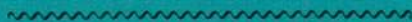


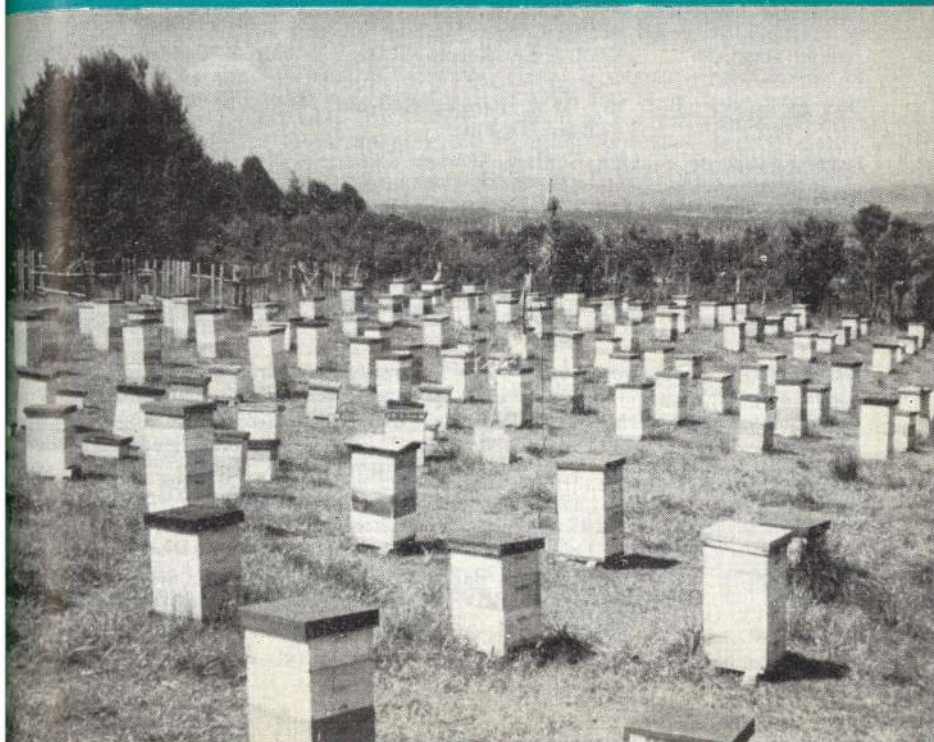
# The New Zealand Beekeeper

AUGUST 1958

Conference Issue



WEST COAST APIARY



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(Incorporated)

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# THE NEW ZEALAND BEEKEEPER

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## ANNUAL REPORT

Gentlemen,

The pattern of progress is sometimes hard to follow. Much time, effort and expense can be involved in action without any apparent gain at the time and it is often not until one has the opportunity of reviewing events in retrospect that one appreciates the significance of the work done in any given period. The past year in the life of the Association could well be an example of this state of affairs, for while the Association has been undeniably busy the effects of its working will I feel, not be apparent immediately.

### Prices and Price Control :

Within a few weeks of the holding of last year's Conference, the Minister of Industries and Commerce announced the re-imposition of Price Control on Honey sales, giving, as his reason, the excessive increase in consumer prices. The return to controls, coming as it did, so soon after we had achieved a free market, was something of a disappointment to the Industry, but it did have some pleasing features from the Beekeeper's point of view. Notable amongst these was the very fact that the very prices adopted by the Industry following decontrol in March of last year were retained "in toto" in the new Price Order No. 1718, thus virtually giving official endorsement to the very moderate claims of Producers as set out by the Association, following the lifting of controls in March, 1957.

Since the re-imposition of control, we have of course, experienced a change of Government, but policy on Price Control has, if anything, been strengthened for some little time. The Industry has stated in the past its willingness to work within the framework of Government Price Fixation, provided its just claims for adjustments to cover production cost increases are met promptly, and I am sure that this assurance could be re-iterated today. Our chief complaint in the past has been with the tardiness of the Price Tribunal in considering price applications and with the fact that our claims, though based on independent cost surveys, have in many cases, not been fully met. It is to be hoped that these complaints will not recur in the future, for it is possible that an early application will have to be lodged to cover the higher price of petrol, transport and other charges.

### Guaranteed Prices :

Despite the excellent arrangements which the Honey Marketing authority has for the disposal of our exported honey and the comparatively good returns which have resulted, it has not yet been possible to return to suppliers, the full cost of production as at present established by the Department of Agriculture. At successive Conferences, producers have requested the Association to press for a Government subsidy to meet the deficiency. This the Executive was reluctant to undertake in view of the short term that the Authority had been operating, and until all other possible avenues for increasing the returns to suppliers had been investigated and exhausted. During the past year it has become obvious that the gap between the Authority's pay-out and the established cost of production cannot be closed despite the fact that the Industry does, as a whole, subsidise the Authority's operations through the Seals Levy to an extent of over £15,000 per year. Consequently, the Executive in line with Conference direction, began the preparation of a case to lay before Government for financial assistance to the

Industry. On February 26 a deputation from the Executive waited upon the new Minister of Agriculture to acquaint him with the broad background to the Industry's various problems, and to seek from him some indication of Government's attitude to financial support for Honey Producers. The Minister confirmed Government's policy of ensuring that primary producers received their fair cost of production and advised that this was provided for in the Government's guaranteed Price System. He invited the Executive, in collaboration with the Honey Marketing Authority to supply him with a detailed survey of the Authority's trading, and to advise him how and to what extent it was considered a subsidy was required. This was done; the full Executive and Honey Marketing Authority met in joint session in Wellington to consider the form and scope of the submissions to be made on behalf of the Industry and on June 24 a comprehensively documented report was presented to the Minister by a joint deputation from the Executive and the Authority with a request that Government make an annual grant to the Industry through the Authority sufficient to enable the Authority to pay the established cost of production to its suppliers. At the time of writing this report we are still awaiting the Government's reply, but anticipate that this will be conveyed before Conference is concluded.

### **Gin Production :**

The Government's announcement that favourable consideration would be given to the licensing of Gin distillation in this country, following upon the re-imposition of import restrictions, has far-reaching possibilities for the Beekeeping Industry. Not only has a great deal of scientific research been carried out into the production of meads and other alcoholic liquors from honey, but the gin samples produced have been commended by an expert viticulturist and pronounced of high quality. With export realisations for the classes of honey suitable to gin production being considerably less than the cost of production, the possibility of utilising honey for the production of spirits could well be a major turning point in the welfare of the industry. Accordingly the Association, on behalf of the industry, has lodged an application in the appropriate quarter for consideration in any licensing which is authorised, and we have made it clear that we will support any applicant concern which will use honey as its base product for alcoholic distillation. Negotiations are in fact, at present in train between the Executive and a major concern, which has at present facilities for the brewing, wholesale distribution and retail sale of alcoholic beverages. Irrespective of the outcome of these proposals for the promotion of gin honey, the Executive will continue to be interested in promoting the production and sale of honey mead, in which product there appears to be considerable public interest at the present time.

### **The Apiaries Act and Toxic Pesticides :**

Parliament, as you know, is at present considering an amendment to the Apiaries Act to provide machinery for dealing with outbreaks of foreign bee diseases, should any occur in this country, and this step has been fully supported by the Executive after consultation with the Department of Agriculture.

The vexatious problem of toxic agricultural chemicals, both pesticides and weedicides is still with us. Losses of bee stocks continue to occur throughout the country due to the inadequate control of the use of these materials. We have been assured by the Minister of Agriculture, however, that the long mooted Agricultural Chemicals Bill, which provides comprehensive measures for dealing with the problem, is being proceeded with and will be presented to Parliament later this year.

### **Research :**

However much we worry about administration, every good Beekeeper knows that it is the practical work in the field which ensures the healthy maintenance of a hive, produces a crop of honey, and at the same time enables his neighbour, the farmer, to enjoy a high level of farm production through effective pollination. Over past years, the Association has continually stressed the importance of practical scientific research to further improve Beekeeping methods, and to

guarantee the best possible pollination service for agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture has acknowledged his like belief in the importance of research, by last year authorising the appointment of two additional Research Officers to the industry.

More than any other single factor, research and a close understanding of the problems which Beekeeping faces in an increasingly scientific age, will be the keynote to the industry's future development. To ensure this, the administration of the industry must lie in the hands of those Departmental Officers who have a thorough knowledge and appreciation of practical problems and experience of dealing with them in the field.

#### Departmental :

It is customary to record in this report our appreciation of the continued good services of Departmental Officers during the past year, and in this connection I feel that some special mention is due to the retiring Superintendent of Beekeeping, Mr. T. S. Winter. Mr. Winter's association with the industry has been in many ways unique. He has served as an Apiary Instructor, as a senior Honey Grader, and as a Field Research Officer as well as in his latter position of Superintendent, and it is undoubtedly been this broad background of experience which has made him such an able administrator with a full appreciation of the real needs of the industry.

To Mr. Winter, in his retirement, we extend our best wishes; to his colleagues in the Department, our thanks for services rendered, and to his successor, our welcome.

#### Domestic :

The slight but significant decline both in hive numbers and in registered beekeepers, which has been evident in the past year, is naturally reflected in our membership figures. However, in all major honey producing areas strong branches of the association continue to flourish and for their efforts, and especially those of Branch Officers, the Executive expresses appreciation.

The Journal continues to be an efficient and attractive medium for the communication of ideas and news within the industry, and the consistently high quality of this Organ reflects continued credit on our editor, Mr. McFadzien.

I cannot conclude without expressing sincere thanks to members of the Executive for their support and assistance throughout a busy year. The Executive wish me to make special mention of the services so effectively rendered by our General Secretary during the year.

Finally, I would like to say that our organisation has again proved equal to the tasks which have confronted it. With your support, the association can, and will continue to play an important role in the development of the Beekeeping Industry in this country.

J. W. FRASER, Dominion President.

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### Marketing Authority

The election of two producer representatives to the Honey Marketing Authority will take place by postal ballot during September, the retiring members being Messrs. E. A. Field and W. T. Herron. The closing date for nominations was August 13.

### N.B.A. Representative

At a meeting of the Dominion Executive held in Wellington following the Conference Mr. J. W. Fraser was re-appointed as the N.B.A. representative on the Honey Marketing Authority for the coming year.

### Circular Service

Members desiring to receive copies of Head Office circulars may do so on payment of the fee of 10/- per year. This should be paid direct to the General Secretary.

### Pamphlet on Pollination

The article in this issue entitled "Pollination of Plants" is the text of a statement which accompanied the honey industry's application for Government assistance, June, 1958.

Reprints of this article, in pamphlet form, are available to beekeepers or Branches of the Association. They should provide effective publicity in farming circles or in response to queries about honeybees generally, and could be distributed with honey orders or at meetings or to visitors at the honey house.

For copies of the pamphlet apply to the Editor; price 10/- per 100 or 2/- per dozen, cash with order.

### 1959 Conference

Following the recommendation from the Wellington Conference the Executive has decided that the Conference next year will be held in Timaru.

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1958-59

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# POLLINATION OF PLANTS

## The Value of Honey Bees to the National Economy

It is now realised in all progressive agricultural countries that the honey bee is essential for effective pollination of many species of plants. The only satisfactory way in which adequate bee coverage can be provided for pollination through the maintenance of a thriving beekeeping industry. Beekeeping is a highly skilled and onerous occupation and unless it provides an adequate income will not attract sufficient beekeepers to supply the needs of New Zealand agriculture. Countries such as Italy, Germany, Switzerland and Great Britain where the honey crop is small, nevertheless maintain large beekeeping research establishments because they realise the value of bees as pollinators. Agriculture is becoming increasingly dependent upon the use of agricultural chemicals which are often toxic to honey bees. The importance attached to the role of the bee in agriculture is shown by the fact that legislation designed to prevent losses of bees through the use of these compounds, has been passed in practically every agricultural country. Although bumble bees may be of some account as pollinators in the isolated hill country areas of New Zealand, their colonies, unlike those of the honey bee, are very weak in the spring, are vulnerable to adverse weather conditions, and cannot be built up in numbers as required. In those regions of New Zealand where practically all our crops and pastures are grown, effective pollination depends virtually upon the honey bee.

Agricultural experts throughout the world have published a great number of papers showing the dependence of agriculture upon the honey bee for pollination. We now quote a few extracts from the wealth of literature available.

