Zealand our own regulations and the recommendations of the Department of Agriculture should be followed, but apart from that the book is recommended as a detailed and clearly written work of reference. Forty-eight pages of information is neatly printed with stiff card cover in "The Diseases of Bees," obtainable from the publishers, Messrs Pender Bros. Pty. Ltd., Elgin Street, Maitland, N.S.W., Australia, for 6/9 per copy plus postage.

Price Control

An approach has been made to the Wholesale Merchants' Federation and the Master Grocers' Federation by the General Secretary in an endeavour to establish trade margins of profit which would be generally aceptable under free marketing conditions. So far no agreement on this point has been reached.

At the present time honey prices are controlled by Price Order No. 1718 under which the following prices are set out:—

Maximum Prices for Honey Sold Otherwise Than in Retail Containers:

	Minimum Price Per Pound At the Rate of s. d.
(a) For honey, cut and wrapped	1 7
(b) For other honey —	
(i) Sold by a producer to a consumer —	
(a) In lots of over 60lb	1 3
(b) In lots of 60lb or less but more than 20lb	1 4
(c) In lots of 20lb or less	1 6
(ii) Sold by a producer to a packer, wholesaler, or retailer	1 3
(iii) Sold by any person whomsoever to a wholesaler	1 3
(iv) Sold by a wholesaler (not including a producer) to a retailer	1 4
(v) Sold by a retailer	1 6

Maximum Prices for Honey Packed in Retail Containers :

Size and Kind of Container	Maximum Price that may be charged by a Packer to a Wholesaler	Maximum price that may be charged by a Wholesaler (including a Packer) to a Retailer	Maximum Price that may be charged by a Retailer (including a packer) to a consumer
	Per dozen s. d.	Per dozen s. d.	
½lb Cartons	12 3	13 5	1 4 per carton
12oz Glass jars	21 6	23 6	2 4 per jar
1lb Glass jars	25 6	28 0	2 9 per jar
1lb Cartons	21 6	23 6	2 4 per carton
1¼lb Glass jars	29 0	31 9	3 2 per jar
1½lb Glass jars	35 0	38 6	3 10 per jar
2lb Glass jars	45 3	49 9	4 11 per jar
2lb Cartons	41 9	45 10	4 7 per carton
2lb Tins	46 3	50 10	5 1 per tin
2½lb Glass jars	56 6	62 0	6 2 per jar
2¾lb Glass jars	62 3	68 4	6 10 per jar
5lb Tins	104 9	115 0	11 6 per tin
10lb Tins	194 0	213 4	21 4 per tin

The full provisions of the Price Order were included in the August, 1957, issue of " The N.Z. Beekeeper " and copies are obtainable from the Price Tribunal.

Comb honey and beeswax are not subject to price control.

Master Grocers' Attitude To Prices

The Master Grocers' Federation will not "buy" its freedom, says the organisation's Annual Report to be placed before the annual conference in Dunedin this week. It must retain to the retailer the right to determine what is a fair and reasonable profit margin.

Concern was expressed at the re-introduction during the year of price control on honey, the report states. Although the matter had been taken up with the Minister of Industries and Commerce, no satisfactory explanation had been given.

"In the meantime the National Beekeepers' Association has indicated that it is prepared to move for the decontrol of honey prices provided the Federation will agree to the retention of the present profit margin or a figure near it," adds the report.

"The Federation has made it clear that it will not buy its freedom.

"So far as the Federation is concerned, it has been particularly careful to recommend mark-ups which are fair both to the retailer and to the consumer. However, it must be emphasised that the margins on too many basic lines have been kept at a figure which does not cover the cost of distribution, with the result that margins on other lines must be correspondingly adjusted."

—"Otago Daily Times", 10/2/56

Mead Production

The recent Report of the Wine-making Industry Committee makes the following reference to honey mead:—

HONEY MEAD

The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand Incorporated presented submissions in support of a claim for amendment to the Licensing Act to permit the production and sale of honey mead in New Zealand.

Honey mead was described as perhaps the oldest alcoholic liquor known to mankind, being mentioned and eulogised in ancient writings. The making of honey mead was considered part of a lost culture and production in Europe was now only on a small scale.

It was contended that New Zealand produced grades of honey suitable for the production of high-grade mead and the honey industry was confident that the product would be in demand here and overseas.

A thorough investigation of mead making and extensive trials with various grades of New Zealand honey was completed by the Department of Agriculture at Wallaceville Research Station in 1953.

A number of these meads compared more than favourably with English samples imported for comparison, but even the best had little consumer appeal or merit compared with other liquors in popular demand. Most of the English "meads" were not true meads but were made by blending the honey with plum and apple juice in manufacture, or were spiced with various flavourings.

The meads made experimentally from strong flavoured manuka honey were the most favoured in consumer tests. Those made from lower grade manuka honey required treatment with activated charcoal for improvement.

It was submitted that the distilled spirits from the New Zealand meads were of very high quality and considered ideal for the manufacture of gin.

Conclusion

Insufficient evidence is available for the Committee to come to any conclusions on this subject, but the Committee feels that the Department of Agriculture could well continue experimenting to see if a worth-while beverage could be produced if this country ever found itself faced with an accumulated honey surplus.

Recommendation

Having given full consideration to the evidence submitted, the Committee is unable to recommend legislation at the present time to permit the production of honey mead.

In the light of this report the Executive made a further approach to the Director of

Horticulture, from whom the following reply has now been received by the General Secretary:—

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter (reference D/3) of November 15, conveying a resolution passed by your Executive:

> "That the attention of the Director of Horticulture be drawn to the Wine Industry Committee's Report on Honey-mead and that the Department be asked to continue with its research as the honey industry is still interested in the ultimate possibility of honey-mead being licensed for sale."

Production of honey-mead has already been the subject of extensive experimental work, including laboratory tests, and it is not considered that any additional work is necessary. Results of experimental work have been published in "The New Zealand Journal of Science and Technology" for December, 1953, copy of the article being attached for your information.

The Wine-making Industry Committee was unable to recommend legislation to permit the production of honey-mead at the present time, so it is unlikely that legislative authority will be given in the immediate future for its commercial manufacture. This being so, and as honeys suitable for mead manufacture are selling quite well and there is no problem of disposing of surplus stocks, no further action is considered necessary at present.

Yours faithfully,
A. M. W. GREIG,
Director of the Horticulture Division.

Toxic Pesticides

At the October meeting of the General Executive some cases were quoted of damage to honeybees from applications of toxic pesticides and concern was expressed generally at the danger to health arising from the present limited control of toxic materials. Pending the passage of the proposed Agricultural Chemicals Bill a request was made to the Director of Horticulture for an extension of the provisions of the Apiaries Protection Regulations. The following reply to this request has since been received:—

The General Secretary,
National Beekeepers' Association.

Dear Sir,

I have received your letter of November 18 conveying a resolution passed at your last Executive meeting seeking an amendment to the Apiaries Protection Regulations to extend the prohibition on spraying or dusting with toxic chemicals to include all flowering crops and pasture.

The real threat which existed to the beekeeping industry by the application of insecticides to flowering cruciferous and leguminous crops has been met by the present regulations.

At present the main applications of insecticides to pastures are DDT or lindane for control of grass grub, subterranean caterpillar and crickets, and dieldrin or DDT to control outbreaks of army worm.

I am informed that the application of insecticide-treated super to pastures has not presented any real hazard to the beekeeping industry owing to the method of application to close grazed pasture, while outbreaks of army worm occur mainly late in summer or autumn when the main season for honey production is past, or in areas where non-flowering crops are concerned.

At present there would appear to be no evidence that an extension of the Apiaries Protection Regulations is justified.

Yours faithfully,
A. M. W. GREIG,
Director of the Horticulture Division.

Trader Gets Stung!

Mr. A. E. Waller, chief inspector of weights and measures for Northamptonshire, was intrigued by an advertisement which offered a "look younger, feel younger" treatment for women. So he obtained a sample of the product, a honey substance called "Apiserum," advertised as a five guinea, 24-day course of rejuvenation for women. And at Kettering, Northants, an analyst later told the court: "If one took the whole of the 24 days' food at one meal it would provide the calory value of a little lump of sugar."

As a result James Lowe, trading as Apiserum, Imperial House, Dominion Street, London, was fined £70, with £12 4s. 6d. costs, on four charges arising out of misleading advertising and failing to specify minimum quantities of ingredients. Lowe denied all the charges.

It was stated that all advertising matter in question had been withdrawn.

An article about Apiserum in the Sunday Pictorial last May was headed: "Don't be stung by this bee lark."

Avoiding a Fire

By SEFTON LINE, Apiary Instructor, Hastings.

A certain commercial beekeeper is in the practice of stacking up his used 60lb. tins in the hot-room and drying them out before refilling them for the storage of bulk honey.

At this place, there is an electric radiator standing on the floor against the wall at a reasonable distance from the tins.

