

HONEY PRODUCERS

ADDRESS BY CHAIRMAN.

FINANCE AND MARKETING.

With the beekeepers attending the autumn convention of the Manawatu branch of the National Beekeepers' Association assembled at Massey Agricultural College yesterday for the second session, Mr F. J. Lewin, president, who was in the chair, extended a welcome to those in attendance: Since the convention last year, the branch had had the use of the hall and apiary at Massey College, he said, due to the support given the organisation by Professor G. S. Peren, the principal, to whom they were grateful.

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Returning thanks, Professor Peren said the college was only too pleased to do all in its power to co-operate with the branch for the betterment of the industry. The college was for the use of farmers, and so apiarists were entitled to use the apiary.

Stating that beekeeping was the subsidiary industry of agriculture, Professor Peren went on to say that the more such industries were encouraged the better it would be for the country. It was very dangerous to have "all our eggs in one basket," and so encouragement should be given to the honey and poultry industries to expand. There was not a very great demand for a beekeeping course at the college, and so it was that none had been as yet introduced, although there was a small apiary there. This apiary had originally come into being in order that it might be of use should a course be introduced, and also in case any students taking the poultry course should desire to use it. If ever it was considered necessary to found a beekeeping course, the speaker assured his hearers that he would be pleased to put the matter before his council. In conclusion, Professor Peren wished the conference every success. He then declared the conference opened.

Several speakers thanked Professor Peren for his remarks, stressing the fact that he and the college had done much to further the industry.

A letter was read by Mr E. A. Field, a vice-president, from the Dominion president of the National Beekeepers' Association (Mr F. Robbins), commending the branch on the enterprise it had shown in holding the convention.

"The Marketing of Honey" was the title of the subject chosen by Mr W. W. Nelson, the chairman of the Honey Control Board, for his address.

"In the course of the past twelve months," stated the speaker, "considerable progress has been accomplished in the direction of applying a policy of orderly marketing of honey under a measure of State control. The position as it stood at the time of the last conference in Timaru was not entirely satisfactory, due mainly to the fact that while the Govern-

ment had acceded to the request of the beekeepers for a reorganisation of marketing methods along lines that would give a payout from the pooled returns of the export and local market, there still remained the vitally important question of selling against the Honey Division of the Internal Marketing Department. Those selling outside the division were obtaining a payable price made possible only by reason of the control exercised by the division over the bulk of the production sent forward voluntarily by suppliers. These suppliers had to bear the full weight of the overhead costs of a division that was rendering indispensable service to the entire industry. The Honey Control Board considered it to be its duty to direct the attention of the Government to the unsatisfactory position that was causing considerable anxiety to the great majority of commercial honey producers. At the annual conference of the association in Timaru last June, the board brought forward certain proposals which incorporated a method designed with the object of establishing a more equable and fair distribution of the cost of extending the sale of honey both in New Zealand and overseas, and in the general development of the industry.

"The proposals of the board were endorsed almost unanimously at the annual conference, and regulations embodying them have since been formally applied by the Government. It will be noted that the main feature of the regulations is the $\frac{1}{2}$ d per lb. stamp system, now required on all honey sold outside the Marketing Division, excepting that sold direct by producers to consumers at the apiary that is not advertised by way of advertisement, placard or circular.

FINANCE.

"The position at the time the present board members came into office was as follows:—Of the original total obligation to the Treasury of £9245 there was outstanding a sum of £5142 9s 2d. The original amount included £6000 sterling

loaned by the Government some years ago for the purpose of securing for the industry the goodwill of Imperial Bee brand following on the collapse of the late Honey Producers' Association. The view of the board was that the circumstances under which this debt was incurred, together with the terms of repayment, were such that the board considered itself justified in requesting the Treasury to reconsider the whole position. Following a discussion of the subject by the board with senior officers of the Treasury, the Department of Horticulture, and the Internal Marketing Division, the board submitted certain proposals to the Government and I am now happy to be able to announce that these proposals have been agreed to. The position now is that the Government is prepared to accept the offer made by the board of £1714 3s 9d in full settlement of the outstanding debt of £5142 9s 2d. This, you will note, represents a reduction of two-thirds of the amount owing. The generous action of the Government in this matter will, I feel sure, be fully appreciated by the producers. It means that honey sent forward by suppliers to the Internal Marketing Department will no longer be loaded with a levy to liquidate a debt incurred at a time when the industry was in a state bordering on chaos.

EXTENT OF PRODUCTION.

“In the general interest of producers, it is of the utmost importance that your control marketing organisation should know the actual quantity of honey available to meet the market requirements. Without this information the Marketing Department cannot function with the maximum of efficiency. I strongly urge you, therefore, to comply promptly with any request that may be made by the department for information concerning your crop returns.

“In conclusion, let me say that the Honey Control Board is satisfied that the honey section of the Internal Marketing Department is deserving of all the support and confidence of the pro-

the support and confidence of the producers. I do not know what the total returns will be from the division to last season's suppliers, but I do know they will be infinitely better than those obtained by the beekeepers of any other honey exporting country."

Asked if the Marketing Department intended to take steps to ensure that all honey sold commercially bore the Government seal, Mr Nelson said he felt that this would be done. The regulations provided for a fine of £200 for an infringement. He was of the opinion that eventually the department would send officers around the country to detect breaches of the regulations.

On the motion of the chairman, a vote of thanks was passed to Mr Nelson by acclamation. The conference then adjourned for lunch.