Ohio State University (1944) (1)

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

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

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

The density of the honeybee population and its constancy over a period of years should be of much concern to farmers. For each dollar that the beekeeper receives, fifteen to twenty dollars worth of pollination services are returned to agriculture. As long as farmers receive free pollination services there is only one factor which will insure an adequate honeybee population, namely, the profitableness of honey production to beekeepers. It is of real economic interest that the density of the honeybee population increases as much as possible. Yet, at the same time, those bees should return profitable honey and beeswax yields to the beekeeper.

Experimental studies conducted by the department of entomology, Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station, show that seed yields are directly correlated with the density of the honeybee population.

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

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

Extensive studies were carried on over a 3-year period involving detailed observations in fields of red clover for each day of the second blooming period. The pollination of red clover by honeybees is incidental to the collection of large quantities of pollen, and nectar in small amounts. **During the 3-year period, studies show that more than four-fifths of the total pollination services were performed by honeybees.**

#### N.Z. Journal of Agriculture (1950) (2)

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

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

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

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

#### United States Department of Agriculture (1946) (3)

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

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

The fertilisation of flowers is so imperative that beekeeping must be carried on to maintain a profitable agriculture. Owing to conditions brought about by the recent war, of which increased acreage of insect-pollinated seed crops is but one, safeguarding the beekeeping industry has become doubly urgent. Beekeeping can be mastered only through years of experience. It cannot be learned as a trade is learned, and there is no floating population of persons seeking employment in beekeeping. The fact that bees have a propensity for stinging discourages many



people from keeping them, and only certain individuals possess the proper temperament to be beekeepers. For these reasons every experienced beekeeper should be encouraged to continue with his bees. It may even become necessary to subsidise the keeping of bees since there is no practical substitute for honey bees in the transfer of pollen from flower to flower and from plant to plant.

#### **Journal of Economic Entomology U.S.A. (1944) (4)**

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

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

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

#### **American Bee Journal (1947) (5)**

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

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

#### **Agricultural Gazette N.S.W. (1947) (6)**

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

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

### German Experiments Reported in Britain (1958) (7)

These showed that honey bees were essential for the production of black currants, fruit bearing being increased seventeen times with effective bee coverage.

### Russian Experiments Reported in Britain (1956) (8)

These showed that honeybees greatly increased seed production in sunflower.

### Russian Experiments Reported in Britain (1956) (9)

These proved the value of bees in flax production.

### No Bees. No Melons. U.S.A. Article (1952) (10)

Bees are essential for production of melons.

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N. Z. BEEKEEPER

## Agricultural Chemicals in Australia

### CHILD SUFFERS SERIOUS HARM

[Editor's Note: The insidious danger in modern agricultural chemicals is shown in this tragic news item reprinted from the Sydney Truth of July 6. In New Zealand farmers and beekeepers have been urging legislation to protect honeybees from pesticides and it has been pointed out that saving the bees is only part of the big objective, which is to save the community. The fearful power which lies in the chemicals now available needs some firm control in this spray-happy world.]

Gallant little Gregory Latham of Narcomburn—he's two today—has made medical history in Royal North Shore Hospital.

Three months ago Gregory was at death's door.

Creeping paralysis which began in his feet and gradually spread through his entire body, baffled doctors for weeks.

His body stiffened. He was unable to swallow food. He gulped breath in distressing gasps.

His blood pressure rose to such a dangerous level that doctors feared

a fatal brain haemorrhage was imminent.

The parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Latham, of Northcote Street, told doctors that Gregory had played in shorts in the garden during the summer.

Then a chance remark by the child's grandfather, Mr. James Parkins, gave the investigators a lead.

Mr. Parkins remembered that a neighbour had sprayed his azaleas planted in a line along the dividing fence early in the year.

Doctors decided to try the antidote—*atropine*—prescribed on the label of the garden spray used by the neighbour.

Twenty minutes after the first injection of *atropine* there were dramatic results.

The paralysed boy moved a thumb, his first muscular reaction in weeks.

Ten weeks later Gregory was discharged from hospital after recovering partial use of his arms and the strength to sit up.

There is every reason to hope now that he will walk someday.

But only time will tell.

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## Royal Jelly Research Foundation

On April 4, 1958, in the City of Valdosta, Georgia, U.S.A., representative producers and dealers in Royal Jelly met and organised the Royal Jelly Research Foundation. The purpose of this organisation is to promote research work on Royal Jelly primarily in the field of medicine. Producers, dealers, doctors and other scientists, and manufacturers using Royal Jelly, are eligible for membership.

It was conceded that there is a great need not only for new work but also to have reconfirmed here the medical research work already done in Europe, so as to place our knowledge of Royal Jelly on a readily acceptable basis to our medical profession, our ethical pharmaceutical houses, our cosmetics industry, and our regulatory government authorities as well.

Substantial quantities of Royal Jelly were pledged to the Foundation, as well as money in sufficient volume to assure a well financed operation that

can be started immediately.

The Royal Jelly Research Foundation will be governed by five directors.

Those elected were:

R. B. Wilson, Chairman  
250 Park Avenue  
New York 17, N.Y.

George F. Hohmann, Secretary  
1017 Los Carneros Avenue  
Napa, California

Leslie Little, Vice Ch. & Treas.  
831 Union Street  
Shelbyville, Tennessee

Garnett G. Puett, Jr.  
Hahira, Georgia

E. B. Ault  
Westlaco, Texas

Some medical research projects already under way will be embraced by the Foundation. Only work that will qualify for publication in high ranking scientific journals will be supported.

Member applications are welcomed, as are suggestions from all interested.

## No New Introduction of Bumble Bees

After a thorough scientific investigation, the Department of Agriculture has decided not to introduce any new species of bumble bees to New Zealand at present. Further consideration will be given to the question in about two years.

The Federated Farmers Dominion Agriculture Produce Section Council which, on the suggestion of its Marlborough branch, recommended to the Department that an investigation be made received its result at a meeting of the Council in Christchurch.

The original suggestion was based on observations made in Marlborough from which it was concluded that the short tongue variety of the bumble bee, which damage the flower by puncturing its side to get at the pollen, was far more numerous than the long tongue variety.

The Department was told that, in the opinion of the branch, if there were more of the long tongue bumble bees the flowers would stand more chance of being fertilised in the proper manner and as a result the yields of clover seed would be higher.

Observations in Marlborough had shown that the yield of clover on the low, hilly country, the area of the long tongue variety, was greater than on the plains where the short tongue variety were found.

In its reply the Department said the conclusion not to import any new species was based on discussion among various officers on the wider subject of pollination of clover and lucerne seed crops. By the time of the next review of the question in two years it was hoped that some progress might have been made along other lines of investigation relating to the ecology of bumble bees and the role of honey bees in pollinating legume crops.

The Chairman, Mr F. C. Henshaw, South Canterbury, said that it was apparent that the Department had made up its mind along these lines and the Council could not ask for much more. The investigation had been carried further this time than ever before.

— Straight Furrow, 21/5/58.

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### Bee Repellent

Bees won't be poisoned by crop spraying operations if the tests of G. A. Bieberdorf and his associates at the Oklahoma Experiment Station are successful. A chemical repellent called 2-hydroxyethyl-tert-octyl sulphide when mixed with any insecticide has shown very promising results in laboratory tests. It is hoped that the repellent will be capable of keeping bees away from sprayed crops until the poison "wears off."

— Gleanings, June, 1958.

### Asbestos Cement Hive Parts

An article by L. H. Johnson in the July issue of the Journal of Agriculture discusses the use of asbestos cement hive covers and floors. Hive parts similar to those illustrated in the article are to be made at the Riccarton factory of Fletcher Industries Ltd. and inquiries can be made at local Branches of the firm.

### Francois Huber

The story of Francois Huber is a phenomenal thing. He was a Swiss entomologist, born about 200 years ago. He is considered the greatest student of the honeybee that ever lived, yet he was totally blind from his youth.

Bees had been observed by man for hundreds of years, because the honey they made was man's principal means of sweetening. Yet not much was known about bees until Huber's wonderful investigations.

As his eyes he had his wife, a faithful servant, and his son. They did the looking and he did the thinking. They used their eyes to observe the things he suggested; then they told him in detail what they had seen. He analysed and evaluated, and then he would tell them what to do next. By this means he found out more about the honeybee than any one man has ever been able to learn before or since.— from "A Life of Francois Huber" by Ann B. Fisher in Gleanings, Oct. 1957.

## CONFERENCE REPORT

The Annual Dominion Conference was held in Wellington on August 5, 6, and 7, when there was a good and representative attendance. The President (Mr. J. W. Fraser) was in the chair.

The Mayor of Wellington (Mr. F. J. Kitts), attended and extended a cordial welcome to delegates.

### Minister's Address

In opening Conference the Minister of Agriculture (Rt. Hon. C. F. Skinner) referred to the importance of the honey industry and particularly its value in agriculture and stated that the Government wished to give it the same security as other sections of the community. He was pleased to note the harmony between beekeepers and officers of the Department whose function it was to help them with production problems. Protection for bees against pesticides and recent legislation to control outbreaks of disease were mentioned and in this connection he gave an assurance that the matter of compensation would be fully discussed and a reasonable settlement reached.

Although the industry was not booming it was making progress, said the Minister, in spite of the present period of recession which had affected all industries. Production had been fairly well maintained and there was a pleasing increase in beekeeping in the newly developed farmlands, but unfortunately there was a downward trend in total hive numbers and the industry was not showing the expansion that he would like to see. The Executive had stated that the cost of production was 13½d compared with recent returns to producers of under 12d and this was not a very satisfactory position. However the request for assistance sufficient to cover the cost of production was not favoured as today we have moved away from this conception of a guaranteed price. Subsidising of exports makes us "dumpers" and in the case of dairy produce we have appealed to Britain to protect us against that very thing. Nevertheless some assistance must be given and he hoped that some answer would soon be forthcoming. The guaranteed price will be considered

for any industry if asked for but such matters as the cost of production factor would first require a searching examination.

Referring to the work of the Department the Minister mentioned particularly the development of technical equipment and research in problems which affect beekeeping.

The two essentials which the Government was anxious to give primary industries were security of tenure and economic security. As an example of the first the Minister mentioned giving farmers the right of freehold, and it was also desirable that all producers should get returns sufficient to give a reasonable standard of living. But the drive for efficient management and increased production must come from the individual farmer. The Government can only assist with research and guidance to provide the best possible conditions for the industry. He assured beekeepers of a sympathetic hearing at all times and he was confident that a solution to their production difficulties could be found by co-operation between the industry and the Agriculture Department.

In reply to a question from Mr. R. Chandler, the Minister stated his interpretation of a guaranteed price, that it must be sustained, in the long run, by market realisations. Assistance could be given in many ways but not as an export subsidy which was contrary to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The President thanked the Minister for his address, and in referring to the recent debate on the Apiaries Amendment Bill complimented him on his excellent representation of the position and on the support which he had received on both sides of the House.

### Honey Marketing Authority

The Chairman of the Honey Marketing Authority, Mr. E. A. Field, gave an address and answered questions relating to the operations of the Authority during the past year.

### Horticulture Division

An address was then given by the Director of Horticulture, Mr. A. M. W. Greig, outlining the work which has been done, and is in hand, by the Division.

## Report and Balance Sheet

The President presented the Annual Report and the Secretary read the financial statement, and after some discussion these were adopted.

## REMITTS

In discussing remits from Branches the following decisions were made:—

### Association Policy

"That in the event of remits being passed at Conferences the President give an explanation in his Annual Report at the following Conference if no action has been taken." CARRIED.

"That the 1959 Conference be held in Timaru." CARRIED. Mr. Hewlett mentioned the attributes of Nelson and its advantages as a Conferences venue, and extended an invitation from the Nelson Branch, and it was agreed that this should be kept in mind for future consideration. Some speakers urged the claims of Auckland as giving delegates an opportunity to inspect the new building, but the general preference was for a South Island centre next year.

A remit suggestion that Conference should in future be held over a week-end period was rejected by a large majority.

"That it be a recommendation to the incoming Executive that in future they avail themselves of the full £1000 from the H.M.A. until they have a satisfactory working balance." CARRIED. This was a motion introduced in the general business and founded on the balance sheet. In moving it Mr. Glynn mentioned that £1000 was available each year as the result of an agreement reached when the seal levy was raised to 1d per pound. In past years only a portion had been drawn, but as there was a debit balance this year he considered it advisable to have some reserve to meet unforeseen emergencies.

### Government Assistance

A remit supporting the principle of Government assistance by means of a guaranteed return to H.M.A. suppliers equal to the cost of production was opposed on the ground that the guaranteed price principle had been proved unsound and that after the Minister's statement it was pointless to pursue this objective. Eventually the following amendment was moved: "That in view of the statement from

the Minister regarding the guaranteed price the N.B.A. seek some other form of assistance for the H.M.A. especially in the matter of the existing capital costs." This was CARRIED on a delegates' vote by 1158 to 463.