It is commonly known that changing temperatures will makes tins crackle and bang, causing a slight movement among the tins concerned.

On this occasion the tins were stacked about seven feet high when the vibration from a bang caused a tin to fall from the pile onto the radiator. The radiator was knocked over face downwards and contined to burn. When the beekeeper ultimately opened the hot-room he thanked his "lucky stars" it had a concrete floor. The honey absorbed by the concrete had boiled to a charred toffee and it was a warning to arrange things differently.

HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

HONEY CONTRACTS — 1957-58 SEASON

(a) Contracts to supply fixed quantities (with 10% tolerance).

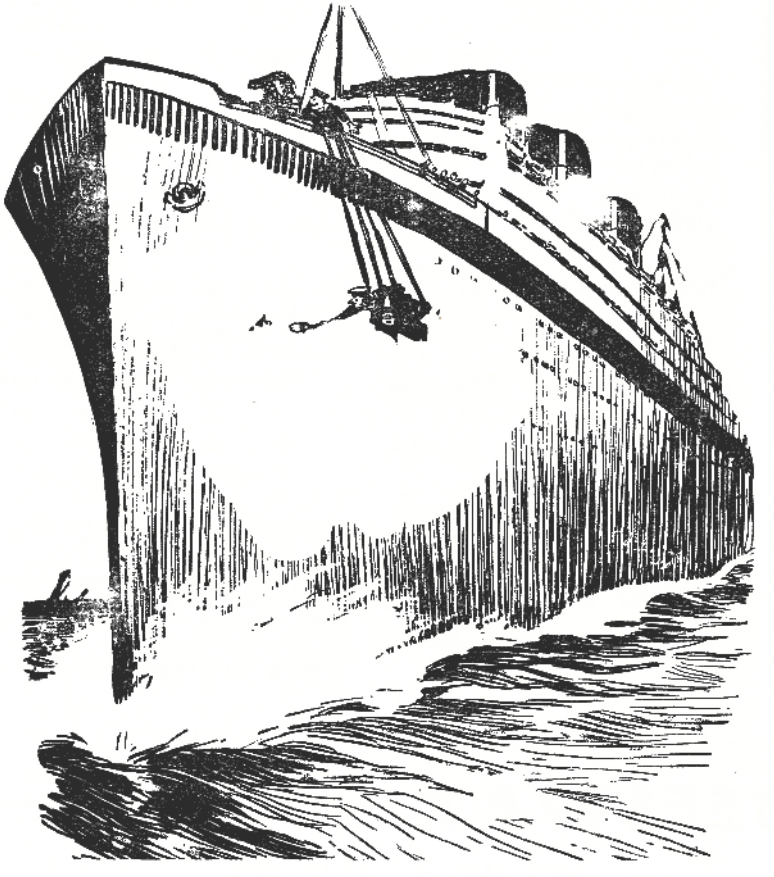
(b) Contracts to supply total production (less consumer sales at apiaries).

	(a)		(b)		Total	
	Tons	Cwt.	Tons	Cwt.	Tons	Cwt.
AUCKLAND	19	3	59	3	78	6
HAMILTON	152	3	284	16	436	19
TAURANGA	22	10	104	10	127	—
HAWERA	2	—	42	10	44	10
HASTINGS	3	—	—	—	3	—
PALMERSTON NORTH	7	—	5	—	12	—
NORTH ISLAND	205	16	495	19	701	15
	Tons	Cwt.	Tons	Cwt.	Tons	Cwt.
WEST COAST	30	15	8	18	39	13
CHRISTCHURCH	45	10	24	15	70	5
OAMARU	31	—	55	5	86	5
INVERCARGILL	33	15	74	—	107	15
SOUTH ISLAND	141	—	162	18	303	18
TOTAL	346	16	658	17	1005	13

Number of Contracts: 156.

W. H. CHUDLEY, Manager.

The Hillary Ship



"Can't sleep — must touch that up before Hillary comes aboard."

HILLARY AT THE SOUTH POLE

ANOTHER FINE ACHIEVEMENT

Sir Edmund Hillary added lustre to a name already famous in the fields of exploration and adventure when he and his party reached the South Pole on January 3 after the long journey of 1200 miles from Scott Base in McMurdo Sound. The success of the New Zealand support party was of particular interest in the Dominion and among the messages of congratulations was one from Sir Edmund's fellow beekeepers, forwarded by the General Secretary with an offer to supplement, if necessary, the supplies of honey previously provided. According to reports the requirements of the expedition had been well organised and no doubt the honey was a welcome item among the provisions.

The Journey

Leaving Scott Base on October 14 the New Zealanders had the task of laying depots over a 700 mile route in order to assist the British Scientific Expedition on the final stages of its journey from the other side of the continent. With the aid of air support and favourable conditions the party established the last depot earlier than was expected and was able to push on to the American advance base at the Pole.

The British Expedition under Dr. Vivian Fuchs had set out from the Weddell Sea at the beginning of November. The first part of their route was over difficult and unexplored territory and a proportion of their time was devoted to scientific work which was the main purpose of the venture. After a strenuous trip they reached the Pole about three weeks behind schedule on January 19, and were welcomed there by Hillary and members of the American Expedition. They were the first party ever to travel overland to the South Pole from the Atlantic side of the continent. Included among the members was New Zealander George Lowe, also of Everest fame.

Dr. Fuchs and his men paused for a few days before continuing along the route already covered by Hillary, and the combined party hoped to arrive at Scott Base early in March. Should the sea outlet be closed by that time it would be necessary for members of the expedition to remain at Scott Base through the winter.

Scientific Progress

The British Expedition is one of many operating in Antarctica as projects in the International Geophysical Year and much progress has been made in scientific investigation. A feature of the news has been the generous assistance received from the large American Expedition which has been closely associated with the British venture.

The parties led by Hillary and Fuchs were the first to travel overland to the Pole since those of Amundsen and Scott 45 years earlier. The conditions now, of course, are entirely different, and it is a striking comparison that Hillary and Fuchs were greeted at the Pole by the well equipped American station, complete with reporters and newsreel men, whereas Scott's party carried their entire resources with them and were faced with the task of hauling their gear on foot over the 1200 mile return journey.

So it is that man gradually strengthens his precarious grip on the planet, and begins, in fact, to look around for other worlds to conquer.

DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE

Horticulture Division

HONEY CROP PROSPECTS

Though it is too early to make a firm estimate of the total honey crop likely to be harvested this year, reports received from Apiary Instructors at January 24 will be of particular interest to producers at this time.

Following is a summary of the reports at January 24, 1958:

Northland

Pastures have maintained fair growth with much Lotus Major in evidence but are now rapidly drying out. The manuka yield will be greater than last season but the bulk of the main crop will be from pastures and the overall crop may be a little above average.

Auckland

Conditions generally similar to Northland except rainfall which was 15 inches below average. It is expected that the overall crop will be below average.

Hamilton

Clover showing up well in most pastures but dull and windy conditions appear to prevent the bees from working this source of nectar.

Bush sources on hill country have yielded fairly well. Present indications are for a below average crop of honey darker in colour than usual.

Tauranga

Crops generally will be above average in the Bay of Plenty and Gisborne areas, while in Rotorua and Paeroa areas average crops are in sight. It is expected that the overall season's crop will be above average and nearly double the quantity harvested last season.

Hawera

Up to January 24 weather conditions generally prevented the bees working main nectar sources and at the time of writing little better than sufficient honey for winter stores was on the hives. There would still be time for a below average surplus crop but the chances appeared slim.

Hastings

From Wairoa down to Norsewood in Hawkes Bay conditions generally have been too dry and in the Wairarapa too windy.

Present indications are for an average crop below that of last season.

Palmerston North

There was no real summer weather prior to January 21 when temperatures became higher and the weather cleared somewhat.

The season is nearly a month later than usual, and there is still time for a surplus crop but it is difficult to estimate what it will be like.

Greymouth

Prospects in Marlborough are for an average crop, Nelson and Westland below average.

On the Coast very little birch honey was produced and most of it has been used for brood-rearing. There is time for a below average crop from the ratas and lotus major if the weather improves.

Christchurch

Pastures are in excellent condition with an exceptionally heavy flowering of clover from which crops above average are already on the hives. Total production well above average for the season is expected.

Oamaru

Field bee activity has been reduced to a minimum by adverse weather conditions.

White clover carries heavy bloom while catsear, thistles, vipers buglos, lucerne and red clover are in bloom but the season generally is a month later than usual. Some beekeepers have "picked" off small quantities of honey for extraction. With normal weather from now on an average total crop could be harvested.

Invercargill

Beekeeping conditions generally similar to Oamaru district. In Waimea and Lumsden areas clover bloom is considered a record. In coastal areas the clover is now past its best. Crops so far are lighter than last season but if the weather improves an average overall crop may be harvested.

