

of honey and beeswax. In passing, I would venture to suggest its encouragement by temporary protective measures, and, until the industry was established, admitting free the necessary hives, fittings, &c. I have just imported from America a number of hives of a simplified, improved, and workable pattern, with the necessary extractors, &c., for carrying on the industry, and was somewhat surprised to find duty charged on them of 15s. 6d. *ad valorem*, which I have paid under protest. This, I would submit, should not be charged until the industry had become established, and it would pay to adapt the necessary machinery for the production of the hives, fittings, &c., which would enable New Zealand to compete in the production of honey and beeswax. The most important point to which I wish to refer, however, is the introduction of the Italian (Ligurian) bee, which has great advantages over the black bee we already have. Their introduction has been attempted by the Acclimatization Society and others without success, probably from the want of systematic and proper proceeding, combined with want of knowledge on the subject. These bees can be obtained in America—probably in San Francisco; and the question I would ask is as to whether the Commission would be in a position to adopt or recommend the expedient of sending such as myself or any other person to that country to bring them here. It is an introduction of such a nature that a private individual could hardly undertake it unaided with success in a business point of view; as the circumstance of the introduction having the effect of Italianizing probably the greater part of the bees in the colony in time, irrespective of the efforts of the original introducer, and in that way would probably prevent such individual from being recouped the outlay, an outlay in which all would participate. An expenditure of, say, some £500, properly managed, would unfailingly, in my opinion, introduce these very desirable insects. I shall be happy to furnish any information required on the subject. I must ask you to excuse the haste with which I have had to introduce this subject to your notice.

I have, &c.,

C. T. WREN.

No. 22.

Evidence of CHARLES THOMAS WREN, taken by Messrs. Commissioners Tinne and Burns at the Minister's Rooms, Customhouse Buildings, Auckland, on 30th April, 1880.

My name is *Charles Thomas Wren*, nurseryman and seedsman, at Remuera and Queen Street, Auckland. I have been over twenty years in Auckland. Referring to my letter *re* bee-culture, I have been engaged in bee-culture for over thirteen years; and this culture can be carried on to very great advantage in this district, and will pay well as a business. It would be of immense advantage to introduce the Ligurian bee, as it is a hardier insect, more prolific, and produces much more honey than the ordinary bee, and is much more manageable. These insects would extract honey from red clover and many other flowers which the other bees are unable to reach; they would also fertilize the red clover, thereby giving much more security of obtaining seed. I am so convinced that these bees can be successfully introduced into this country that I would be quite prepared to do the work upon being paid my expenses, and a fair amount for my trouble if I succeeded in bringing these bees to the country: that is, to have my expenses paid in any case, but to forego any further remuneration should I not succeed. Referring to the statement in my letter that "hives and fittings ought to be admitted duty-free for a time," I now find that these articles can be manufactured in Auckland, since it has been shown that the industry was likely to progress and become of importance. I also find that they can be manufactured at as cheap a rate as they can be landed here. A stimulant to this industry would be given by the introduction of the Ligurian bee. I think it would tend to the advancement of bee-culture if a duty was imposed upon beeswax and honey, merely as a temporary expedient. I will endeavour to furnish the Commission with further documentary evidence on this subject in a few days.

C. T. WREN.

Any person going to San Francisco for these insects would require to start on his journey not later than the month of September in order to secure the queen bees at the proper season; but the month of August would be better.

No. 23.

Mr. C. T. WREN to the Commissioners on Native Industries.

GENTLEMEN,—

Mount Hobson, Remuera, Auckland, 1st May, 1880.

As affording some idea of the importance of bee-culture in America—and it is believed that we have quite as good country as the average of America for this industry—I would mention that one publication alone (there are several) has 4,373 subscribers, 200 advertisers, and 680 contributors; that, during the year 1879, one establishment alone (there are, perhaps, twenty of them) for the production of hives, fittings, and bee-material, sold 3,632 hives, 133,349 brood-frames for sections, 45,314 brood-frames, 408,978 sections, and 10,284 lb. of comb-foundation, besides large quantities of other fittings, Italian bees, beeswax, &c. I make extract of a report from an apiary in New York State for 1879, as follows: "Taking it altogether, the season has been an unfavourable one for surplus honey; however, we have obtained in box-honey 2,909 lb., and 572 lb. extracted honey—making 3,481 lb. in all, or 58 lb. per stock on 60 stocks or hives. This is the lightest yield we have had during seven years, with one exception—namely, 1876, when the average yield was 50 lb. per hive. With the above yield the apiarist went into winter quarters with 100 colonies, thus showing an increase of 40 colonies. The yield on the average of each colony is as follows: In 1873, 80 lb.; in 1874, a fraction of a pound less than 100 lb.; in 1875, a little over 106 lb.; in 1876, 50 lb.; in 1877, a little less than 167 lb.; in 1878, 71 lb.; in 1879, 58 lb.: making an average yield for the past seven years of 90 lb. per hive. This honey sold at an average of 10d. per pound, which would represent, on apiaries of 100 colonies each, the sum of £375 for honey alone."

One practical man can do all the work required to be done with 100 stocks or colonies of bees. There is certainly room here in New Zealand for 500 such apiaries. But the results are very largely indebted to the Italian (Ligurian) bee, without which the successful proportions there shown could