### Marketing

A remit asking that nomination and election of H.M.A. members be on the ward system was criticised as being likely to encourage parochialism and cause increased friction in the Authority. It was also pointed out that the present system had given balanced representation, and the remit was LOST.

"That the method of voting by suppliers-to-packers at H.M.A. elections be simplified by placing a copy of the necessary form in the Journal." CARRIED. This referred to the form of declaration required, prior to enrolment, from suppliers-to-packers.

A remit suggesting that the declaration should not require the signature of a Justice of the Peace was withdrawn when it was pointed out that the form of such declarations is governed by statute.

Mr. Haines moved a remit requesting that manuka honey get subsidy from the seals fund equal to other honeys, and mentioned the dissatisfaction in the north because manuka is excluded from participation in the pool whereas packed manuka must contribute to the seal fund. After Mr. Field had explained that manuka and birch honeys benefited through being included in the bonus payments, the remit was withdrawn.

"That Conference request the H.M.A. to press for better terms of interest for the Authority's building." CARRIED.

"That Conference views with concern the fact that the H.M.A. has neglected to carry out the resolution passed at last Conference to press local sales." In answer to the inference of "neglect" the President (as N.B.A. representative on the H.M.A.) said that the present Authority was unanimous that local sales should be increased and he detailed the steps which had been taken—a new agent, raising the quality of the pack, appointment of Mr. Nelson to supervise packing operations, and consideration of advertising

methods. This statement was supported by other H.M.A. members present, and the remit was LOST.

"That the H.M.A. take immediate steps to place another pack on the local market at a price and a grade to meet the competitive selling of possible price cutting." In answer to a question Mr. Field said that the agent considered there was a place for a second pack at a reduced price. The wisdom of taking such action depended upon supplies received by the Authority and the level of prices overseas. The remit was LOST.

"That the Executive explore the advantages or otherwise of a floor price for honey and take action accordingly." CARRIED.

"That it be a recommendation to the H.M.A. that the analysis issued by the Manager on its operations since its inception be published by way of insert in the Journal." CARRIED.

"That the H.M.A. be requested to publish by way of insert in each issue of the Journal reports of overseas prices for the varying grades of honey." CARRIED.

The words "by way of insert" were included in each of the above two remits to allow the H.M.A., if necessary, to confine the circulation of these reports to New Zealand beekeepers.

A remit asking for a report on the suitability of the new H.M.A. premises with particular reference to its unloading facilities and its floor loading capacity was withdrawn after a report prepared by the Authority had been read to the Conference by Mr. W. Nelson. (A copy of this report will be published in the November Journal.)

"That the H.M.A. endeavour to reduce the volume of honey requiring reconditioning for export and that such honey be sold on the local market before the honey deteriorates." CARRIED.

"That this Conference recommends to the H.M.A. that payout points be settled at the time of grading as in the past and that no penalty be applied for subsequent reconditioning." CARRIED.

It was moved by Mr. W. B. Bray, seconded by Mr. Sage, that Conference request that a meeting of H.M.A. electors be arranged at the time of the Annual Conference in order to provide opportunity of discussing fully the operations of the Authority. CARRIED.

MAY 1958

"That the Executive take action to have the profit margin controlled on all packed honey handled by the wholesale and retail trade." Mr. T. E. Pearson, supported by other speakers, emphasised that producers must retain the goodwill of the trade, and as the trade reserved the right to fix their margins the remit was an unreasonable request. The remit was LOST.

#### Petrol Tax

"That Conference opposes the increase in the petrol tax." CARRIED.

"That the cost of production survey be brought up to date." CARRIED.

#### Production Matters

"That all pesticides be clearly labelled by manufacturers as being toxic or non-toxic to honeybees and that an exact time for applying same be stated." CARRIED.

"That investigations be made to ascertain the extent to which hormones are harmful to bees." CARRIED.

"That in view of the weakness in the Regulations which permits toxic pesticides to be applied to flowering pastures and crops other than brassicas and legumes, this Conference request that the present Regulations be extended to cover all other possible exigencies." CARRIED.

Mr. Gumbrell, who is the beekeepers' representative on Federated Farmers' Executive in South Canterbury, emphasised that farming interests strongly supported the move for adequate protection of honeybees.

"That Conference again request the Department of Agriculture to take the earliest opportunity of sending an officer to the U.S.A. to study at first hand methods of apiary management." Some doubts were expressed as to the specific matters to be studied and the benefits to be gained from such a visit, and the remit was LOST.

"That the Executive take immediate action to ensure that Catchment Boards and other local bodies be compelled to give beekeepers 30 days notice of each works contemplated within a quarter mile of an apiary or on access roads." CARRIED.

"That the Executive investigate the possibility of securing fresh films of beekeeping interest from overseas." CARRIED.

"That immediate action be taken to enlist the aid of the State Forest Service, Catchment Boards, County

Councils, and other like bodies to further the planting of trees that are nectar secreting as well as being useful for timber. CARRIED.

#### Research

"That Conference request the Department of Agriculture to conduct experiments in pollination, with the aim of determining statistically the value of bees and other pollinating insects." CARRIED.

"That an Apiculturist be appointed forthwith to the South Island." CARRIED.

"That the Department be asked to initiate a programme of original research into bee diseases." CARRIED.

A remit requesting the Department to conduct experiments in commercial beeswax production was LOST, it being the opinion of Conference that this matter was better left to producers to investigate in their own districts.

#### Honeymead and Gin

"That in view of the current restrictions on the importation of spirits, the Executive investigate the possibilities of manufacturing gin from distilled mead, and for the making of mead on a commercial scale." Mr. E. D. Williams reviewed the negotiations in which he had taken part in association with the Executive and certain manufacturing interests and explained the factors which would be involved. Although the cost of honey, compared with the price of other materials, appeared to be high there were recipes available which would produce beverages of very fine quality. After a full discussion the remit was CARRIED.

#### Life Member

It was recommended by the Executive that Mr. T. S. Winter be

made a life member of the Association. In bringing forward the nomination the President referred to Mr. Winter's long period of service in the industry and his splendid contribution towards the welfare and standing of honey producers. He also paid a warm tribute to Mrs. Winter for her unflinching support on the home front. A large number of speakers from all parts of the Dominion supported the nomination, which was carried amid acclamation.

Mr. Winter thanked the Conference and in the course of his reply mentioned some of the pioneers of earlier times and traced the progress of the industry over the past 40 years.

On behalf of members the President then presented Mr. and Mrs. Winter with a handsome silver tea service and conveyed to them the good wishes of New Zealand beekeepers.

#### Election of Officers

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

Two members of the retiring Executive, Messrs. J. D. Lorimer and H. Cloake, for personal reasons declined nominations on this occasion.

Officers elected for the coming year were: President: J. W. Fraser, Vice-President: J. R. Barber, Executive, N.I.: R. R. Chandler, J. I. Jay, S.I.: J. K. Bray, G. E. Gumbrell.

The President thanked Mr. Greig and officers of the Department for their attendance and continued interest in the work of the Association, and the meeting closed with a comprehensive vote of thanks to those who had assisted at the Conference and during the year.

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# HONEY MARKETING AUTHORITY

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

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to address Conference once more concerning the activities of the Honey Marketing Authority.

The only alteration in the personnel of the Authority since last Conference was the appointment of Mr. W. B. Bray, following his success in last year's election, and the retirement of Mr. T. E. Pearson. We all appreciate Mr. Bray's long and active association with the honey industry and we hope that his health will soon be fully restored. Mr. Bray took the opportunity when he was in London, shortly after his appointment to the Authority, to call on our London agents and obtain first hand knowledge of their selling organisation. During his term of office, Mr. Tom Pearson took a full share in our discussions and the Authority has recorded its appreciation of his services.

Our annual report and financial statements for the year ended August 31, 1957, were published in the May issue of the "Beekeeper." I do not propose to go through them again at this stage but I will be glad to discuss later, any special matters concerning the report of statements that you may care to bring forward.

### Production :

As it appeared to be the wish of the industry, the contract system for the receipt of honey by the Authority was continued for a further year. The question of non-fulfilment of contracts has always given us concern and the contract conditions for the season, just ended, were therefore tightened up in this respect. If the contract system is to be of any value, contracts must be binding on both parties. Contracts received for the 1958 season totalled 1,005 tons compared with 1,239 tons for last year.

Honey production this year in the North Island has been a little below normal, but according to our information there has been a very heavy drop in production in the South Island. These factors have had a corresponding effect on supplies to the Authority. The receipts for the last two seasons are as follows:—

	1957 Tons	1958 (up to 31/7/58) Tons
North Island	933	834
South Island	638	256
	<hr/> 1,571	<hr/> 1,090

### Marketing :

Sales of the Authority's packs on the local market have unfortunately, reached a low level. As mentioned in last year's address, selling agents have been appointed to cover the Auckland territory, but they have reported to us that they can make very little headway when so many packers are prepared to cut their prices or allow special discounts. A decision has been made to spend £500 on advertising the Authority's honey and the programme will commence at an early date, when the pack we put out from our new building will be equalled only by the very top grade packers.

It is hard to understand why producers with a really good quality pack, are prepared to sell at such heavy discounts and the difficulty of competing with the price cutter is a very real one for the Authority. It will take time and careful attention to marketing and presentation of our packs by our agents, backed by careful advertising, to establish our brand on a well supplied market.

During the last few months there has been a great deal of uninformed criticism of the Authority because of its decision last year to hold out for higher prices overseas and the need to treat certain quantities of honey to prevent deterioration. Attempts have been made to relate these facts to an earlier occasion when there was a shortage of honey in this country, the implication being that if we had sold the honey to packers, there would have been no need to process it later on.

Let us go back a little and get these facts in their proper perspective.

During the 11 months of our current financial year up to July 31, we shipped honey, and as we had stocks, they applied to us for supplies. At the time honey was selling well overseas, but in order that the public might not be deprived of honey, we decided to release a reasonable quantity to each applicant.

When the 1957 crop came in the packers were able to secure their requirements direct from beekeepers in the normal way. A slowing down in overseas business then became apparent and overseas prices started to fall. We did what any prudent business man would do; we held our prices as long as we reasonably could and when it became clear, after a radio telephone conversation with our agents that they were not likely to rise, we instructed them to reduce their quotes and dispose of surplus stocks at the prices then ruling. Our agents carried out our instructions and we are greatly indebted to them for their efforts on our behalf.

To prevent deterioration of stocks we had to process a certain quantity of honey, but the hold up in sales was not the only reason for this operation. It was found that the keeping quality of honey sent in by a number of suppliers particularly some from Taranaki and Southland, was such that it was not suitable for overseas. Incidentally this was the reason for the stipulation in last season's annual information circular that the keeping quality of honey supplied to the Authority must be such that it would keep in good order for 12 months. When treatment became necessary the opportunity was taken to blend with it and bring up in colour and flavour a number of darker and strong flavoured honeys and the resulting blend has been selling well overseas.

During the 11 months of our current financial year up to July 31, we shipped 1,250 tons of honey to the United Kingdom and Europe. The fall in overseas prices already mentioned continued until a few months ago when a marked improvement became noticeable. In the United Kingdom in particular prices have returned to their previous high level. In a recent letter our agents, Messrs. Kimpton Brothers (Red Carnation) Ltd, reported that since the beginning of this year they have sold 525 tons of honey in the United Kingdom and Europe. Of this quantity 95 tons comprised white clover honey which realised 160/- per cwt or better. Since the beginning of 1957 the price for Australian honey dropped by approximately 50/- per cwt but has now recovered by about 10/- per cwt. Manufacturing grades of Australian honey are being offered to the United Kingdom market in the neighbourhood of 75/- per cwt and the best grade of Australian honey at 103/- per cwt. Chilean honey of a good colour has recently sold at London at 85/- to 87/6d per cwt. Our agents have also reported that during the last 3 or 4 years, an increasing demand has been built up for New Zealand honey and many packers and consumers have been persuaded to change over from other kinds of honey.

Our thanks are due to our agents, Messrs. Kimpton Brothers (Red Carnation) Ltd, who, in spite of competition from honey from other parts of the world, are maintaining and increasing prices.

It should be kept in mind however, that the recovery overseas may be due partly to the fact that we have a much smaller amount available this year for export. If past experience is any guide, when supplies are appreciably increased, values are adversely affected. This of course applies to any commodity but particularly so to honey which must compete with unrestricted supplies from other countries at prices unacceptable to us.