Chatham Islands

A shipment of fourteen hives of bees purchased from Mr. F. N. Glenday, Riccarton, and ten high quality young Italian queens bred by Mr. B. T. Cloake, Springbrook, St. Andrews, Canterbury, left Lyttelton for the Chatham Islands on December 19 in the charge of Mr. L. A. M. Griffin, Apiary Instructor, Christchurch, to the order of local farmers (following an initial visit to the Islands last season by Mr. I. W. Forster), particulars of which appeared in the Christchurch "Press" at that time.

Mr. Griffin's mission was successfully accomplished. The queens were used to requeen hives already there, the hives sent were successfully established at various points on the main island and a number of farmers were given intensive instruction in the management of bees and their use for pollination purposes, to the best advantage.

CAPPINGS MELTER

The attention of beekeepers is drawn to a special article by Mr. L. A. M. Griffin which appeared in the Journal of Agriculture, December, 1956, covering an electric hot top cappings melter. Reports to hand indicate that results being obtained with this melter under Canterbury conditions far exceed early expectations.

There is one point, however, that Mr. Griffin wishes to draw to the attention of any beekeeper who undertakes to make one of these melters himself. It is important that the clearance between the sloping false bottom at the hopper end of the tank and the bottom of the hopper baffle, is exactly four inches. This allows the false sloping bottom to extend diagonally less than half way along the bottoms of the tank and not over half way as inadvertently mentioned in the article.

All of these melters now manufactured commercially are made to the correct dimensions.

T. S. WINTER,
Superintendent, Beekeeping Industry.

Bees for Chatham Islands

A shipment of approximately 500,000 honey bees, to be used for the pollination of agriculture crops on the Chatham Islands, will leave Lyttelton today by the Port Waikato.

They are being taken there by the apicultural instructor of the Department of Agriculture (Mr. L. A. M. Griffin) who will instruct various settlers in hive management and the best use of honey bees for the pollination of economic crops, especially clovers. It is also hoped that the bee population can be built up and maintained at a level necessary for this important work.

The honey bee is the most dependable and efficient pollinator in agriculture. It is unique in that although it is not domesticated it is amenable to control, and any number of bees can be concentrated quickly in areas where economic crops require to be pollinated.

The climate is moderate and conducive to pasture growth most of the year in the Chatham Islands, but only a comparatively small portion of the main island is in established pasture, in much of which the poorer types of grass predominate.

Clovers Encouraged

As high production from grasslands is determined very largely by the amount and consistency of the supply of nitrogen in the soil, the farmers have been encouraged to sow clovers which help to correct any nitrogen deficiency inherent in the soils.

Clover growth and its spread there has been far too slow because of the absence of pollinating insects, especially honey bees, to ensure adequate seed set.

Farmers on the main island are following a policy of gradually improving the areas of wasteland by first stocking with cattle to tramp out the fern and allow grass to become established. They now realise from experience that the success of this policy under local conditions would be greatly increased if clovers consumed by the stock were carrying seed which would be spread in the animals' droppings, and that to ensure adequate seed set of essential clovers it is desirable to provide a suitable spread of honey bees.

Pollination Work

Some idea of the colossal amount of pollination work carried out by honey bees in the course of their lives can be gained from various figures.

During the flush of the season a single colony of bees in a modern hive contains upwards of 45,000 bees, about one-third of which are young house bees and two-thirds field workers.

In a good hive about 300,000 bees are reared each year, and require approximately 400lb of honey and 40lb of pollen each year to supply them with food and warmth for the production of wax for their combs.

Scientific investigation has shown that it takes about 20,000 bee flights to collect a lb of nectar or 80,000 bee flights for the production of a lb of honey.

It has also been reliably estimated that it takes 2,000,000 bee loads of pollen to help rear the brood in one hive each year.

Crosses

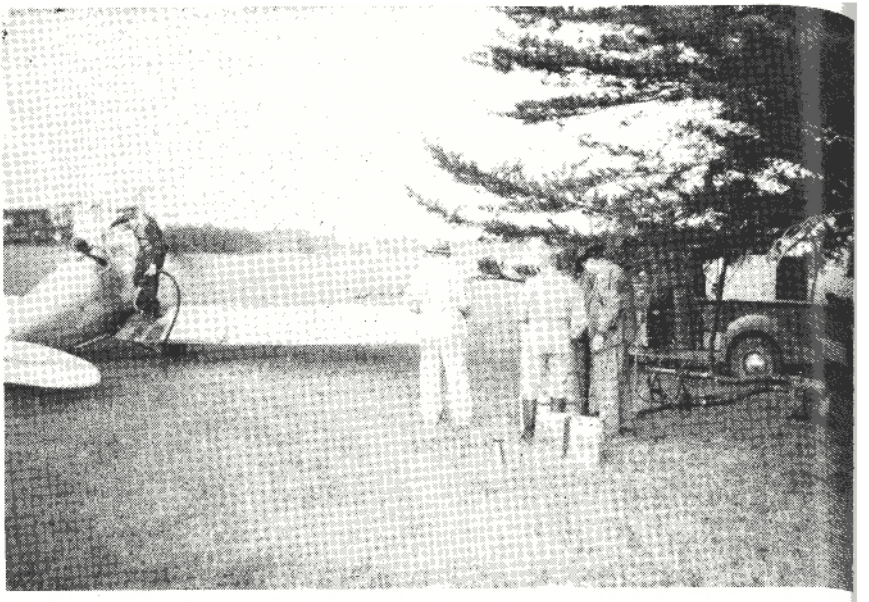
My bees were getting a bit docile and soft,
So in order to put things right,
I crossed them with a cobber's really tough strain
So that wax moths and wasps they could fight.

I waited for these hardy types to get busy
And the wasps discomfiture to see,
But something must have really got crossed,
For the only thing they fought was me.

I tried crossing them with Carniolans,
But they swarmed till they wasn't no more.
So I then introduced Caucasian blood,
But they stuck propolis from the roof to the floor.

In desperation this season, I crossed with the blacks,
But I still don't seem to have any luck.
For the way the darn weather has been,
I should have crossed them with a duck.

— Box-hive Bertie.



EXPERIMENTS WITH INSECTICIDES

Aerial applications of insecticides and their effects on honeybees were studied at Te Awanga, Hawkes Bay, during the past summer. Research Officer T. Palmer-Jones (wearing jack-boots) is shown with others preparing a mixture — at 4.30 a.m. Messrs. I. W. Forster and S. Line also assisted in this project.

HONEY ON GRAPEFRUIT

Cut the breakfast grapefruit in half. Separate the segments and then press honey well in with the edge of the spoon and let it stand a few minutes. Delicious !

Commonsense bows to the inevitable and makes use of it. It does not ask an impossible chessboard, but takes the one before it, and plays the best game.

FAR NORTH

A Field Day of the Far North Branch was held on December 7, 1957, at the apiary of Mr. D. D. Matthews, Awanui Road, Kaitaia, when the President welcomed Mr. Roberts and a good muster of members and friends, including Mr. Tucker, President of the Northland Branch, and two of our old members who find in their retirement that they miss the bees and have decided to again become beekeepers in a small way.

Lectures and demonstrations were given by: Mr. C. G. Rope (Handling Bees), Mr. G. A. Johnson (Clothing and Equipment), Mr. D. S. Roberts, apiary instructer, of Auckland, (Swarm Control, Supering, Re-queening, Finding Queen, Disease and Control), and Mr. W. I. Haines(Taking Off the Crop).

Mrs. Matthews provided an enjoyable cup of tea and lunch was partaken accompanied by the usual hum of conversation.

After lunch a competition of finding the queen was held. Mrs. Matthews was successful and was presented with a queen and nuc.

The party then adjourned to the honeyhouse of Mr. W. Haines where a demonstration of wiring frames and embedding foundation was given by Malcolm Haines.

Mr. W. Haines, assisted by Mr. Roberts, demonstrated uncapping and extracting honey, packing and blending, and melting of wax.

Afternoon tea was served by Mrs. Haines and Mr. Roberts explained the requirements of the health regulations as applied to honey houses. Discussion was then continued on general lines and many topics of interest were debated.

The President thanked Mr. Roberts and others for the demonstrations and attendance, and Mrs. Matthews and Mrs. Haines for the refreshments and this brought an enjoyable day to a close.

Crop Report

The season opened in the spring with prospects of a bumper crop but strong winds throughout the spring and early summer were disastrous for the manuka crop. Yards in sheltered eastern districts had good crops while others had no surplus at all.

Swarming was particularly bad and many hives were well below strength.

The fair weather after Christmas was a welcome break and with pasture sources blooming well most yards should collect a fair crop.

With the spring crop well below average and an expected fair crop in the autumn we are doubtful of getting an average crop.

—W. I. Haines

AUCKLAND CENTRAL

This will be a very hurried note from Auckland as the writer is extremely pressed for time.

Last evening's meeting turned out to be a discussion meeting although a talk by Mr. Reisterer had been planned. However, I think that Mr. Reisterer had his full share of the discussion so that no one felt very guilty about it.

