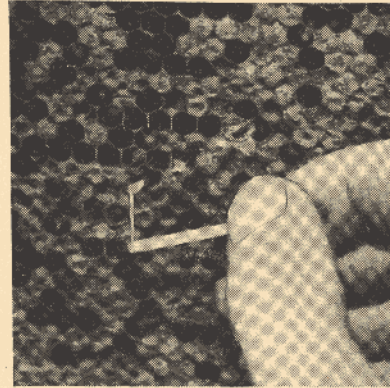


# OBSERVATIONS on AMERICAN BROOD DISEASE

By C. G. ROPE,  
Honey Grader, Auckland



A simple test for American brood disease. Diagnosis is confirmed when a sticky thread from a decomposing larva adheres to matchstick probe.

1. Mr Braybrook's remarks in the preceding article holds true in the districts with which I am familiar in the Auckland Province. They no doubt apply over most of New Zealand with the possible exception of the southern districts where there are differences brought about by the relative inactivity of wax moths, and the abnormal number of wild colonies due to the thousands of old hollow willow trees and hollow concrete power poles which are widespread.
2. It is generally accepted by observant authorities that escalation of the disease is fastest in cold districts. This is so in New Zealand and there is a parallel on the North American continent.
3. Though any colony of bees can become infected with *Bacillus Larvae* (B.L.) I have never seen the disease personally in a so called "abandoned" apiary, nor in a wild hive, nor in a box hive and I have destroyed hundreds. Other people have found B.L. in these places, of course, but the point I am stressing is that the occurrence must be very rare, at least in the districts where I am competent to express an opinion.
4. Although infection can be caught by colonies robbing infected honey from discarded honey-pots, I have never seen B.L. in any of the many colonies in close proximity to the largest rubbish tips in New Zealand where there is a continuously exposed "face" at which the bees can be seen working.
5. I know of entire counties heavily stocked with bees which have been entirely free of B.L. over the past 10 years.
6. In my experience, therefore, **most** infection is **propagated** within registered apiaries by **beekeepers themselves**, and in his article Mr Braybrook has described how this happens.
7. I have seen numerous instances where B.L. has been **completely eliminated** from apiaries which had previously been extensively diseased. How was this done? By cutting one's losses and burning without compassion **ALL** the infected bees and combs, and the equipment which could not be sterilised by scorching with a flame and later painting over inside and out, or by immersion in boiling paraffin wax.

8. On the other hand, I have seen beekeepers who have learnt a measure of control but try to salvage queen bees or combs, or fail to carry out thorough sterilisation of ALL their equipment that has come into contact with B.L. or who mismanage their apiaries following initial infections, and who virtually "live" with the disease all their lives.
9. I have met **commercial** beekeepers who did not know that honey in new comb in the supers on diseased hives contained B.L. spores proportionate to the degree of infection in the broodnest!
10. The spores of B.L. have been shown to remain viable for up to 25 years or more. I know of one case where an unsterilised storey was salvaged by a beekeeper from a colony destroyed 10 years previously by an inspector. The storey was given to another beekeeper as a "present". Soon after it was restocked with bees, infection showed up in the colony. No disease had been found in that district for a number of years prior to this event.
11. I have seen 200 colonies wiped right out by B.L. in four years on an isolated island! It transpired that the beekeeper may have tried to "cure" the initial infection with sulpha drugs. The following year another beekeeper restocked the island with 300 healthy colonies in disease-free equipment. These have been there for four years now, and not one has developed B.L.
12. I know of another instance where 200 out of 600 hives became infected from a minor initial outbreak which it is believed the beekeeper attempted to control by use of drugs. **Drugs inhibit growth of the Bacillus, but they do NOT destroy the spores.** That beekeeper, too, is out of business! Who will be next?

## CURRENT PRICES

for

## BEESWAX

If you have pure, clean beeswax take this opportunity  
of cashing in on today's top market prices.

Don't delay — write to us **NOW!**  
stating the quantity available

**SHARLAND & COMPANY LIMITED**

Taylor's Road, Morningside, AUCKLAND