#### **Seals Revenue :**

The seals levy is coming in at almost the same rate as last year, the amount collected for the 11 months up to July 31, 1958, being £17,350.

### **pay Out to Suppliers :**

It is difficult at this period of the trading year to give accurate figures regarding the total payout for the season, but the indications are that we should be able to maintain last year's record of 9d per lb pro rata plus a final payout of 3¼d per lb.

Taking everything into consideration these figures must be considered fairly satisfactory although I know full well that they still do not cover the established cost of production.

### **Premises :**

We had expected that our new building would have been finished well before this but, in spite of all our efforts to push things along it is only now ready for occupation. However, since April we have been able to make use of it for the storing of this season's honey. The new packing and storage arrangements will cut down our overhead considerably and the property will prove a valuable asset to the industry as a whole for very many years to come.

### **Financial Position :**

The Authority's audited accounts and balance sheet as at August 31, 1957, disclose that we are still handicapped financially by the lack of reserves and the heavy liabilities which we have had to accept in establishing our organisation. On a number of occasions the Government has pressed us to make further payments off our stock debt of £17,187 but it is impossible for us to do this without reducing the payout to suppliers. In June, a deputation from the Authority, consisting of the Deputy Chairman, Mr. Nelson, the Manager, Mr. Chudley and myself, met the Minister of Agriculture and explained our financial position and the circumstances under which the debt had been incurred. It is hoped that some form of relief will be granted which will put this debt on a more satisfactory basis.

### **Acknowledgments :**

In November, 1957, Mr. J. A. Tarleton, who had occupied the position of Executive Officer since the establishment of the Authority and who had been associated with the previous honey organisations resigned to take up an outside position. A month later the Chief Clerk, Mr. I. D. Shearer, unexpectedly passed away. Mr. D. B. McLaren has been promoted to Chief Clerk. A re-arrangement of duties and the smaller volume of receipts this year has enabled the staff to carry on without filling the other vacancy. I wish to express the thanks and appreciation of the Authority to the Manager and all those who co-operated in carrying on the work of the organisation during this difficult period.

I cannot let this occasion pass without referring to the retirement at the end of June of our good friend Mr. Tom Winter, the Superintendent of the Beekeeping industry in the Department of Agriculture. His regular attendance at our meetings and his profound knowledge of the industry have been a great help to me and the Authority as a whole in our discussions and decisions. To the Director of Horticulture, the Honey Grader, the Apiary instructors, I again extend our thanks for their assistance and co-operation. The Rt Hon. K. J. Holyoake, as Minister of Agriculture, was always ready to help us when it was within his power, and to him we owe a great debt of thanks. It is also pleasing to find the Rt Hon. C. F. Skinner, the present Minister of Agriculture, already taking a keen interest in our industry and investigating ways and means of assisting us in our financial problems.

### **Conclusion :**

It is appropriate at this stage that I should express my sincere thanks to those members who have assisted me since the Authority came into existence with the closing down of the Marketing Department. The task before me as the first Chairman was not an easy one, but it was made much easier by the help and co-operation I received from my colleagues on the Authority, and also from the Manager, whose loyalty and support I have had at all times.

I think this is an opportune time for me to refer to the relationship which, in my opinion, should exist between the National Beekeepers' Association and the Authority. I am conscious I have received more than a fair share of unfair criticism from members of your Association and from some branches; criticism largely brought about by a misunderstanding of the functions of the two organisations serving the industry. In my opinion, your Association's function is to assist your members and the industry as a whole. The Marketing Authority's duty is to sell honey in New Zealand and overseas in the interest of the beekeepers as a whole; and while it should at all times consider fully and carefully remits carried at your annual conference, the final decision pertaining to marketing must be made by the Authority. The Authority has the facts and knowledge concerning marketing conditions here and overseas.

Any move by your Association to get money from the Government to help the Authority is naturally welcomed by us, but the responsibility of ensuring that such assistance is not obtained at too high a price rests on the shoulders of your Executive. Again the Executive can put out price guides and ask beekeepers to abide by them, but on the other hand the Authority must have the support of the merchants' and grocers' organisations to be successful sellers on the local market. If this support is not forthcoming, we as sellers would not be in a position to support your Executive. The final observation I wish to make is that I see a grave danger in some of those who serve the industry consciously or unconsciously introducing packer versus supplier arguments. The danger lies in the fact that outside interests could use a divided industry to enter as profit making companies with no consideration for the producer-beekeeper. In my opinion the responsibility of our industry leaders is to keep the industry united, be they packers of their own product, suppliers to the Authority or both suppliers and packers. I hope Conference will forgive me for bringing these matters forward, but I think that in the long run they are most important to the welfare of the Honey Marketing Authority.

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DEPARTMENT  
of  
AGRICULTURE

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Horticulture Division

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ADDRESS BY MR. A. M. W. GREIG, AT THE DOMINION CONFERENCE  
IN WELLINGTON

During the past year two major staff changes have occurred.

The first is the retirement at June 30, of Mr. T. S. Winter, as Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry and the appointment of Mr. E. Smaellie as his successor.

The second is the graduation of a science student and his appointment as the first professional officer in the apiary section with the designation, Instructor in Apiculture.

The retirement of Tom Winter marks the end of an era in the history of the Horticulture Division of the Department of Agriculture because he has known and been closely associated with every one of the directors of this division since it was formed in 1909 as the Division of Orchards, Gardens and Apiaries under Mr. T. W. Kirk, who retired in 1921. He was followed by Mr. J. A. Campbell (1921-1933), Mr W. K. Dallas (1933-43), and myself since December 1, 1943. Before joining the department permanently, Mr. Winter was a cadet at the Ruakura and Tauranga experimental stations and the undertook commercial beekeeping in Canterbury. He served in Egypt and Gallipoli with the Wellington Infantry Battallion. For some years Mr. Winter worked for the N. Z. Honey Producers' Association and was General Secretary to your organisation, the N.B.A.

For 33 years Mr. T. S. Winter has been a member of the department starting as Apiary Instructor at Hamilton in 1925 and from 1928 being closely associated with honey grading. This work involved constant travelling from Auckland to the Bluff and necessitated up to 15,000 miles a year. For 18 years Mr. Winter has held the chief executive departmental position entirely associated with beekeeping. His quiet and co-operative manner has been appreciated by me and my predecessors. He has written many Journal articles and bulletins and been associated with many legislative changes during his term of office but in particular he will be remembered as the originator of the present honey grading system and for his comprehensive bulletin No. 267 "Beekeeping in New Zealand." On behalf of the Department of Agriculture I take this opportunity to thank Mr. Winter for his service.

Mr Winter's successor as Superintendent of the Beekeeping Industry is Mr. Eric Smaellie who is present here today. He has had nearly 30 years experience in the beekeeping industry, 14 years as a beekeeper and 15½ years as an Apiary Instructor. Whilst beekeeping he was for a time Secretary to the Taieri branch of your organisation. As an Instructor he has been stationed in Otago, West Coast, Canterbury and Auckland, and in taking up his new appointment at the age of 47 years, he has a useful period of service ahead of him. With his co-operative outlook and administrative qualities I believe he will prove himself in his new position.

During the year also, the first apicultural cadet completed the science degree course in association with practical experience and has been appointed as an Instructor in Apiculture. This designation is parallel with the designations of similar officers in the Extension and Horticulture Divisions on field and experimental work who are known as Instructors in Agriculture or Horticulture when their qualifications include a university degree. Apicultural cadetships continue to be offered from time to time and I hope that any beekeeper who

has a son with university entrance, particularly in science units, will ask him to give serious consideration to an apicultural cadetship leading to instructional service to beekeepers.

#### **Qualifications in beekeeping :**

The Royal N.Z. Institute of Horticulture Act was duly amended in the 1957 session of Parliament, and some progress has been made by your executive and the Examining Board of the Institute. The Board has asked me to convene a committee meeting comprising members of the Board and members of your Association to consider whether the syllabus, as drafted, should lead to a Diploma or a Certificate—the former would have the higher standing and probably be known as a Diploma in Apiculture, whereas the latter would probably be a Certificate in Beekeeping. The committee will recommend on the content of the subjects to be included and also draw up a list of suitable examiners. This subject has been briefly discussed with your executive and a meeting is to be convened in October.

#### **Recent Legislation :**

Last week two legislative measures affecting beekeepers were approved. The Apiaries Amendment Bill has had its second reading in the House and received general support. This amendment was on the lines suggested to last year's conference and enables regulations to be gazetted for eradicating any new serious bee diseases should it appear in this country and for the payment of compensation if it is necessary to gazette an infected area or a quarantine area especially if apparently clean hives have to be destroyed in the eradication programme. Acarine has been quoted as an example of a type of serious bee disease which would necessitate the wide powers being provided in the current amendment to the Act, but I wish to emphasise that this is precautionary legislation. Acarine is not present in New Zealand and has never been detected in this country.

The apiary registration regulations (Amendment No. 1), were also gazetted last week. These regulations to assist in the identification of apiaries, have also been considered by your executive before being recommended to Government. They come into operation one month after a beekeeper has been duly notified by the Registrar.

#### **Bee Research and Extension Advisory Committee :**

From time to time over recent years there have been suggestions made regarding a change in the administration of agricultural research in New Zealand. In various phases of horticulture, however, a new co-ordinating pattern has been developed through research and extension advisory committees and these are now functioning for vegetables, nursery stock and viticulture. These committees are known as:

The Vegetable research and extension advisory committee.

The Nursery stock research and extension advisory committee and

The Viticultural Advisory Committee.

They provide a ready means for producers, research workers and advisory officers to exchange ideas and consider problems of concern to vegetable, nursery and wine making industries. The committees are purely advisory. They have no power to direct research or advisory work but they play an important part in assessing problems, in helping to co-ordinate the endeavours of research workers, advisory and regulatory officers and producers and in aiding the dissemination of information to producers.

In looking at the beekeeping industry today, I am impressed with the valuable work being done at Wallaceville by the Research Officer, Mr. Palmer-Jones and Mr. I. Forster, Apiary Instructor, Oamaru; design of new equipment by Mr. C. R. Paterson, Apiculturist, Hamilton and pollen analysis by Miss L. McDowall, Wellington. Important examples I call to mind are the prototype vacuum plant for removal of excess moisture in honey; a honey creaming plant; a mechanical loader for apiary work; a new type of honey strainer; hive bees as pollinators; the effects of various insecticides on honey bees producing honey mead; controlling wasps; methyl bromide fumigation of bee combs.

Mr. President—I wonder whether the time hasn't arrive for regular reviews of the research and advisory work associated with beekeeping on similar lines to what is now being done in vegetables, nursery stock and viticulture. I think such reviews by a committee of the workers concerned and members of the National Beekeepers' Association would keep us more closely in touch with what is being done and such a partnership should have a good co-ordinating influence and also assist in guiding research work, field experiments or diagnostic servicing, and seeing that priority is given to the problems of most urgent concern to the beekeeping industry. I shall be interested to hear your views on this suggestion.

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## Conference Jottings

About 100 people attended the opening of Conference and they came from points as far apart as Kaitaia, Franz Josef and Invercargill. Twenty-eight were there from the Waikato. At the later sessions there was a steady and representative attendance of 60 to 80 members. The Conference Hall at Wool House was warm, comfortable and appropriate and met with general approval as a Conference venue.

★ ★ ★

A tribute to Messrs. Kimpton Bros., the London agents for the H.M.A., was paid by the Minister of Agriculture in opening Conference. Mr. Skinner met Mr. Kimpton during his recent visit to Britain and was very much impressed by his keen and conscientious attitude. "The sale of your produce is in safe hands there," said Mr. Skinner. "I have no doubts whatever about that."

★ ★ ★

The new building of the Marketing Authority in Auckland is now in use for storage purposes and an official opening ceremony is to be held at an early date to mark this important milestone in the history of the industry.

★ ★ ★

The moral aspect of the liquor trade was raised during the discussion on gin and mead production when two speakers referred to the social evils arising from the consumption of alcohol and regretted the proposal to change honey, a perfect food, into something which was practically a poison. The

speakers were Mr. Palmer and Mr. W. B. Bray. Four other members also asked that their names be recorded as opposing the remit.

★ ★ ★

President (in answer to Mr. Sage, seeking an opportunity to discuss the work of the H.M.A.): Under the remits, I will be surprised if a man of your mental agility can't find there some pegs on which you can hang all the hats you may wish to clamp down over the ears of the Authority!

★ ★ ★

At an enjoyable get together evening after the first day of Conference the system of group discussion was introduced to members and this was used with selected remits the following day. Conference was divided into nine groups of about eight members each and after the question had been threshed out within the groups their findings were presented briefly to Conference by the recorder from each group. A vote was then taken after the mover had replied.