Quite a piece of the evening was given over to individual crop reports which, because of the wide area covered by the branch, were very varied.

The general feeling is that it will be a poor season unless something unexpected leads to a late flow, and the best hopes are for about 4½ tons per 100.

Unseasonable weather at the early part of the year led to starvation and violent swarming in the same apiary, and windy weather coupled with the low rainfall have combined to keep the nectar supply down.

With this in mind and also feeling the pressure of the departmental drive for honey-house improvement, we soon

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got round to wondering firstly whether beekeeping brought as good a reward as other businesses and secondly whether there might not be some short cuts to greater efficiency. Here Mr. Reisterer gave an impromptu talk on the transfer of some of the management from the bees to the beekeeper.

Another interesting debate arose around a visit Mr. Berlin had had from the factory inspector. It was agreed that he would have to guard his machinery but we felt that the possibility of his honey-house being registered as a factory with all the attendant regulations would have to be watched very closely.

I am sorry that time prevents me from reviewing the two excellent talks given by Mr. Smaellie at the end of the year especially as some of the branch members missed out on the Labour weekend meeting.

—R. V. Happy

HAWKES BAY

A well-attended Field Day arranged by the Hawkes Bay Branch was held under perfect picnic conditions early in November at one of Mr. George Gordon's apiaries. The spot was originally planted as a house site, but the quake changed these plans, leaving a delightful grassy circle surrounded by a wonderful variety of trees and shrubs with a winding drive leading up to it. Incidently the Queen Mother is to stay at the homestead on this property during her visit to Hawke's Bay.

Talks and demonstrations included "The Life Cycle of the Honeybee" and "Apiary Gadgets," Mr. S. Line, apiary instructor; "Queen Rearing," Mr. G. Gordon, assisted by Mr. M. Gordon; "Swarm Control," Mrs. W. Dorward; and "Spring Hive Management," Mr. L. Maultsaid.

The afternoon was voted such a success that next season we may be able to have a full day's programme. Heavy winds dried out moisture early in the season and generally dry conditions now point to a lower than average honey crop.

—G. O. Dorward

Not all women are guilty of repeating gossip. One of them has to start it.

This is an era of electrical living—nearly everything is charged.

WEST COAST

The Annual Field Day held at the home apiary of the Branch President, Mr S. Graham of Waiho, was a day to remember, and in view of the fact that in most cases attendance meant being on the road before 7 a.m. there was a very good gathering with visitors from as far as Christchurch.

The morning was dull but this made driving more pleasant. Our road took us through many miles of native forest; trees of many varieties with their varying shades of green foliage and different types of flowers make a pleasant study, and just how interesting we were soon to learn for following the usual formalities of such gatherings and a more than generous sample of South Westland hospitality Secretary Ralph Glasson told a very nice story wound around nectar secreting native shrubs, etc., pollinated by bees and spread by birds—particularly tui and pigeon. (It is a very noticeable fact that berry bearing shrubs show most prolific regeneration near apiary stands.)

The guest speaker was Mr Chavasse of the N.Z. Forest Service. Although not familiar with nectar value, quality or quantity, he told something of their many problems and research findings. Of pollination; how modern methods of control of insects has had a noticeable effect on other than self pollinating trees, shrubs, etc. Of spread; though many seeds are wind borne or water carried, birds are the best spreaders, particularly of fruit and berry bearing types. Their economic and commercial value is firstly as cover growth for the giants, and secondly—and more important—as control of insect and grub enemies of the "big chaps," for it is better that such feed off the small, prolific germinating, quick regenerating shrubs and trees.

From the discussion it appears that though the introduction of manuka blight has quickly cleared many acres of scrub, it may have done much damage and brought many problems. The cover for forest seedlings is gone and in many areas the long term result is similar to cutting without replanting—erosion, river bed build-up, and flooding of low lying areas.

Mr Chavasse spoke briefly on deer and opossum damage—how many trees recover from damage by these pests but die from repeated attacks. He emphasised the magnitude of the control

problem both in man power and finance. At the conclusion of his address he named many shrubs and twigs hastily gathered by members and their families.

Mr. Steve Graham gave a short talk on various methods of queen raising, and his honeyhouse and equipment were on view and much admired.

Mr. Dick Hobbs, our Apiary Instructor, followed with ideas on finding queens, checking for quality, and introducing new queens.

These two addresses caused the usual flood of opinions from which it seemed that on two points were all agreed:

(1) Autumn queen raising stands the best chance of successful mating and a swarm-free follow-up.

(2) Blacks or good hybrids do better and require much less attention in poor years, particularly in seasons of broken weather.

A long but enjoyable day; home about 9 p.m.

Honey Crop

Crop prospects on the Coast are poor, most stands being very uneven. In some cases only about a third of the colonies are of good strength. The main flow appears to be almost finished but putaputaweta, blackberry and lotus may yet help out.

—Tom Holland.

CANTERBURY

The overall crop prospects in Canterbury appear much better than last year —light land is doing best. After a very late start the honey was coming in well at the end of January and beekeepers were keeping their fingers crossed. Some producers have done exceptionally well, others fair—result probably above average.

—K. Ecroyd

SOUTH CANTERBURY

Field Day

The day was fine and a good gathering attended a Field Day held at Mr. G. Gumbrell's apiaries at Peel Forest on November 23, 1957.

Members of Canterbury Branch joined with us, and visitors from south also included Mr. J. W. Fraser, President N.B.A., and Mr. J. McFadzien, Editor N.Z. Beekeeper.

The day's programme opened with a talk by Mr. G. Gumbrell on queen rearing using the Jay Smith method. This interesting address was followed by Mr. J. W. Fraser who gave a talk on the two queen system of queen introduction using a division board. Good results with this method in his district were claimed by the speaker.

At this stage a break was made for lunch and Mr. Gumbrell led us to a pleasant picnic spot where tea and hot water were provided.

After lunch we moved to another apiary which was prepared for a demonstration of queen introduction using a five frame nuc.

Interesting talks were given by Mr. I. Forster and Mr. J. McFadzien, while some beekeepers were busy taking photos. Beekeepers were invited to open hives and Mr. H. Cloake and Mrs. Hearne were successful in finding the old queen and introducing a new one.

Afternoon tea was enjoyed down by a creek, after which our President, Mr. R. Davidson, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Gumbrell for arranging a pleasant and instructive day for all.

Crop Prospects

To date, January 25, 1958, we are still waiting for the main honey flow. Practically nothing has been extracted and many apiaries at this stage have little more than winter stores. Clover is still good and a period of settled weather could change the whole outlook but it must come soon or crops will be below average.

—J. G. McKenzie

OTAGO

The weather was poor for beekeeping until it took a turn for the better about January 20. Many colonies were below strength and as a result there has been less swarming than usual. A few swarms are always reported from about the city, however, and one taken by our worthy President, Mr. C. W. Foote, weighed in at 10¼ pounds. We hope Charlie doesn't have to feed that one through the winter!

About the last branch member to achieve greatness, or have it thrust upon him, was Mr. Tom Jackson, who last winter focussed his attention on more distant pastures and dispatched a few sections of comb honey to the Waikato Show. Tom had his doubts about the parcel arriving safely and was duly gratified to find that (a) he was awarded first place in the class, (b) received a useful prize in the form of comb foundation, and (c) the sections

came back home safely. After that Tom should have some honour in his own country, and perhaps abroad as well.

SOUTHLAND

Beekeepers from all over Southland and from as far as Dunedin were present at a Field Day held at Mr. George Booth's apiary, Drummond, on January 18. The day was wintry but the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Booth recompensed for the wet conditions. The up-to-date honey house was inspected and the following speakers were given an attentive hearing: Mr. N. Glass (Package Bees), Mr. J. McFadzien (Queens), Mr. G. Toogood (Beekeeping in Canada). Mr. J. W. Fraser and Mr. W. T. Herron spoke on Association and Marketing Authority business.

At the conclusion of afternoon tea, Mr. J. W. Fraser made a presentation to Messrs. Griffin Bros. who have retired after 28 years of beekeeping at Woodlands. During that time they have taken a prominent part in beekeeping activities in the south, Mr. L. K. Griffin being Secretary of the Southland Branch over a long period and serving on the National Executive for several years. Several speakers referred to the support which the Griffin brothers have given to the work of the Association and all joined in extending best wishes to Laurie and Charlie in their retirement.

Prospects for this season are not very bright up to the present (January 20) as the persistent bad weather has prevented foraging and depleted hive strength. Clover is plentiful and a spell of fine weather could still bring a light honey crop.

—C. M. Cunningham

SWEETNESS ON THE DESERT AIR

(From Chemical and Engineering News)

Plastic "flowers" are in bloom this summer in the dry, barren stretches of Arizona. The artificial blossoms developed by A. W. Woodrow of the Department of Agriculture's Southwestern Bee Culture Laboratory at Tucson, are being set out, along with bee colonies, in isolated areas.

