

bers of the Executive, which was carried by acclamation.

After a vote of thanks to the Press, the President declared the Conference closed.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

VISIT TO THE H.P.A. RECEIVING AND PACKING DEPOT.

Perhaps the most interesting item from a practical and industrial view was the visit on Friday afternoon of about 100 to the Honey Producers' Receiving and Packing Depot. In the absence of Mr. Ryland, Mr. Fraser explained that the Depot was not prepared for the occasion, but knowing it from close contact, it was an ordinary working day, with "business as usual."

Mr. Fraser then formally introduced Mr. W. J. Jordan, the depot manager, who explained the workings of the Depot.

Mr. Jordan then asked those present to follow the honey from the time of arrival to its despatch as a blended article under the brand of "Imperial Bee." In the first place, the honey is liquified, when the specific gravity is tested, which process was explained and demonstrated. Should the hydrometer record lower than 1.42 at 60 deg. Fahr., then the honey was unfit for export or packing, as there was danger of fermentation. This, however, could be somewhat overcome by the new plant recently installed.

The colour tests were explained, and it was made clear to all that the honey is graded scientifically and fairly.

A feature of interest was the sample of each honey which had been received into the Depot during the past twelve months, and suppliers were able to compare their own production with that of neighbours or other apiarists. The wide range of colours and flavours would afford an interesting exhibit at any show. Following the receiving and grading, the party proceeded to the upper floor, where some thousands of cases of honey from all parts of the Dominion were stacked.

The principle of blending was explained, wherein the colour, flavour, grain and condition were considered, and fifty tins were selected for each batch. These were placed in one of the newly-constructed heaters and in contact with the heated pipes. In half an hour the honey commences to flow, and falling on to the floor of the heater runs down the slope and pipe into the tank below. The honey running from fifty tins simultaneously and entering the tank in a stream half an inch in diameter, resulting in a perfect blend. The honey retains its granulation, and its essential flavours are unimpaired. In twenty hours the tins are drained perfectly dry, so that the two heaters have a capacity of 500

tins in five days, or over thirteen tons per week. Passing to the tanks on the ground floor, we saw the honey running therein in a steady stream. The scum separates and accumulates on top, and is thus easily skimmed off and treated. It was explained that we were down to 2½ lbs. of scum to each ton of honey packed.

A demonstration of filling the small vessels was given by the young ladies of the staff, one of the operators filling two cases of 2 lb. tins each case 4 doz. in six minutes. It was explained however, that such is not the average speed, but the cases are filled at the rate of 12 an hour, being 9,000 lbs. of honey per day. Into smaller vessels, jars, and cartons about 5,000 lbs. can be packed in a day. All the paper cartons, after being filled and the lid placed on, have a protruding edge rolled in, and the top is sealed with paraffin wax, thus preventing the absorption of moisture by the honey and making leakage impossible.

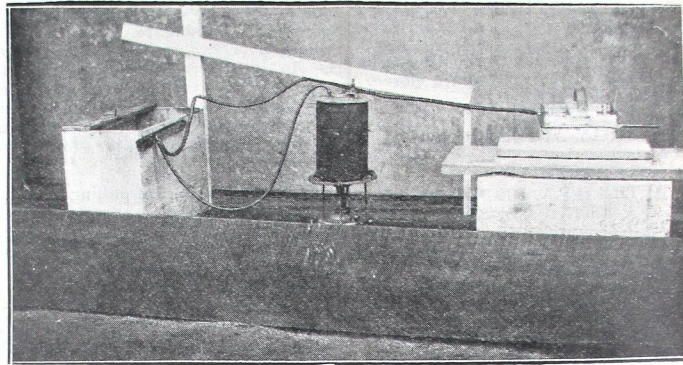
The visitors saw samples of the honey packed under the "Imperial Bee" brand during the last six months, and the consistency of colour and general qualities proved that the previous complaints of dark or liquid honey being put on the market as "Imperial Bee" will not be repeated.

The visitors expressed their surprise and satisfaction with the improvements made, and complimented the H.P.A. upon the progress and efficiency of its staff at the Depot.

A little amusement was caused during the visit by the reference which Mr. Jordan made to the scum. He said that at one time about 50 lbs. of honey and scum were skimmed from each ton of honey packed. The quantity was now down to 2½ lbs. per ton, and even that was subjected to careful test before being declared useless. It was heated and tested for wax, which existed, but not in sufficient quantity to pay for securing. As a poultry food it was useless, as ducks or fowls would not eat it. It was then tried as a fertiliser, but was found to have no qualities in that direction, and at present the 2½ lbs. per ton were being consigned to the drain; but it was hoped to hear of or find a use for it in the near future.

DEMONSTRATIONS.

Mr. D. Franke, of Turakina, demonstrated his appliance for extracting thick honey from the combs without breaking. That the test should be complete, Mr. F. E. Stewart, of Rotorua, brought two combs of the thickest variety obtaining in his district, and four supers of combs were supplied by Mr. T. E. Clark, of Hobsonville. The combs were first uncapped and placed in the extractor, being left long enough to satisfy the audience that what



was left could honestly be called unextractable honey in the general sense. They were then taken out by Mr. Franke, who then used what is simply a brush, 9 in. long and $3\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide, but instead of bristles $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. fine nails are used. With this he pressed the nails into the combs as far as the mid-rib, working the brush slightly to stir the honey in the cells. The whole comb on both sides was gone over, the two combs placed in the extractor, and the usual time given for extracting, when the combs were taken out and handed round. For all practical purposes, the combs were clean, and the remark of one man who has put tons and tons into the river was, "It'll do me!" Mr. Franke was then asked to try the appliance without uncapping the combs, which he did, and the result was quite good—certainly very much better than what would be obtained had the comb been uncapped and extracted without the use of the appliance. Some thought the process slow, but as Mr. Franke said that when one is demonstrating a new appliance before about 100 critical folk, one cannot work as one would in the ordinary way in your own honey-room.

The photo reproduced here does not very fully explain the appliance. The boiler in the centre is of a gallon capacity, made of galvanised iron, one outlet to the steam knife, which is hanging on the uncapping box on the left. The steam passes through the knife to the tray on the right. This has a false bottom, and tubes are zig-zagged through it to the outlet. In the tray is placed about 1 lb. of honey, which is heated by the steam, and acts as a lubricant to the "nail" brush, which in the photo is resting on the tray, also heats

the nails, preventing the comb from sticking to the brush and breaking off lumps of the cells. The board in front of the tray is where the combs are laid for the embedding of the brush.

Mr. Franke also has an embedder brush that allows a jet of steam through it, but he says the tubes leading to and from it are liable to get in the way, and as far as he can judge very little, if any, better work is done with it.

Mr. Franke was very heartily thanked for the demonstration.

Our own opinion is that Mr. Franke has an appliance that, even in its present form, will mean that thousands of pounds of honey hitherto wasted can be harvested. Now the initial idea is shown to be good, it is easily possible for Mr. Franke and others to improve the appliance, as has been done with others dealing with thick honey.

Mr. Franke brought with him a sample of honey that had been extracted under the process to prove that no harm in any way had resulted. The honey had granulated hard, and was quite a good flavour for its kind.

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The melter demonstration was spoilt by the lack of sufficient steam, both appliances requiring higher pressure than was obtainable from the oil-drum boiler that was used.

This brought to a conclusion one of the most helpful and interesting meetings of beekeepers that has ever been held in the Dominion.