In this innovation (sponsored by the General Secretary, a Junior Chamber of Commerce member), there was a ready co-operation from members, resulting in the most animated session of Conference. In discussing the ward system of election one group asked for an extension of time and this was greeted with a chorus of approval from the other groups. It was refreshing to note the full participation by members, and the recorders without exception presented very capable summaries of the group conclusions.

Keen interest was taken in an address by Mr. T. Palmer-Jones, illustrated with colour slides, on Agricultural Chemicals and the Bee-keeping Industry. At the close of the talk several questions were asked and members expressed appreciation of the work being done in this important sphere.



Mr. W. B. Bray (in case there might still be some doubts about the matter): We've been let down all the way. We've been sold a pup, and we've been led up the garden path!



Mr. J. R. Barber (warming to his argument): "Some men actually reach the age of retirement without becoming grandfathers." The point at issue has not yet been elucidated as the meeting at this stage dissolved into gales of laughter.



Dress nylon is used as the straining material in a new-type honey strainer which was displayed and explained by Mr. C. R. Paterson. A new honey creamer was also exhibited and the discussion on these items of equipment brought a practical atmosphere into the Conference hall. A special word of appreciation to Mr. Paterson was given by Mr. E. A. Field, who acknowledged his assistance in promoting efficiency and saving unnecessary expense in the setting up of the Marketing Authority's processing plant.



In acknowledging his election to life membership Mr. Winter alluded to the Dominion President (Mr. J. W. Fraser) as a "pocket battleship." Those who know the amount of energy and tenacity which Jack contains in a comparatively small compass regarded it as a particularly apt description.



Most of the ladies who assembled in Wellington were present at the opening of Conference and thereafter took advantage of the alternative programme which had been arranged for

them. This included sightseeing, shopping, a visit with Conference members to Todd Motors' Assembly Works at Petone (where the party received a most cordial welcome and was entertained at afternoon tea), shopping, a film evening, a trip to Kelburn and the gardens, and shopping. What it costs to take your wife to Conference is something members will never know!



Conference was made the occasion of a radio broadcast from 2YA featuring the honey industry. The speaker was Mr. G. E. Gumbrell, who discussed the scope of beekeeping in New Zealand with particular reference to the part played by honey bees in the agricultural economy.

Further radio publicity for the industry was achieved when Miss Newton, of 2YA, was welcomed to a session of the Conference where she obtained material and impressions for broadcasting.



Wellington is always very much the administrative centre, with its tall office buildings and its industrious citizens hurrying through the streets with their satchels. The dominating feature of the capital, of course, is Parliament House, set among lawns on a commanding site; but it is somewhat humiliating to the provincial visitor to observe the old part of the buildings—premises which would not be tolerated by a self-respecting business firm. Inside the portals it is comforting to find that an atmosphere of reverence and decorum pervades the corridors and galleries, in striking contrast to the impression one gains from the radio broadcasts. However, the people who deplore the low standards of the debates should not blame the members for that. They should blame the electors.

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### BAY OF PLENTY

[Editor's Note: We have received from the General Secretary a copy of the Annual Report — reprinted below — together with a note commending this Branch as being the first this year to supply all of its annual returns to Head Office. Congratulations to Bay of Plenty on a very good year's work.]

#### Annual Report

It is with pleasure that I present my report for the third Annual General Meeting. During the year just concluded it has been very gratifying to welcome several new members to our Branch. During the year our membership has increased from 15 to 19.

Finance: Regarding the finance of the Branch I am sure you will all agree that our position is very good. The bank balance and cash in hand is £17-15-6.

During the year we had a visit from Mr. W. W. Nelson, Honey Marketing Authority representative, who outlined various aspects of the marketing of honey. Mr. Nelson is due to visit us again in the very near future and I trust that members will take the opportunity of getting as many as possible of their marketing problems answered.

We also had a very successful film evening and I would once again like to thank Mr London for the use of his building and also our Apiary Instructor, Mr. Briscoe, for procuring some excellent films. This coming year I would like to see another of these film evenings, and I would also like to see an evening on the showing of slides.

Field Day: I think you will agree that the Field Day was quite a success when one considers the smallness of our Branch. Some Branches are now holding their Field Days in the spring, about November; I think that there

is a lot to recommend having a Field Day at this time of the year and I would suggest that the incoming committee look into this matter.

Nobody knows better than my committee, and especially myself, the enormous amount of work our Secretary did over the last year, and my experience in being your President has brought it home to me how, to a very large extent, the success of our Branch is dependent on the efficiency of our Secretary. Our sincere thanks are due to Mr. Parkes for the use of his home for our committee meetings, Mr. Briscoe our Apiary Instructor, and Mr. Warr for the use of his residence for our Field Day. In conclusion I would like to thank my committee for the assistance that they have given me during the season, and also the women folk for the help they have given.

D. A. Barrow,  
Branch President.

### SOUTH CANTERBURY

Good progress had been maintained during the year by the South Canterbury branch according to the annual report presented by the president (Mr. R. Davidson). Membership, he said, had been maintained and finances were sound.

Field days had been well supported and much useful information had been passed on to the industry throughout the district, he said. The increasing interest of tree planting societies and local bodies in planting nectar secreting trees was noted with appreciation. These trees, while of benefit to the honey industry, were also the source of good milling timber.

In an effort to meet the growing market for beeswax and to relieve the honey market of the less popular lines of flavoured honey, a proposal

was advocated for the changing of some apiaries to wax production instead of honey production.

Officers were elected as follows: President, Mr. L. G. Lyttle; secretary, Mr. L. F. Robins; senior vice-president, Mr. A. H. Simpson; junior vice-president, Mr. H. Knibb; journal correspondent, Mr. J. G. McKenzie; press representative, Mr. C. Dawson; Federated Farmers representative, Mr. G. E. Gumbrell; auditor, Mr. J. Alexander; executive, Messrs. H. Cloake, J. G. McKenzie, and R. Davidson.

## OTAGO

### Annual Report

Circulars are regularly sent to twenty-two members but of these only fourteen are financial up to May 31, 1958. Polite reminders, provided by Head Office, were included in the notice of this meeting to the members in arrear.

Three Branch meetings were held, May, August and November. A very successful Field Day was held at the Home of Mr. T. Jackson at Milton, in February. Interesting addresses, demonstrations and discussions occupied the beekeepers present and a pleasant day was enjoyed by all. There were twenty members present, many of them accompanied by their wives.

At the Annual Convention held during Show week in June, the Branch played host to a good muster of visiting beekeepers from Southland, Canterbury and from our own Province. Apart from the benefits derived from discussion of the problems of marketing, price control, honey-house management, and other pressing affairs of the industry; most of the beekeepers attending enjoy a real get-together and look forward to this event each year.

Even after exercising the utmost economy in conducting the affairs of the Branch, the small balance on the wrong side of the ledger from last year has grown a little. The Balance Sheet shows the position plainly, and your secretary will welcome any practical suggestions how to improve this tendency. However, things are not nearly so desperate as in the City Transport Department. The Convention Accounts are in a very healthy position showing an increased credit balance again this year.

The sincere thanks of the branch are due to all those who assisted during the year with talks and demonstrations, and to Mr. T. Jackson for his hospitality for our Field Day. The Apiary Instructor, Mr. Seal, has also earned our gratitude for his ready assistance at all times.

### Committee

At the annual meeting the following members were elected as the Branch Committee for the ensuing year:— Messrs. C. W. Foote (President), E. Shepherd (vice-president), A. J. Shaw (secretary), J. W. Kennedy, H. F. van Puffelen and T. L. Jackson.

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## *Small Peak Defeats Sir Edmund Again*

There is a warm-hearted touch in a recent news item which tells how the 7030ft Scott Knob, in the back country of the Wairau Valley in Marlborough, remains the master of Everest's conqueror, Sir Edmund Hillary. But not for long, probably, because as he himself says, "I'll be back."

Sir Edmund, accompanied by Lady Hillary, his brother Rex (also a beekeeper), and Peter Mulgrew, his radio operator on his dash to the South Pole, went into the back country with the intention, among other things, of climbing Scott Knob, a comparatively minor mountain, but one which defeated Sir Edmund when he was at the Delta air force station during the war.

Sir Edmund said that their trip was a holiday one—"mainly shooting and a bit of climbing." The route they followed on the climb was one, he believed, not used previously. About 500ft from the top they were stopped by a rock face. "We were tired, not as fit as we should be and we didn't want to be out too late," he said with a smile, so they turned back.

Sir Edmund and his party then proceeded to Kaikoura for more holiday climbing in the Kaikoura Ranges, but Scott Knob is still firmly in mind, and next time it will no doubt join the list of those "knocked off."

## Dunedin Convention

The Annual Convention of Otago and Southland beekeepers was held in Dunedin on Tuesday, June 3, at 1.30 and 7.30 and there was a fairly representative gathering. At the afternoon session Mr J. Glynn was elected to the chair and addresses were given by Messrs J. W. Fraser and W. T. Heron on general and marketing activities of the past year. Questions and discussion followed. Several speakers paid tributes to the work of Mr T. S. Winter, retiring Superintendent, and the meeting passed a motion recording its appreciation and conveying good wishes to Mr and Mrs Winter in their retirement.

Mr C. W. Foote presided at the evening session and the first speaker was Mr D. W. A. Seal who compared in lighter vein beekeeping and bee masters in the North and South Islands. Underlying the humour were some

very sound observations regarding procedures, crops and climates. Mention of the "horizontal rain" of Invercargill caused a slight altercation among those present, during which the horizontal attitudes favoured by certain southern beekeepers also came in for some profound and not altogether unfavourable comment.

The second speaker was Mr I. W. Forster who gave a general survey of the use of pesticides and their effect on beekeeping.

An enjoyable interlude was provided by Mr Gill with his ventriloquist entertainment, and the Convention concluded with supper and a social hour.

During the Convention Mr Morrison raised the point that it might suit beekeepers better to hold future Conventions on the Saturday or Monday (Queen's Birthday) instead of a weekday. The Secretary of the Otago Branch would welcome opinions from beekeepers or Branches on this point.



**GROUP TAKEN AT OAMARU**

From left: Mr. I. W. Forster (Apiary Instructor), Mrs Forster, Messrs. T. Palmer-Jones (Research Officer, Wallaceville), J. W. Fraser (Dominion President), and J. McFadzien.

—Photo by T. Palmer-Jones

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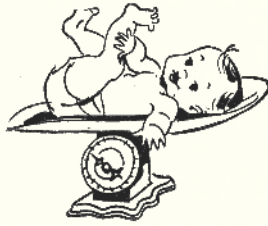
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# Notes for Beginners

by 'SKEP'

Sitting in comfort by a roaring fire and a 20 degree frost outside seems a far cry from summer's heat, clover flowers, nectar secretion and all the sweat and toil of the honey flow. However it is a pleasant change not to be working to a hard and fast schedule and a good time to indulge in speculative thought. The countryside has a real wintry look about it and any complete stranger would find it hard to believe that these dry, frost-bitten pastures can be literally white with clover in a few months time. Such is the miracle of nature.

I have often wondered what impact science, in the form of hormones and pesticides is going to have on our rural economy; just how long we can take these "short cuts" to efficient husbandry without upsetting the balance of nature. No right thinking person will deny progress but I fear that there is a tendency to regard science as knowledge itself rather than a means of seeking knowledge.

Mysterious bee losses continue to occur and nectar supplies in many areas are slowly being limited to the clover flow. The cost of production is rising in ways that no economist can calculate and no Price Order compensate.

However, as is always the case, there is a "silver lining" in the form of a steady but unconscious trend towards a better state of affairs. People are slowly beginning to realise that the universe cannot be controlled and regulated by dogmatic science. I attended a meeting recently whereat was formed what is to be known as a Farm Forestry Group. The enthusiasm was great and the subject matter ably explained by the guest speakers. The beautification of the countryside, the provision of timber, the control of erosion and suppression of noxious weeds were the acknowledged benefits of the proposed scheme. I fear that only a few present appreciated that these tangible benefits were only a part of the ultimate. The

planting of nectar secreting trees will materially benefit pollinating insects, and birds will find food and shelter. It will thus be possible for nature to strike a balance and both man and beast will have a happier and healthier world to live in.