U.S.D.A. bee specialists are using them in bee feeding experiments. They hope to find out what makes real flowers attractive to bees in order to solve pollination problems. They also are using the artificial flowers to determine the influence of weather, insecticides, and hive placement on pollination and the amount of nectar a bee will collect.

Many studies have been made of caged bees, U.S.D.A. scientists point out, but these do not provide good enough information; bees are social insects who do not lead a normal life when caged.

In such situations the bees are deprived of a queen, must get along on an enforced diet, and are restricted in their movement. But by using artificial blooms, bee men can study bees in the wild and at the same time control their diets; few other sources of nectar are available in the Arizona areas chosen for the experiments.

Woodrow's flowers are Lucite blocks with holes drilled in them. Syrup for the bees to sip instead of nectar is placed in a shallow dish and covered with the plastic block. The holes permit the bee to reach the syrup with its proboscis, just as it would take nectar from a flower. The larger flowers are connected to a reservoir so that the syrup—a mixture of honey and water which can be varied to determine food preferences—is kept at a constant level; a recorder automatically graphs the amount of syrup gathered by the bees.

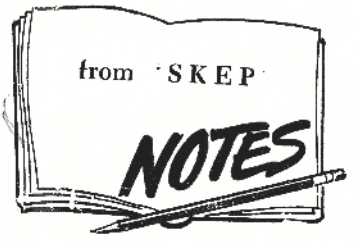
—Quoted in "Gleanings."

Honeyed Apple Crisp

Spread 4 cups of sliced apples in a shallow dish and pour in 2/3 cup of honey mixed with 1 tablespoon of warm water, or slightly more if the apples are of a dry variety. Mix together in a bowl ½ cup of flour and ¼ cup of brown sugar and work in ¼ cup of butter, making the mixture crumbly. Add ¼ cup of chopped walnuts and spread the mixture evenly over the apples. Bake the pudding in a moderate oven for 30 to 40 minutes until the apples are tender and the crumb crust is crisp and browned.

AT A WEST COAST FIELD DAY

From left: Messrs. R. Hobbs (Apiary Instructor), L. A. Ilton (Branch President), and R. V. Glasson (Branch Secretary).



for Beginners

Having more or less recovered from the festivities of Christmas Day, I thought I should get down to writing my next instalment before I get into solid work again. And believe me it is going to be "solid" if we get a spell of good weather in a fortnight or so. The December rains have been excellent and the bees are fast recovering from the decimation they received by the winds that prevailed up to a short while ago. But to get back to Christmas. Apart from the religious aspect I consider that it would be an excellent idea to hold the festivities in mid-winter. It is always one hectic rush to get work up to date and ahead enough to enable a few days holiday to be taken and I usually find that it takes at least two days' relaxation to regain enough energy to enjoy the celebrations. However, I suppose this is largely due to Anno Domini and I can almost hear my readers saying that "Skep," whoever he is, has just about "had it" as far as hard work is concerned. Well, perhaps, they are right, so I had better keep quiet and cease complaining. I often think that beekeeping is like gold mining, it is the glorious uncertainty that keeps you going. No two seasons are alike. Disease, wind, drought and flood all take their toll and although careful planning can, and does, play a big part in successful apiary management, a lot of luck enters into the game. Will we got those rains? Will we be free of bad winds, and if we are not, will the bees have time to recover strength before the main flow sets in? Plenty of rain in December and a super of honey on the hives by Christmas is a comforting feeling but one cannot relax. Get everything ready for that flow, because when it does come it will be fast and furious. One week there will be supers to spare and the next every hive will be full up. At least that is how it should be! Sometimes things work out like this and it is not always a matter of luck. "Plan your work and work your plan," as the saying goes.

Harvest Time

Last November we had those hives supered up and all ready to gather the crop. A time of great expectations! The first crop of honey a beekeeper harvests is usually a "messy" business but his enthusiasm carries him along so that neither stings, heat, lifting, nor stickiness can damp his ardour. I have presumed that a crop of extracted honey is being planned for and not sections. Although extracting a few supers of honey does not call for an elaborate set-up as far as equipment is concerned, certain things are essential. A bee-proof room is a "must." A small extractor, honey-warmer and settling-tank are necessary, also a strainer. Any good text book will explain the set-up, or better still, your apiary instructor. Having got all in readiness for the job of extracting it is now time to examine your hives and see how much honey is on them and what condition it is in. Unless at least threequarters of the comb is capped it is not fit to extract and should be left on the hives until this state prevails. However, this condition will come about in due course and one day the beginner will commence to harvest his first crop. Probably the most "comfortable" way to take honey is by means of bee escapes. These are put on overnight and by morning the bees will all have left the honey supers and gone down to the brood nest, leaving the combs of honey free of bees and ready to lift off. At least that is what

the books say but I often find that, whereas I have read the books the bees sure have not! Then things are not quite so good. The most practicable way of taking the first honey is by shaking and brushing. There will still be a flow on and robbing will not be a worry. Whatever method you may adopt do not use Phenol. When taking honey always look at the brood before removing any combs. If disease is present in the hive it can be spread throughout the apiary or apiaries by taking combs of honey from the hive and putting the extracted wet combs out on to other hives. Make this examination a Golden Rule and never depart from it. There is no need to examine every comb, just the centre of the brood nest and combs from which bees have just hatched. We always adopt this practice and when a long period has elapsed without disease we begin to think it is waste of time and then out of the blue the odd case of disease will turn up and you feel justified. Do not be too greedy on the first round. You must remember that when the hives are closed down in April they will require to have a full super of honey left on them. Some years there is a considerable autumn flow to "top up" with, other years there is virtually none. Likewise, different districts vary; you must be guided by the season and local conditions. Bush areas will require less stores than straight-out clover areas and so on.

It is a good plan to leave the main extraction until the flow is over, then the exact state of the hive can be easily ascertained. Do not be over optimistic and put too many supers after the first "take." If no excluders are used the queen will go up into them and lay and you will get the impression that the hive is full whereas in effect the bottom super is empty. The queen should be laying fewer and fewer eggs every week from January onwards so that by say, mid-April, laying has ceased altogether. Work your hives with this object in view; give no encouragement for a big bee population after the flow has come to an end; they are a liability rather than an asset. Check again for disease before closing the bees down for the winter, put entrance guards on the hives to exclude mice and prevent robbing. Make sure the hive is queen-right and if all is in order, you have finished with your bees until next spring. "Do not disturb" is the slogan from then until early September.

That Honey

Having got that extracted honey into the tank you will no doubt be wondering what to do with it. There are numerous text books dealing with this and beyond stressing the fact that cleanliness is essential and that the honey must be covered, skimmed and a "starter" of fine-grained honey stirred in before tinning off, I do not propose to offer much advice on the subject. Once again I say consult your apiary instructor. A practical demonstration will teach you more in half an hour than I could in many pages.

Speculation and Enthusiasm

If the beginner has had a good season he will probably develop a disease that my wife used to call "Beeitis." That is to say he will think along these lines: What a grand life; 100lb of honey per hive at 1/6 per lb equals £7/10/-. One hundred and fifty hives will give me an income of over £1200 per annum and I will have all winter free. Don't be carried away by enthusiasm. It is true that many commercial apiarists start off with one or two hives and build up into big businesses. As a hobbyist you have had no real expenses, no wages to pay, no truck to run, no buildings to buy and maintain, no real plant to acquire. All this costs money to buy and keep in order. The good producing areas are fully stocked with bees, in some cases stocked beyond the economic capacity for honey production. Good sites are hard to come by and the purchase of an efficient outfit costs real money.

Postscript

My good resolutions to get this finished and in the editor's hands before I got really busy have not materialised. That honey flow has started and looks like keeping on; every comb is full and the pressure is on. "Skep" is somewhat busy. So long until May.

It is not doing the thing we like to do, but liking the thing we have to do, that makes life blessed.

"SKEP" IN ACTION AT A FIELD DAY (Who can it be. Surely we've seen those brawny arms somewhere!)

Story of Ten Royal Ladies

Ten royal ladies slept in the city last night in somewhat unconventional circumstances (says a story in the Christchurch "Press" of 18/12/57). They all slept in the one bed with a man. And in case their reputation is irretrievably ruined here are the innocent facts.

They felt there was safety in numbers, so each brought a suite of eighteen members of the working class as an escort, and a buffer against shock.

These royal ladies are specially selected Queen Bees en route to the Chatham Islands to found families there, and their very attentive host last night was the Government Apicultural Instructor for Canterbury (Mr. L. A. M. Griffin).

"Queen Candy"

A light wooden box, 2in. by 3in., covered with gauze housed each Queen and her eighteen worker bee escort.

To sustain them a block of "Queen candy" was placed in each box. This special candy is made of ground sugar or icing sugar mixed with liquid honey, then warmed in the oven. More sugar is afterwards added until the honey can absorb no more. A solid block is thus formed.