## And now to WORK !

Most of us will have got all our wax pressed out and frames and supers assembled for the coming season. About the last week in August is a good time to have a look at those bees. Choose a warm day and do not expose the brood too long. There are three things to check on. First is the hive queen-right, is it free of disease, and are there ample stores. At this time of year there should be about three frames with brood on them and it should be compact. If the queen is failing or the hive is queenless it is best to unite it with another hive using the papering-on method. Later on, when young queens can be obtained, it is an easy matter to split the hive and so regain your lost asset. If disease is present the bees must be gassed and the hive destroyed by fire. This is the only sure way and is the cheapest in the long run. There should be at least 8 frames of honey in the hive if the bees are to carry on properly until the usual spring nectar sources are available. Some years willow will yield an appreciable amount of nectar but do not count on it. Very often high winds and rain will be experienced for the ten days or so that the catkins are on the trees.

If everything is in order there is nothing further to do until the end of September. By then you will find more bees and brood in the hives and, provided the weather is good, it is a good plan to put the brood down into the bottom super, placing pollen combs on the outside, empty in the middle of the second super and honey on either side of these empty combs. On no

account split the brood; it is still possible to get a spell of cold stormy weather and such action could result in chilled brood.

### Swarming

From now on the strength of the hive will be rapidly increasing and by late October or early November it will be necessary to watch for signs of swarming. Your first warning will be finding a number of queen cells with young larvae in them. If only two or three are present it is a sign that the queen is failing and is about to be superseded and usually this process takes place without incident. However, the bees may change their minds and swarm so the beginner may find it prudent to requeen the hive with a young queen purchased from a queen breeder.

If your queens are young and of the right strain, stores are adequate and there is plenty of room you should not be troubled with swarming: nevertheless it is a problem that you will come up against sooner or later. If swarming seems imminent early in the season I think that it is best to artificially swarm the hive and if no increase is desired, reunite the two colonies on the eve of the honey flow. The procedure is as follows. Just before the cells are about to be sealed, place the super containing the queen and most of the bees and brood on a new bottom board at the back of the old hive with the entrance facing the opposite way. Flying bees will return to the old hive and, with bees already there, be sufficient to care for the brood that you have left them. Break down all the cells but one in the hive left on the old stand. In about three weeks the young queen should be mated and laying and the new hive containing the old queen settled down to routine again, having given up all ideas of swarming. Your only duties now will be to keep putting the brood down, make sure there are ample stores and that the bees are not crowded for space.

As you become more proficient in beekeeping you will be able to forecast whether or not a hive is going to swarm. The early swarms are easily dealt with as described but it is the hive that swarms on the eve of the honey flow that upsets calculations. If the swarm is lost, so also is the crop. Time is

too short for the hive to build up in strength again. It is always advisable to anticipate this trouble and split the hives as for swarm control even if there are no queen cells present, just make certain that there are eggs in the queenless portion and the bees will do the rest. It is quite easy to stop a hive swarming but to do so without upsetting the hive morale is another thing; a hive thus upset will not settle down to honey gathering as efficiently as a strong hive where everything has been well timed and arranged.

### Preparations for Honey Flow

My next article will appear about mid-November when the hives will be getting strong. We will then consider using queen excluders and try to forecast the coming honey flow. In the meantime make a point of discarding all surplus pollen-clogged combs. Those with hard pollen must be melted down and the frames rewired etc. The combs containing fresh pollen can be cleaned by soaking in a solution of  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. Baking Soda to 2 galls of water for 48 hours. It looks an awful mess but if the job is done on the eve of the flow and the combs put out immediately on strong hives, the bees will soon have them cleaned up. Gather up all those odd bits of wax that you have lying about and turn them into cash. Remember the old motto "Look after the pence and the pounds will look after themselves."

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N. Z. BEEKEEPER

# AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS AND HONEY BEES

Address given by I. W. FORSTER, Apiary Instructor, Oamaru,  
at Convention of Beekeepers, Dunedin, June 3 1958.\*

One of the English bee journals recently summed up the insecticide position rather sarcastically by saying "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, if D.D.T. doesn't get us dieldrin must."

Perhaps a portion of a recent report on locusts is also worth quoting. "Many scientists have subscribed to the idea that a fitting label for the present era would be the 'Age of Insects'." This is because insects, despite the great disparity between their evolutionary development and that of man, still dispute with him for control of vast areas of the earth. In number of species, insects surpass all other animals put together, and in ecological adaption probably cover a larger area of the world than any other group. For his livelihood and sometimes even for his life, man is forced to wage incessant war on insects."

The report estimates the annual loss caused by locusts to be £30,000,000.

No wonder insecticides are becoming such an important commodity.

Insecticides versus honey bees is a fairly long-standing problem. Other pollinating insects are affected but as no one is directly concerned with caring for them the damage is not immediately obvious. Honey bees act as guinea-pigs for other beneficial insects. In some cases I think that honey bees may act as guinea-pigs for man too. Yes, it is probable that the beekeeping industry's concern over the danger from some chemicals does bring to notice the potential dangers, and results in precautions being taken that may save the lives of humans.

Though the problem of bees and insecticides is an old one, it is a problem

that has fast increased of recent years. More and more insecticides are being used. More and more deadly insecticides are required. We read how, where D.D.T. was first used a completely D.D.T. resistant codlin moth has developed. They've had to switch to such deadly things as parathion to deal with it.

As well as presenting the problem of resistant pests, insecticides may kill off natural predators and so make us more and more dependent on chemicals. Yes, this insecticide race could well become a sort of vicious circle.

## Methods of Application

Another factor to be reckoned with is improved methods of application. Ground spraying machines are now amazingly efficient. Long booms lined with nozzles allow a quick coverage of crops. This great spread also means that there is little wheel damage.

Aerial application does of course, allow tall crops to be treated which could never be done otherwise. Actually though, if you have much to do with aerial application you quickly become aware of just how uncertain it can be. This uncertainty does increase the hazard to bees because from this angle, time of application is so very important. With the ground machine it is fairly straightforward. You get all set up and if you want to treat at dawn you just start off at dawn and spray. If you want to spray at dusk or in the middle of the night for that matter, you can arrange to do it with a fair degree of certainty.

The drift factor is not accentuated as with the aircraft, so unless the wind is really strong it doesn't worry you. I really think that in many cases the aeroplane is favoured because of a certain fascination that it has. In some cases it seems to be the idea that it increases your social prestige to have an aeroplane operating on your property. However the aeroplane is something we have to accept and allow for.

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\* Editor's Note:—This talk covers the same ground as the illustrated address given by Mr. T. Palmer-Jones at the Dominion Conference in Wellington, August 6, 1958. Mr. Forster has been associated with Mr. Palmer-Jones in most of the field work done in New Zealand on this important phase of agriculture.

## New Chemicals

Of course the greatest factor today is the terrific advance in new chemicals over recent years. One must just about think in terms of months, not years. Nobody could have anticipated what that progress was to be. Nobody can forecast what it is likely to be in the future.

Away back, the problem used to be arsenate of lead and that's all. It was used mainly on fruit trees which meant that only odd specific areas were affected. It was, of course, a stomach poison. We say it used to be just arsenate of lead, but don't make any mistake, arsenate of lead is still one of the most lethal of insecticides.

D.D.T. was the first of the contact insecticides. Something that did not have to be eaten but would kill an insect merely by touching it. We recoiled in horror, didn't we? I can remember the N.B.A. Conference when we received a wire that D.D.T. was actually on sale in Ranfurly. We thought that beekeeping had really "had it." Strangely enough D.D.T. does not seem to have caused much serious bee loss.

D.D.T. super used for grass grub and porina gave us some worry. Yet when we tested it under conditions that exposed honey bees to the maximum effects it was evident that practically no danger existed. This test was carried out in a most thorough manner and the theoretical result was backed by the practical effect on the test apiary.

It was reported in "Gleanings" how in America they sprayed an acre of dandelion in full flower with 12% D.D.T. There were three hives in the field and one hive just outside. A few field bees were killed outright but no noticeable harm was done to the colonies.

Control of army worm by D.D.T. seemed likely to be another headache. The position has been that in most cases it is ryegrass that is attacked and usually there has been very little clover present.

The control of cocksfoot thrip with D.D.T. is another one. This thrip can only be dealt with in December when the pollen is blowing and there is often clover present among the cocksfoot. Cocksfoot growers have in some cases destroyed the clover with selective weed-killers so as to have nothing to

attract bees to where they may be harmed by the D.D.T. You can see that if the D.D.T. is not a serious danger it may be better for the beekeeper to have the clover left and take a chance with the D.D.T. Yes, some of these problems are complicated.

We certainly must not underrate the danger of D.D.T. or let it confuse our thoughts over insecticides generally. It is to everyone's advantage to allow as much freedom as possible and I think that is the view held by most beekeepers. Of course it is not suggested that we should take the lid off as far as D.D.T. is concerned.

Lindane, B.H.C. has proved to be the most deadly to honey bees so far. Its effect is particularly bad because the field bees carry it back to the hive. The effects are much more prolonged than if the bees were killed outright on the crop.

## Systemic Insecticides

Well, following the contact insecticides we have the systemics. These are actually absorbed by the plant and the sap becomes toxic. Leonardo de Vinci more than 400 years ago believed that arsenic could be used as a systemic. In 1935 the Germans started research on systemics and eventually developed Schradan. In 1936 scientists observed that wheat grown on ground containing Selenium was not attacked by aphides.

Reports on the danger of systemics to honey bees are very conflicting. This is of course understandable. So many factors are concerned. Reactions and results must vary.

Very early in the piece I read where they had tested Pestox III overseas. Now Pestox III is a systemic. It was applied by watering into the roots of the plant. This made the nectar in the flowers 100% lethal to bees.

Metasystox, another systemic was reported overseas as being safe to bees. You know there's one thing in this insecticide problem that we have to be thankful for. That is the service given to the industry by Mr. Palmer-Jones at the Wallaceville Animal Research Station. He's always on the job studying, screening new insecticides. It is a typical example of his vigilance that he doubted the safety of Metasystox as reported from overseas work. He tested it in the laboratory. These laboratory tests confirmed his sus-



picians. So we carried out that full scale field test with *Metasystox*. Of course, under our conditions it just wiped out the field force of the test apiary. Fortunately it had no effect on brood or queens, so under the conditions that we carried out the test there was no long term effect, but *Metasystox* is definitely very lethal to honey bees. Mind you, our testing of *Metasystox* probably brought it to attention in New Zealand quicker than would otherwise have been the case, but we did know in advance its likely effect on bees and have thus been able to control its use.

### Hormones

Now hormone weed killers. These are generally accepted as being harmless to bees. Mr. Palmer-Jones has kept a watch on this one. There has been some bee mortality recently though, that beekeepers tend to associate with hormone weed killers. There is no real evidence to show that this is so. A suggestion has been made that the effect is an indirect one. The hormone may not actually kill the bees but in some way makes the field bees unacceptable to the guard bees. This would mean of course, their being denied entry to the hive and having to stay outside and die. This also is mainly conjecture. One thing we do learn though, is that we can't be dogmatic over these problems and hormone weed killers is one of the things that we will probably have to have another look at.

Mr. Palmer-Jones has done work with some of the newer insecticides. Toxaphene, Stobane, Thiodan, Primin and Diazinon. These are fairly recent developments. Here again we see the great boon it is to have a research officer watching and testing. As I have said once we were charged with the operation of the Apiary Protection Regulations we just had to have knowledge of the danger presented by the various insecticides. Naturally it cannot be undertaken to fully test every insecticide and that is where this lab. work comes in. Insecticides that appear to have promise for the control of pests without being harmful to bees, or on the other hand, insecticides that appear likely to be used but will probably be harmful to bees can be easily tried out in the lab. Perhaps easily is hardly the word. This lab. testing is very painstaking, exacting work.

The efficiency of the methods used in the lab. is reflected in how closely the results usually tie up with practical field tests.

### Case Bearer Moth

Now take the problem of the clover case bearer moth. This is a serious pest which causes great loss in white clover seed yields in New Zealand. The moth lay its eggs in the clover flower and when the grub hatches out it eats out the seed in the clover pod. Any treatment would probably have to be while the clover was in flower. So you can see this is a situation that could present considerable danger to bees. Well, Mr. Palmer-Jones, by a study of the various chemicals and lab. tests, had picked out Toxaphene and Strobane as having promise. These by the way, are not in the dangerous group that are known as organo phosphates. They don't have a systemic effect. We tested out these two chemicals in a large scale field test at Hastings. We had Mr. Line to help us too. It was a big job but it was done very thoroughly. Toxaphene was tried out both as a liquid and as a dust. Strobane was just used as a liquid. Here again we probably "led the field" in the large scale use of these chemicals in New Zealand.

We had two test apiaries and applied the insecticides to clover in full flower. We had, of course, to grapple with all the usual problems. You know, weather, aeroplanes, pasture growth and so on. A job like this is quite hectic. Once you start the process its continuous over Saturdays and Sundays, sunrises and sunsets, if necessary. On this occasion we carried on over two weekends and I hate to think how many sunrises and sunsets we saw. Most mornings we would get up about 3 o'clock and ring up the pilot. If there was any doubt as to how the weather was going to be we'd wait around and then ring back. Sometimes we would actually go out to the test area before dawn and still not be able to get the particular chemical applied for some reason or other.

Well, we found Toxaphene to be quite safe to bees and Strobane only slightly dangerous. So you see we now have two insecticides that we can suggest as an alternative if we have to stop the use of something more dangerous.

Early in 1958, the problem of controlling pests in seed lucerne crops while they are in flower arose. Mr.

Palmer-Jones and myself undertook a trial in the Kurow district. We had a field of lucerne in full flower with hives of bees scattered through it. Liquid D.D.T. was applied from the air at daybreak. Here again we put in one waste morning. Up before dawn for a long wait on the shore of Lake Waitaki for a plane that turned out to be fog-bound at Waimate. By the time we found out we'd missed our breakfast at the hotel.

Now this D.D.T. did not appear to kill any bees. There were no dead bees at the hives and everything else was normal. Field bees caged off flowers on the treated crop the same day as the D.D.T. was applied showed no undue mortality.

### Defoliants

Another problem that cropped up this year was the use of defoliants on white clover. These are phenol preparations that knock down the foliage so that the seed can be harvested early without waiting for the natural dying off of the leaves. There is a great need for something like this in a summer and autumn like the last one when second growth poses a terrific problem to seed growers. Defoliants have been used before on red clover and lucerne but this is usually late enough in the season not to worry bees. Of course on white clover the defoliant is applied much earlier. Perhaps in February and to clover still carrying a lot of bloom.

It was Mr. Griffin, the Apiary Instructor at Christchurch, who saw the possible danger. He also noticed that one defoliant was rated as being dangerous to bees while another of a similar formulation was rated as safe. It appeared fairly obviously that both should come into the same category. Mr. Palmer-Jones and I tested out the

effect of two defoliants on a large scale at Methven and in plot tests at Oamaru.

We found that the clover withered so quickly after the defoliants were applied that bees would not work treated clover. These defoliants appear to be quite safe to use. This may appear to be a negative result but it is most important that there is no unnecessary restriction.

While it is more spectacular to find chemicals dangerous to bees, it is a greater satisfaction to everyone to find safe ones. If we can say go ahead and use such and such a chemical we are more justified in stopping the use of a dangerous one.

Knowing the many factors that can influence the effect of various chemicals we emphasise that when we find the amount of bee mortality is negligible it is only on that crop and under those conditions that we recommend their use.

The knowledge we have gained is, of course, invaluable in the operation of any regulations governing the use of agricultural chemicals. I'm afraid though, that quite a lot of work will still be required as this modern agricultural chemical pattern unfolds.

Let me repeat again.

Don't forget the large amount of backroom work that is being done all the time. The administrative officers who have to see that money is available for these jobs. The specialised knowledge of such men as Mr. Odinet the Therapeutant Officer in Wellington. The lab. work at Wallaceville. Consultations with firms engaged in supplying chemicals. Also with other Departments.

Without this continued checking and testing it would just be a matter of trial and error. The trial could be most irksome and the error at times probably disastrous.

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## *Mr. Winter Honoured at Timaru*

A complimentary dinner honouring Mr. T. S. Winter on his retirement as Superintendent, Beekeeping Industry, was given by the South Canterbury Branch in Timaru on May 29. Representatives were present from the Canterbury, Otago and North Otago Branches and messages were received from other parts of the South Island.

The principal toast was in the hands of Mr. R. Davidson and other speakers were Messrs. I. W. Forster, H. Cloake, G. E. Gumbrell, J. McFadzien, A. Ecroyd and I. Mackinnon.

In his reply Mr. Winter gave an outline of the history and present status of the honey industry, and in referring to beekeeping events and methods of the early days he listed many of the stalwarts and pioneers of years gone by.

Items of entertainment were given by Mr. S. B. Cross and Mr. and Mrs. Forster, and following the dinner the President of the South Canterbury Branch, Mr. L. G. Lyttle, presented the guest with a tea set. It was an appropriate gift and a nice tribute to Mrs. Winter who has been helpmate to Mr. Winter during his long term of service in the honey industry.

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### FOUR WELL KNOWN IDENTITIES AT A RECENT FIELD DAY IN SOUTH CANTERBURY

From left: Messrs. W. B. Bray (Leeston), A. S. McConnell (Claremont),  
J. Forster (Timaru) and Jack Irving (Albury).

—Photo by Chris. Dawson

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# Tuapeka Mouth News

By F. A. SKINNER

I remembered the other day my good resolution to write at least once a year to the Journal. I always read the various articles with pleasure and I think if we all try to write something occasionally it will be a help to the Editor and perhaps give extra pleasure to readers.

I must say in this my annual report that I have no glow of pride in my achievements this year, but rather I feel a little deflated. It was a case of making the best of what weather we had. It started with the big flood in early November. To make matters worse I had wintered my hives extra light. I expected a good number to die, and was not disappointed, but I reckoned this as little loss because they were so savage.

I had 300 quiet Italian queens on order from the north and hoped to requeen as many as possible. I reckoned on making up my rather heavy winter losses from my two manuka yards established for this purpose. These were my well laid plans.

My queens arrived during December and I had a few weeks work introducing them. I got quite good at nabbing the wild black royalty. All my queens were introduced by about the end of December but things were not looking too good at this stage. I had made a lot of nukes but they were not building up, in fact I had to start running around with bags of sugar to stave off a famine. The apiaries up in the more sheltered valleys were not so bad and pulled through without extra feed.

Well, to cut a long story short, there was rain and more rain. The bees made the best of what weather they had and seemed to pick up a bit of honey during the latter part of February. I took off about 50lbs per hive on the first round and started off on the second round. By picking combs from here and there I reckoned on getting about another 25 lbs. I actually started but found this is not my style of working so I left a lot of honey on the hives, much more than would suffice for winter feed. I do not want a repetition of carting

around bags of sugar. The hives are also in excellent order for making an increase next year but that's another story, I hope.

This is my third season and I think I have learned a lot from such an unseasonable year. I am sure quite a good crop could have been harvested if one had taken the necessary precautions. Plenty of winter stores I think is the answer. They recommend that the Australian farmers build up a reserve of hay to tide them over a drought year; well I think, in the same way, it would be a good idea to have a reserve of honey on hand. It should not be hard, for me at any rate, to put aside 200 odd boxes of manuka honey as a reserve.

I have an apiary placed for the purpose of gathering manuka and making nukes. Actually this last three years they have had no surplus of manuka and have yielded extra heavy crops of predominantly clover honey. The manuka bug, however, is making very heavy inroads. I notice it attacks and kills the red manuka but does not seem to affect the big bushy white manukas. These latter seem to flower much later in the year and the bees don't seem to bother them. I would be very interested if anyone would write something about the manuka species and I would like to know what the bees think of the white manuka trees.

## Marketing of Agricultural Chemicals

With the establishment in New Zealand of the Shell Agricultural Division, the world's largest suppliers of agricultural chemicals have brought their operations into New Zealand's primary industry.

Under the direction of Mr G. Arnott, formerly of the Shell Chemical Co., England, and a staff which includes a number of graduates of Lincoln and Messey Colleges, Shell has laid the foundations of the most comprehensive privately financed research, testing and marketing service in the Dominion.

Interviewed in Wellington, Mr Arnot pointed out that the Division would have the advantage of being wholly devoted to the interests of New Zealand agriculture and, at the same time, would make full use of Shell's large overseas resources and world-wide scientific and research facilities.

The Division, it was stressed, will be working in the closest co-operation with the N.Z. Department of Agriculture and Mr. Arnot drew attention to its role as a link between agricultural authorities and individual farmers.

### *The Watch-dogs*

A chap down the road has many hives,  
Of cross-bred bees parked by his back-door,  
I curse his mongrel drones flying my way  
And making my mating darn poor.  
I offered to requicken them with a nice  
gentle strain  
And spoke of the beekeeping pleasure  
ensuing.  
He said "It's very good of you old man,  
But I'm afraid there's just nothing  
doing.  
I know my bees appear a pretty poor lot  
And I'll admit that in swarming they  
revel.  
They never seem to gather much honey  
at all  
And they sting like the very devil.  
The tradesmen won't come near the place,  
They leave all our goods down the drive.  
The bees have stung the wife, the kids,  
and me  
Till we're lucky to be alive.  
You may think I'm crazy to put up with  
this  
And ask "Whatever do you keep bees  
for".  
To tell the truth, they're the only things  
I know,  
That effectively scare off my mother-in-  
law.

— Box-hive Bertie.

### **Hot Honey Lemonade**

Hot honey lemonade is particularly valuable in relieving "flu." When suffering from a cold take hot honey lemonade just before retiring: 4 table-spoons lemon juice mixed with 4 table-spoons honey. Add 1 cup boiling water. Drink hot.

## **West German Market**

West Germany has taken more United States honey than any other foreign country, during recent years. In fact, in four of the last six years she has taken more than one-half of the U.S. total exports of honey.

Honey production in West Germany during the past season was unusually low, because of adverse weather conditions, the prevalence of bee diseases and the loss of bees from poisoning due to careless plant protection measures.

West German beekeepers feel encouraged for the future because beekeepers are being given help through the work of the Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture, and Forestry. The amount of sugar that can be secured free of sugar tax for bee feeding, has been increased recently.

It seems likely, however, that the amount of honey imported by West Germany will increase. In 1957 West Germany imported an unusually large quantity of honey, 70 million pounds, an increase of about 20 per cent over 1956. This increased demand was the result of the low domestic supply, also the dropping of the dollar premium which was required formerly from importers of honey.

Because of the general use of honey as a medicine or food tonic in West Germany some objection has been raised to a part of the shipments received from the United States. It is believed in West Germany that the diastase count of honey is an indication of its health value.

It is believed that a new food law will be enacted in West Germany that will define normal honey in some detail and when that comes, quality requirements for honey will be stricter than they are at the present time. It therefore behooves honey exporters in this country to furnish only honey of good quality.

— Gleanings, June, 1958.

### *Poetic Justice*

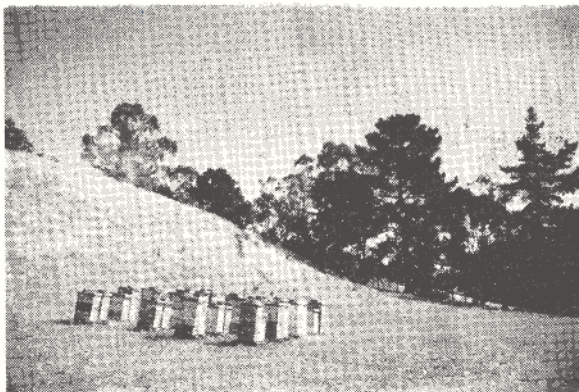
Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.

(Deuteronomy XXV.)

N. Z. BEEKEEPER

## Beekeeping in Hawkes Bay

This attractive apiary, owned by Mr G. Gordon, was passed several times by the Queen Mother when she stayed overnight at a residence a few miles out of Hastings.



Mr. C. Fafeita of Eketahuna (in the Hastings Apiary District) is a wizard with concrete, to which he adds washing soda to make the concrete "tight" or closely knit. He has a lot of concrete roofs with a water-groove under the lip—weight about 30lbs and no brick required on top.



Mrs. G. Dorward of Havelock North taking off her 1958 honey crop. With white overalls and iron barrow she is heading for the honey house, full of enthusiasm. One of Hawkes Bay's many hot sunny days.



—Photos by Sefton Line.



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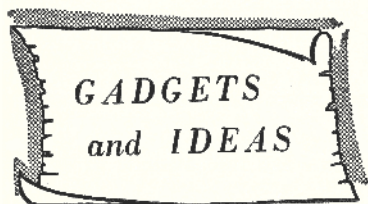
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The following items are reprinted from the "How To Do It" column in "American Bee Journal":

#### **BURR COMB PAIL**

While going through a yard getting ready to remove supers, I learned the advantage of a covered pail into which I could scrape burr combs. Often considerable honey is built between supers and if left to drip or leak can start a robbing festival. The type of covered pail used in the kitchen with hinged lid and a foot pedal to lift the cover will soon pay for itself in the bee yard, and can be set on the truck and emptied upon return to the honey house.