The bees are teetotallers, drinking water only. Mr. Griffin supplies this by wetting his fingers and drawing them over the wire gauze covering the boxes.

The Queens were raised in St. Andrews by Mr. B. T. Cloake. The strain is one of the hardiest raised in the South Island, and it is considered that they will best suit condition in the Chathams.

Under expert care the bees can survive in these boxes up to four weeks, said Mr. Griffin.

"And So To Bed"

And why were they taken to bed?

If the Queens are chilled their ovaries are likely to be affected, and this results in their becoming drone-layers.

When they arrived yesterday they were put to bed with a hot water bag. Later, when it became warmer, they were taken out of their bed and put on a table, and, later still, shared Mr. Griffin's bed with him.

"Busy bees" is certainly an apt term, as regards the Queens at any rate. They lay up to 500 eggs a day, each one meticulously in the cells of the special combs provided. Mr. Griffin said that the Queen goes from cell to cell first looking into it to see that it is unoccupied and then settles momentarily to lay her egg.

The eighteen worker escorts are not only there for company. They groom their Queen, washing her with their legs. Most importantly, they are there to act as a buffer in case the boxes may be dropped.

They are truly "Royal Ladies" and they are only a tiny part of the half millions bees which will sail in the Port Waikato from Lyttelton.

Royal Jelly Boom in Australia

(Reprinted from "The Australasian Beekeeper" of December 15, 1957)

The publicity about royal jelly being of benefit to people suffering numerous complaints, the majority of which are probably due to general ill-health, is creating increasingly greater consumption of honey.

There is the honey consumed in the taking of royal jelly mixed in honey — 2 grams R/J to 6 ozs. of honey is one popular mix, but the quantity of honey seems to be immaterial, and we have heard of as much as one pound of honey per 2 grams of R/J being recommended. In any case considerable quantities of honey can and will be used in the consumption of R/J. Also quite a number of the royal jelly honey consumers were not previously regular consumers of honey, and thus new family consumers can become honey-eaters.

Mr. Rex Peacock, an apiarist of Kerang, Victoria, who has been most energetic in making royal jelly available to many people, says: "Those who cannot afford royal jelly believe honey has the elements anyway, and buy it. I am selling honey to royal jelly customers who have never bought honey from me before but contacted me through royal jelly. I bought six tins of clover honey from a beekeeper the other day to use royal jelly in, so that is another six tins off the over-supplied market."

Then there is the enthusiastic acceptance of royal jelly preparations for "my lady's" complexion.

The ladies seem to be raving about it and beauticians who are not already publicising royal jelly preparations (most of which are important lines backed with lavish publicity appeal) are being queried by their clients.

The virtues of honey for beauty preparations have long been propounded, and beeswax too is used extensively in cosmetics. Now we have royal jelly coming into the picture as a booster for high class or expensive cosmetic preparations. So three products of the bees, honey, beeswax, and royal jelly, are sharing in the boom.

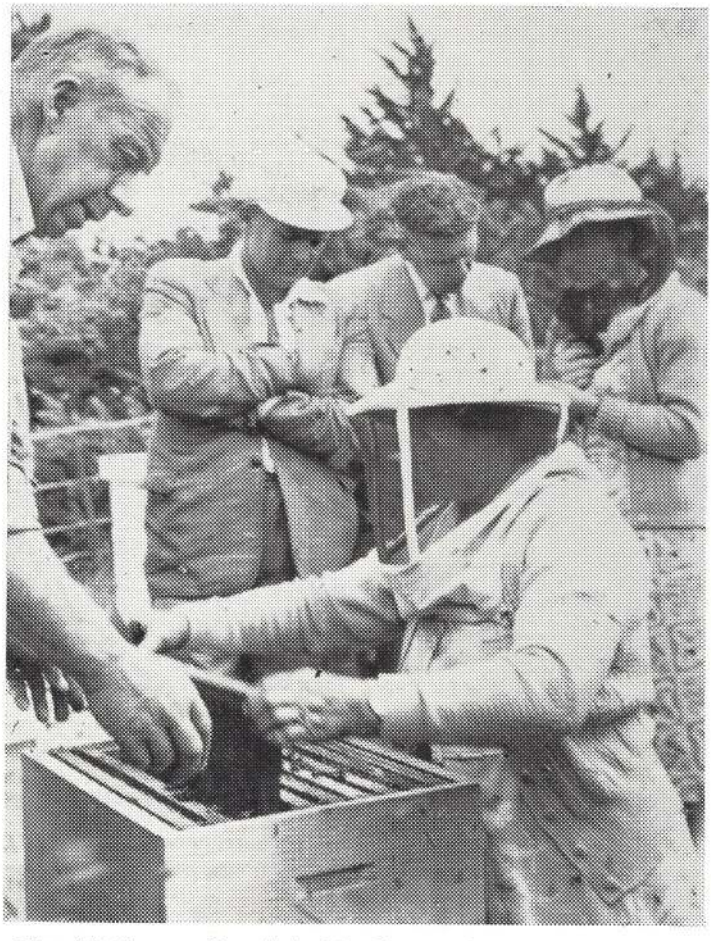
It has been reported that Foy's Emporium of Melbourne sold royal jelly lines (imported from Austria) at the rate of £1250 worth per day for the week it was featured at their store.

We have heard of one beekeeper whose income from honey to date this season was nil but he had made sales of royal jelly, without much effort, to the extent of £350 in the past month.

It would appear that beekeepers generally could well afford to become more interested in the production and sales of royal jelly to meet the apparent increased demand for this product. It would be interesting to find out the quantity and value of royal jelly now being imported to Australia.

If there is a possibility that royal jelly can be such a good health builder as reported by medical men of other countries, then for the sake of suffering humanity this apparent wonder substance should be thoroughly investigated by medical scientists here.

If required by the medical profession for treatment of human ills, there is no doubt that Australian beekeepers can supply the raw product. Pharmaceutical preparations of royal jelly to meet the exacting requirements of the medical profession is needed before any universal use of royal jelly by Australian doctors can be expected.



Mrs. M. Hearne, Rangitata Island, preparing a colony of bees for the introduction of a young queen, at a recent field day held at a Peel Forest apiary by the South Canterbury Beekeepers' Association. On the left is Mr. G. E. Gumbrell, owner of the apiary.

Gadgets and Ideas

No Smoker !

Lull your bees to inactivity — simply by sound waves — 600 cycles per second and at 120 decibels intensity by a cheap vibrator. Bees remain 'frozen' as long as sounding continues and manipulation easy and stingless — you use both hands but ear protection is needed. Bees become active immediately sound is stopped. — (From 'Beekeepers' News').

Water for Bees

At a Brains Trust session in Australia a 'certain party' on the committee told the panel that, for three years, his bees had stubbornly refused to touch a drop of the water provided for them in the apiary. Both cheap and costly water containers had been placed at every direction and position in and around the apiary, to no avail.

He (the certain party) said he had placed baits of sugar syrup around the water and sugar in the water. The ants had been grateful. Then a local chemist suggested: "Try citronella. I once broke a jar of citronella in the shop and bees came from miles around to lick it up." Five shillings worth of pure citronella oil, when placed in the apiary, had attracted 12 species of ants, but no bees. Later, an expert had recommended putting aniseed near the water. Genuine aniseed was purchased, but all that happened was a visit to the apiary by two dogs.

A panel member suggested water dripping on a board. The certain party replied that there had been a dripping board in his apiary for the past 10 months.

He said he was concerned whether the bees were creating a nuisance by hanging round neighbours' taps and drains. What, he pleaded, could he do further.

Mr. Clemson said bees sometimes preferred brackish water. Without wishing to cause the questioner's bankruptcy, he would suggest that the certain party purchase or borrow some salt and place it in the bees' water. He also said that in the very hot weather the bees liked water that was in the shade.

Mr. Manchee said he had noticed that bees often preferred to obtain water from outside the apiary, rather than from a container in the apiary itself. He did not know why.—(The Australasian Beekeeper).

Blow 'em Out !

"Have you ever tried a blast of air to get bees out of the supers?" asks Earl Covington in 'American Bee Journal'. "I got the idea last fall when taking off my last few supers. Robber bees were worse than I have ever seen them. It was impossible to shake or smoke them from the combs. I lost my temper, loaded the supers on the truck with lots of bees in them.

"Being an operator of a small auto service station I thought of a blow pipe I had made to work on the air hose to blow out fuel lines, carburettors, and the like. I tried it and it cerainly did the trick."

A New Zealand beekeeper suggests taking a pressure outfit, or a 44-gallon drum loaded with compressed air from the garage — enough air to blow away a lot of bees.