Next time I buy one I'll keep the new one wrapped until it gets to the yard, and avoid having it swapped for the one in the kitchen!—M. M. Moore, Iowa.

#### **TO KEEP SMOKER LIT**

Many find it hard to keep the smoker lit all the time they are using it. Take discarded rags and pour

borax water over them. Dissolve a small cup of the borax in warm water to make the liquid. Thoroughly wet the cloth and then hang up to dry. Do not hang in damp and windy place as that dissipates the borax. After the cloths dry, tear off any size piece you wish, put in smoker and light. After a minute it cannot be put out. I use it with great success. — C. A. Brown, Ohio.

#### **HOW TO CLEAN QUEEN EXCLUDERS**

I clean queen excluders of wax and propolis by using a wire brush such as painters use to remove old paint from buildings. I find this works better than using heat as there is no danger of damage to the excluders and the wire brush does a quick and effective job.—Frank L. Wheeler, New York.

#### **TAKE CARE OF THOSE CANS**

When packing honey in tin pails or 60lb cans one often finds some of these tin containers which have small rust spots upon them. Give these spots a good rubbing with steel wool, fine grade, and these spots disappear. Finger marks, small spots of wax, propolis, etc. may be quickly cleaned off by using steel wool. Wash off the can with clear gasoline, place the honey label in place with glue, and then wipe tin can with a rag moistened with boiled linseed oil. This prevents the tin from any further rusting and cans may be stored until needed for sale.—E. F. Bea, Minnesota.

## **NICHOLAS'**

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## **T. W. R. NICHOLAS**

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## Reflections . .

*from the  
Editor's Desk*

### Honey and Gin

It is perhaps disconcerting to the beekeeping purist who regards his product as "a perfect food" and "nature's finest sweet" to contemplate the commercial use of honey for the manufacture of gin. It even more disconcerting to the beekeeper who believes that the merits of gin can only be described as a minus quantity. There are some, indeed, who may feel concerned lest they should be projected unwillingly into a nefarious trade.

This brings us to a problem which has grown up with the development of specialisation in skills, or the division of labour, and civilisation itself rests upon this ordered system of human endeavour. With the passing of time the fabric of society has become so intricate that to touch one thread of it is to affect the whole, and the only way to avoid being involved in the forms of a civilised community is to depart into some region of complete solitude, like Robinson Crusoe. The beekeeper who produces honey for the manufacture of gin is no more responsible for the gin trade than the shoemaker who makes shoes for the distiller.

This does not mean, of course, that an individual must accept without question the existing standards of his community. It means that his participation in a trade which the community demands in no way interferes with his right, and his duty, to exert a personal influence for good as he sees it.

There is one comforting thought for everyone in New Zealand's gin-making venture, whatever materials are used. Times may be harder than they were but if we can afford to provide 284,000 gallons of this commodity each year our resources are obviously still a long, long way above the bare necessities of life.

### Advice to Branches

Some thoughtful comments on the role of Branches were made by Mr. I. W. Forster at the recent Timaru function in honour of Mr. Winter. In proposing the toast to the National Beekeepers Association Mr. Forster mentioned that the pattern of production within the Dominion changes more quickly in beekeeping than in other types of farming and the Association should be readily adaptable to meet these fluctuations by forming new Branches in expanding areas where the need arises. Conversely, when beekeeping activities recede in a district it is wise to face the fact and the declining Branch in some cases would be better to amalgamate with a neighbouring Branch. It is most unfortunate when a Branch is allowed to decline and gradually fade out. "Believe me," said Mr. Forster, "it is quite sad to see a Branch slowly die, and it seems to have a lasting effect on members. From the point of view of an Apiary Instructor when a Branch fades out that district becomes so much harder to work and one cannot fail to conjecture how hopeless the situation would be if the Association did not exist at all."

The sound reasoning in these comments should be apparent to all members, and it should also be apparent to beekeepers who are not members as yet.

### Hard Winter

So far we haven't heard of any beekeepers who failed to come through the winter in our part of the country, but we know one who nearly failed. The mercury went very low at times. As for the bees, the severe weather must have taxed their endurance to the limit.

N. Z. BEEKEEPER

During this winter the Taieri River was lightly frozen over for several miles in its lower reaches, a condition which has occurred only twice, to our knowledge, in the last twenty years. The newspapers of seventy years ago record that a person on one occasion skated the four or five miles from Henley to Waihola, but this would have been out of the question in recent times.

However, it is safe to assume that the bees will come to life again in the spring—they usually do. Bees have wonderful stamina; we have often been impressed by the way in which autumn-raised queens will maintain a token brood nest throughout the winter and the bees will even attempt to replace such queens if they are removed at any time.

Life, in fact, can be fairly tenacious in the face of climatic hazards. In midwinter we discovered a hedgehog curled up in his nest under a pile of rubbish, happily oblivious of the conditions around him. Another casual find this year was a few pupae of the mason wasp, hibernating in their little plaster house among some bricks. They were exactly as cold as ice, but in perfect condition, patiently awaiting the warmth of spring.

All this helps to prove that the South Island was intended for habitation. It is a proposition which would not be accepted without considerable demur in some quarters.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### To the Editor

Sir,—In the May issue Mr Williams seems to delight in entertaining your readers with irresponsible statements. Out of respect for your space, I will deal with only two of them. He says that the secondary pack will be a top quality. Perhaps he was being careful in saying quality and not grade. It could be said that all honey is top quality but he knows that there is much honey of a lower grade sent to the Authority than ever arrives at the private packers door. This is the honey that is being sold overseas at a lower price and we can do better by selling it under another brand here at less than first grade. Already first

grade is being sold by packers at cut prices and nothing disastrous has happened except that those packers are a bit poorer financially.

He says "Surely when we have a Government committed to the policy of guaranteed prices to cover the cost of production of primary produce, a Government which has indicated to the N.B.A. that they are prepared to implement such a policy on behalf of the beekeeping industry . . ." Having read that, I turned to what the Minister said in his letter printed on page 13. "The question of a guaranteed price for honey for export cannot be considered until . . ." Mr Williams appears to be a victim to the tyranny of words. The guaranteed price is a mirage.

Yours, etc.,

W. B. BRAY.

Leeston, 24/7/58.

### To the Editor

Sir,—The further letter from Mr Williams which appears in your last issue confirms my previous statement that Mr. Williams evidently considers the less honey handled by the H.M.A. the more advantageous it will be to the Industry. I take up the opposite view.

Mr. Williams regards the seal levy as the life blood of the H.M.A. and the strength of that organisation is therefore determined by the volume of "blood" transfused into its financial arteries. Unfortunately the donors of this precious substance may become exhausted in their effort to keep the patient alive unless aid from another source is forthcoming.

Mr. Williams says—"I am not opposed to the H.M.A. improving and advertising its packs and endeavouring to increase sales: It could do nothing else etc." In another sentence he says "The only solution to the problem is to increase the total sales of honey in New Zealand, an object that would hardly be achieved by advertising Imperial bee on the local market."

The curious contradiction in these two quotations leaves one a little perplexed but perhaps some elucidation may be found in Mr. Williams further comment—"If the H.M.A. sales increased 500 tons the packers sales will decrease by the same amount and the H.M.A. will get the 500 tons the packers would have sold." Mr. Williams obviously believes that any advertising

SPEAKING OF CARTONS

# Remember Cinderella!

*A*

ll of you have heard the story of Cinderella, when you were a youngster. Her two flash sisters used to leave her to sit at home knitting by the radiator, while they took in all the night clubs. Never let her have silk stockings, lingerie or lipstick. Poor Cindy never had a chance to go places.

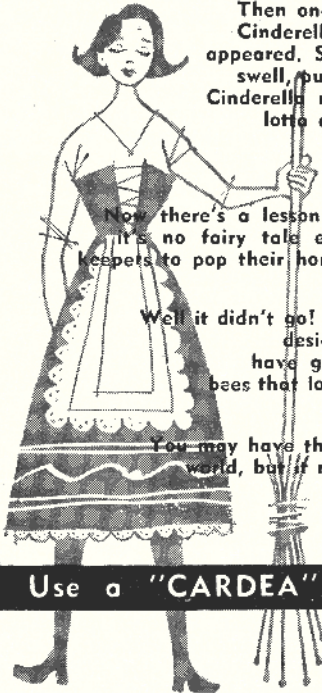
Then one night while the sisters were out at a cabaret and Cinderella was all alone at home, her Fairy Godmother appeared. She gave Cinderella a hair do and dressed her up swell, put her in a Rolls Royce and sent her to a posh party. Cinderella made the hit of the evening and a Prince with a lotto dough fell for her hard, and offered her everything.

Why? Because Cinderella was all dressed up.

Now there's a lesson about Honey Cartons in that old time story and it's no fairy tale either. For years it was the habit of many bee-keepers to pop their honey in any old kind of jar or carton and let it go.

Well it didn't go! Not in competition with that packed in attractively designed and printed "CARDEA" Honey cartons. You have got to have more than a poorly printed picture of bees that look like a lot of flies, to sell honey the modern way.

You may have the best honey in the world, but it must be dressed up!



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effort to increase the demand for Imperial bee would fail to increase consumption and he further believes that any increase in supplies to the H.M.A. is undesirable.

The H.M.A. payout may have reached nearly the estimated cost of production that satisfies Mr. Williams but it represents at least 3d per lb. below the nett return of those selling in bulk to packers or direct to the wholesale or retail trade. It is not surprising therefore that the volume of honey sent in to the H.M.A. has progressively declined over the past four years from 2206 tons in 1953/4 season to 1080 tons in 1957/8 season. It is significant that this steady decline in supplies has been accompanied by increasing competitive selling locally mainly from former suppliers who are crashing in at heavy discount rates against established packers. Clover honey is now being retailed in Auckland for as low as 1/9d per lb. carton. This represents 7d per lb. below the estimated cost of production level as decreed by the price tribunal.

The "virtual bankruptcy of the Industry" which Mr. Williams feared from price cutting is already under way. A second pack from the H.M.A. in Metropolitan Auckland under organised control might have arrested this chaotic drift and at the same time it would undoubtedly have benefited the pay out.

Mr. Williams evidently harbours some doubt over the efficacy of his own cure for our ills because he winds up his letter with the pious hope that the Government will help the pay out with a guaranteed price subsidy. A forlorn hope I fear.

I heartily reciprocate the friendly personal feelings expressed by Mr. Williams towards myself. Let me say no one could have had finer beekeeping neighbours that I had in Messrs. Otway and Williams during my thirty years of beekeeping.

Mr. Gumbrell (a senior executive N.B.A. member) in his letter refers to my "ludicrous" effort to draw a simile between the dairy exports and the honey exports. Ere this appears in print perhaps a statement from the Minister will determine the extent of my alleged "ludicracy."

WALLACE NELSON.

### To the Editor

Sir,—Anyone who has analysed the activities of the H.M.A. must be concerned at the failure of the organisation to sell their pack on the Auckland market. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the pack is not acceptable to the public. Seals buyers and suppliers alike are perturbed at the suggestion of a second pack at a reduced price and if this policy is put into effect it will inevitably lead to an orgy of price cutting. Private packers will claim, with some justification, that the leaders of the industry have created a precedent and in a very short time the industry might very well be in dire straits. It would surely be preferable to rectify the position by ensuring more efficiency in marketing rather than follow a policy which would lower the level of returns to beekeepers.

Criticism is, I know, easy, and if not constructive, it can be harmful. What is lacking in the industry is a sense of responsibility and a feeling of pride and unless these can be attained the outlook is unsatisfactory.

At the forthcoming election I will be offering my services to the industry and, if elected, pledge myself to support a policy of efficiency, enterprise and progress.

Yours faithfully,

G. E. GRUMBRELL.

Geraldine, R.D.

### To the Editor

Sir,—In your last issue, Mr. Nelson has replied to my February effort by (1) patting himself on the back and (2) inquiring as to the percentage of my crop supplied to the H.M.A.

I do not quite see the relevance of this: it may affect my views, but not my arguments. But while we are on the subject, Sir, may I ask Mr. Nelson a similar question: If he were a candidate for election to the H.M.A. this year, would he be eligible? Is it, or is it not, a fact that he is holding office by virtue of a provision in the regulations which he bitterly opposed?

I note with interest, and approval, that Mr. Williams, who is a candidate, has fearlessly stated the amount of honey he is supplying.

SUPPLIER.

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Literary contributions and advertisements  
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### FRONT COVER

The photo on the front cover  
shows part of an apiary of  
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Mr. R. V. Glasson. Photo by  
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