Acarine Disease

Though acarine disease of adult bees has not been found in New Zealand, it is prevalent in some Europeon countries, and in the British Isles is present in about a quarter of the colonies. The cause is a small parasitic mite, Acarapis woodi, which breeds in the trachea or breathing tubes of the bee. The mites feed on the body fluids of their victim, taking their food from the trachea walls. The female mites lay their eggs and the young are hatched and reared within the trachea of their host. When the trachea become crowded the mites crawl out and search for a new host.

The disease is also transmitted by drifting of infested workers from diseased to healthy colonies and by robber bees. Heavily infested bees become weak, are unable to fly, and soon die, a condition that rapidly overtakes the whole colony.

The first sign of acarine is a number of bees running about in front of the hive, some with the hind wings sticking out sideways while the forewings are folded in the usual position. This occures usually in early spring though it may occur at any time during the season. As the disease advances num-

bers of bees will be found dead in front of the hive, and large numbers will also be seen crawling in front some distance from the hive. The whole apiary will quickly become infested.

Though the importation of bees into New Zealand is governed by a strict quarantine system requiring the importer to obtain a permit under the Apiaries Regulations, 1952, and no permit is granted for importation from those countries where acarine is known to exist, there is always the possibility of an illegal importation of bees either by accident, or by ignorance, or by wilful disregard of the regulations.

Any case with the described symptoms, including mass crawling of bees, many with unjointed wings, should be reported immediately to the Apiary Instructor for the district for investigation, as acarine is the most devastating of all bee diseases.

—From an article by A. W. Bennett, Apiary Instructor at Hamilton, in the Journal of Agriculture.

Comb Honey Production

By BUCK SPINIFEX

It had always been a matter of some contention between my wife and myself as to the wisdom of going in for the production of comb honey instead of extracted honey alone in my home apiary. My wife, who doesn't know the difference between a drone and a worker bee contended that I should go in for comb honey, while I tried to explain that the district wasn't suitable, that is was more difficult to produce, the bees swarmed, and so on, quoting all the authorities, even including that dear old man, Dr. Miller. Even then, after bringing up all the heavy artillery so to speak, my wife was still unconvinced, so, just to prove my point, I ordered a quantity of the deep frames, sections, and thin super foundation. I did not consider the occasion warranted the expense of using the T supers as the whole thing would be a failure and I could use the full-depth supers again next year for extracting honey.

Well, as all bee-keepers here know the 1957-58 season was far from being conducive to a contented and peaceful state of mind. I tried to refrain from alluding to the approaching fiasco to my good lady. Dull days and cold westerly winds followed with dreary succession. Although my hives were wintered with top-boxes I had also set aside a number of supers with frames of honey "just in case." I was forced to feed most of my hives or see them starve. Just as I had become resigned to never getting any honey the weather picked up somewhat and I am still mystified how my bees managed it. I found that they were actually getting ahead of brood requirements. Then, to my great relief the pohutukawas blossomed and we were saved.

Supers were hastily put on, even, yes, even the boxes of sections. I had always understood that the hives were to be reduced to the brood-chamber. There were several colonies I had wintered in single boxes; to these I gave the sections as well as the hives with the top boxes. To my amazement they both did equally well.

The situation was saved indeed. Then came the day when I considered I had better remove the sections to prevent them from becoming travel stained, and what a surprise! Frame after frame was carefully removed revealing almost perfect sections. These I graded and rushed to hoist my placard announcing HONEY FOR SALE, 1lb sections. Scarcely had it been nailed into position when passersby came asking for some honey. My morale was so high I simply had to give my neighbours some of my bounty, even some who were not my neighbours, some who were hardly on nodding acquaintance. Anyhow, they all had something in common. They all praised my sections, and how did I get the bees to build right out to the sides, they're so much whiter and nicer than the sections one buys in the shops.

Well, I don't know; but I suppose we are all subject to a little flattery. My good lady came in to my honey room to admire and remind me that she "knew" section honey could be produced here. Then, one day, she inquired, woman like, how much I had made out

of the honey. When I told her I thought about £7 she looked at me incredulously and said that there must be a lot more than that as there was more than £15 worth. No, that's all there was, I lamely reminded her, shifting my weight uneasily and suddenly found some pressing work outside. Next year, I have an idea my wife is going to take over the selling part of the business.

Beekeeper to King of Libya

Englishwoman's Hard Task

The coastal road from Derna to Susa in Libya is a lonely, desolute route. It is a forgotten spot.

Once, in a blaze of history, the world knew this classic battleground between Montgomery's 8th Army and Rommel's Afrika Corps.

But in 1957 only the desert remembers. Small Italian settlers' houses crumble along the way; points of shelter for nomadic Arabs.

It was not the place I expected to find an English woman, Miss Olive Britton. And her occupation—beekeeper to the King of Libya—seemed equally improbable.

I had heard in Tobruk, where King Idris lives, that many miles along the coast an English woman had an estate, making honey for the King. I asked many times on the road, and citizens always told me: "The bee lady? Yes, she is near Susa."

I found Miss Britton at last living in a vast rambling house which an Italian colonel built before World War II. The place, far off the road, was hidden in a camouflage of decaying palm trees and bougainvillea run wild.

Malaria Attack

Olive Britton is a small, grey-haired woman in her fifties. She smiled readily and apologised for being a little weak. She had just recovered from malaria, she said. The nearest Englishwoman lived 70 miles away, and medicines were hard to get.

I asked Miss Britton how it was that she should be making honey in this remote spot for an oriental potentate. Miss Britton said she had started making honey and training people in beekeeping more than 30 years ago, in England.

Then, after World War II, she went to Palestine, bringing beekeeping as one small way of survival for the thousands of refugees there.

Afterwards, six years ago, she had come on to Libya. And the Government had allowed her to set up a bee farm here in the foothills of King Idris's kingdom. The nation was desperately in need of both skills and employment. So the Libyan Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries employed Miss Britton (with 30 years' beekeeping behind her) to set up a bee training centre for all of Libya.

But Libya is not a country where things happen the easy or the usual way. Miss Britton said her first concern was honey for the King. King Idris apparently liked huge spoonfuls for breakfast. In the ramshackle rooms of her house, she showed me her different types of honey made by the bees in their hives in the hills behind.

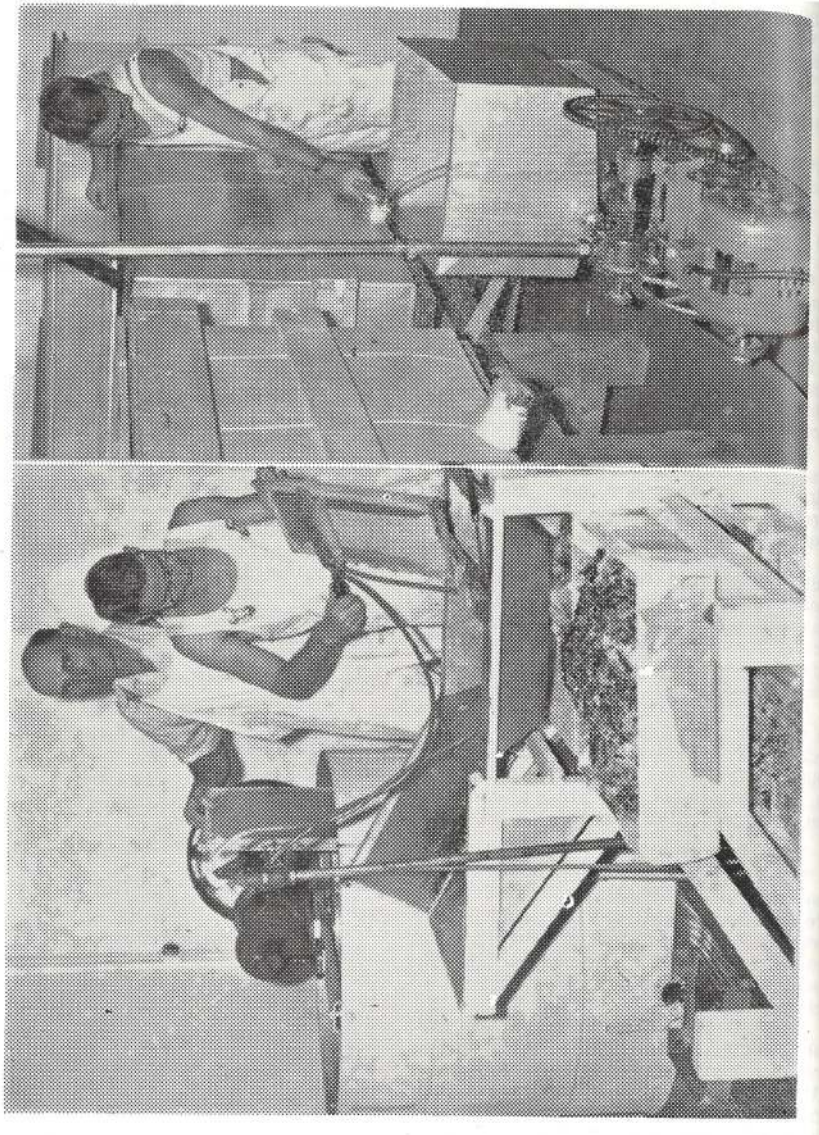
Juniper honey was King Idris's special favourite. At the monarch's order Miss Britton said she had with great difficulty managed to make some of this delicacy in the honey world.

Hazardous Life

Poor Miss Britton, I discovered, led a hazardous life. The house had no electric light, and the place was infested with snakes. The kitchen roof had recently fallen in upon her. The bakery door had been ripped off, and bread was a rare luxury.

When I came to the bee farm all of Miss Britton's staff were down with Asian flu. Her meagre supply of aspirins had gone. Shereef, her servant, had gone by foot 30 miles over the hills to telephone for aid. But that was two days ago. So, as a rare visitor in a car, I was asked to take by modern means an appeal for help from the outside world.

So, after a cup of tea, I left. Miss Britton came out to the ruined gates to wave me off. She waved again when I looked round half a mile down the road. Then the shadows swallowed her up—this lonely, unusual and brave beekeeper for the King.—Associated Newspapers Feature Services.



THE HONEY HARVEST

The extracting season is the climax to the year's work in the apiary. These pictures show work in progress at a South Canterbury honey house. LEFT: While one man uncaps with a steam-heated knife another loads a comb of honey into the extractor. RIGHT: Honey is released from storage tanks and pumped up into the cooling room.

Reflections . .

from the Editor's Desk

A Pleasant Occupation

Each year the Shell Oil Company issues an attractive pictorial calendar featuring different aspects of New Zealand geography. The theme for 1958 is New Zealand industries and the front-page month of January portrays the beekeeping industry. There is a brief written account of the Dominion's honey and beeswax production and the illustration shows a beekeeper manipulating a hive of bees. If we are not mistaken the manipulator is Mr. Percy Berry, one of our leading producers, and in this picture he certainly makes beekeeping look like a pleasant occupation.

Honey for the President

After President Eisenhower's recent illness the magazine "Time" printed a vivid account of the few critical days when the nation was anxiously waiting for hopeful news. Of the third day, the article says:—

The President awakened at 7.40 a.m., got up, showered, shaved himself, breakfasted on half a grapefruit, creamed chipped beef, toast and honey and Sanka. Then he set about bouncing back with a vigor that astonished his staff. In pyjamas, beige dressing gown and slippers, he padded about the second floor of the White House, later got dressed in slacks and sweater, settled down to work at his easel on a portrait of Queen Elizabeth II's daughter, Princess Anne. He sought and got his doctor's permission to receive a few official visitors—Nixon, Adams, Hagerty and the King of Morocco. He put in a half-hour's formal work on State papers, signed his name a dozen times, his initials once, attended to items that ranged from the month's NATO Council meeting through next year's Federal Budget.

We know well the recuperative value of honey and it is pleasing to think that it played some part in the President's recovery.

A Philosophy

Mr. Ezra Benson, Secretary for Agriculture in the U.S.A., struck a vigorous note when speaking at the opening of the I.F.A.P. Conference at Purdue, Indiana, in May last year; a note which is not heard so often these days. Quoted in a recent issue of "Straight Furrow" he said:—

"There is an old fashioned philosophy that I have quoted many times, and that is that people are not actually helped when you do for them that which they could and should do for themselves. In my belief the farmer will get his fair share of the national income out of efficient production —balanced production—and better marketing. He will not get it out of government. He will not get it out of acreage allotments and marketing quotas. He will not get it by Government price-fixing, and he never has. He will get it through research and education and co-operation and free initiative. He will get it out of building new markets and strengthening the private and co-operative marketing machinery."

FOR A TICKLY COUGH

A lemon scraped out into a dessert dish and mixed with a big spoonful of honey is simply grand for a tickling cough, and perfectly healthy, harmless and natural. A grapefruit will do as well—use the pulp as well as the juice.

"The bee then, makes the wax from flowers. The honey, however, it does not make, but merely gathered what is deposited out of the atmosphere, for it is distilled from dew. As proof of this statement we have the known fact that occasionally beekeepers find the hives filled with honey within the space of two or three days." —Aristotle.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor:

Sir,

In your November issue Mr. Williams has set out an array of hypothetical figures in an effort to prove that if the H.M.A. confined its activities to the export market and left the packer to meet the local demand our marketing problems would be solved.

That very policy has been progressively applied since the H.M.A. came into existence and the results have been far from satisfactory to either suppliers or non-suppliers.

Our local sales of H.M.A. packs over the six months period ending November last has averaged 10 tons 17 cwt per month compared with an average of 26 tons 14 cwt per month for the corresponding period of the previous year.

The fallacy of Mr. Williams' reasoning in believing that the seal revenue can make good the difference between export returns and local parity is more apparent from the following analysis.

At the 1956 conference Mr. Field, H.M.A. Chairman, stated that the pay out was 2d. per lb. below estimated cost of production. At the 1957 conference Mr. Field stated that our overseas prices had dropped £20 per ton to meet a competitive drop of up to £50 per ton. Since then our export prices have dropped still further and in an effort to stabilise the British market we have sold a considerable tonnage to Germany at prices returning us about 4d. below local parity. At the close of our financial year last August we had the whole of our intake of the previous season on hand unsold plus 200 tons carry over from 1956. Moreover we had to suffer a reconditioning cost of approximately 3d. per lb on 300 tons to bring "stale" honey up to export standard.

In the face of these facts how can Mr. Williams argue by any process of logical reasoning that the seal revenue can be other than a negligible factor in bridging the gap between export returns and local parity?

The seal levy is rightly regarded as a cost to the packer that should be recovered in the selling price to the consumer. If, however, the packer cannot recover this cost then it obviously becomes a tax on his nett income. What Mr. Williams proposes in effect is that the New Zealand consumer (or packer) be taxed in order to subsidise cheap honey to Germany and other overseas markets. It is precisely this very policy as applied to subsidised dairy products by foreign countries to Great Britain that has created a marketing crisis for our dairy farmers and invoked strong representations of protest from our Government.

Surely Mr. Williams does not envisage the Government condoning the actions of a New Zealand Marketing Authority were it to apply a policy similar in character to that in operation by our overseas dairy competitors that has operated to the very serious detriment of our economic stability.

To me it seems the very antithesis of orderly stabilised marketing to suggest —as Mr. Williams does—that the path of progress is in the direction of the producer's own marketing organisation handling less honey. The industry knows from bitter experience that such a policy can only lead to competitive selling, unpayable returns, and the ultimate control of our marketing by outside commercial interests.

That very situation is developing right now as Mr. Williams well knows.

—Wallace Nelson

To the Editor:

Sir,

A thought aroused by Mr. Williams' effort in your last issue—and surely his arithmetic is sound: What has the Authority ever done to encourage the sale of honey by packers? It will be remembered that in a time of shortage a couple of seasons ago the Authority in its wisdom virtually denied supplies of honey to those in a position to sell it, with the result that honey which could and should have been sold, went out of condition in store and we are told it took £6000 of SUPPLIERS' MONEY to recondition it, even to a point where it was marketable at a low price. If you will print a mixed metaphor, I would suggest

to all voters at the next H.M.A. election that there is many a wolf in sheep's clothing sailing under the suppliers' flag. Mr. Williams has stated a good case and stated it very well. I hope we will hear from him again.

—Slumgum Jim

Sir,

With commendable modesty, your correspondent E. D. Williams has refrained from pointing out that the hypothetical case he made out in his letter in your last issue has been substantiated by the Authority's trading operations last year. Never were Authority local sales lower, never were the seals levy receipts greater, never was a higher payout. I am, etc.,

—Supplier

Economic Beekeeping

Bees can be kept so they will get along from season to season and cause their owner little trouble. But bees cannot be kept profitably without good equipment and good management which the bees need for results.

EQUIPMENT—First, **hives.** In a climate warm enough bees can get by without a hive. They also can endure considerable cold in skeps and boxes but it is more profitable to use good hives and not primitive equipment.

Second, **tools.** Bees can be handled without smoke, without a veil, without a hive tool. But work would be slow and not economical. We need the smoker, the veil and the hive tool for efficient operation.

Third, **houses and machines.** We can extract outdoors or in the kitchen. We can do without the extractor and cut out slabs of honey to be crushed and strained. But it is extremely uneconomical. We need the extractor and the house to work in and to store equipment for our requirements. Also we can get along with a cold knife for uncapping. I had 500 colonies before I had a steam knife but it was hard and inefficient work. We also can dispose of the cappings and the honey they contain by melting them together to get a cake of wax and some darkened honey. But this is inefficient and costly. We need good equipment for economical success. —E. L. Sechrist, in American Bee Journal.

The National Beekeepers' Association

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

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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.

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

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FRONT COVER

The photograph on the front cover shows Sir Edmund Hillary standing in front of his snow tractor after arriving at the South Pole on January 4.

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