

apiaries that were small last year have developed to such an extent that they now come under the heading of commercial apiaries.

The honey crop in the majority of the districts was again a light one, particularly in Canterbury, where the climatic conditions were adverse to a good honey-flow. In the Southland District, however, beekeepers were favoured with another successful season, the returns even exceeding those of last year.

A further decrease in box hives is noticeable. Farmers are beginning to realize more and more that box hives are not profitable, and in many districts they have been entirely eliminated. More efficient steps are now being taken by beekeepers to keep foul-brood under control. This is no doubt largely due to the fact that the advice given by the officers of the Division, both by letter and practical demonstration, is being taken advantage of to a great extent.

Several demonstrations and lectures on beekeeping matters have been given by the Instructors in their respective districts, and were largely attended on each occasion. These demonstrations bring the officers in close contact with beekeepers in different localities, and produce conditions which ensure mutual good feeling; they also afford opportunities of teaching practical methods of manipulation.

The local honorary apiary inspectors appointed to assist the Instructors are doing very good work, and at small expense to the Department. Their assistance is of great value to the beekeeping industry generally in the better control of diseases, &c.

Export of Honey.

According to the Customs figures, 1,572 cwt. of honey, valued at £3,554, was exported during the year. This is a decrease of 818 cwt. as compared with the previous year's figures, brought about by the poor season experienced, lack of shipping, and also by the high prices prevailing locally.

All the honey is graded by the Department's Graders before shipment. There is a marked improvement in the manner in which the honey is now being got up for export, producers realizing that it is unwise to submit consignments unless the quality and packing are good. Owing to the price of tinplate having increased considerably, due to shortage of supplies, there is a tendency on the part of a few producers to forward honey in second-hand tins. This is very undesirable, as unsuitable packages greatly depreciate the price of the contents.

The following are the quantities of honey graded by each Instructor during the year: Auckland, 522 cwt.; Wellington, 640 cwt.; Christchurch, 72 cwt.; Dunedin, 192 cwt.

Ruakura Apiary.

As mentioned in my last report, the supervision of the apiary at the Ruakura Farm of Instruction has been handed over to this Division. During the year experiments have been conducted with several different makes of hives to ascertain their advantages and disadvantages, and daily temperatures have been taken, &c. One innovation that is worthy of special mention is the placing of each hive on a sheet of asbestos slate. This adds greatly to the appearance of the apiary, and facilitates the cutting of the grass round the hives, besides being a saving in labour. Other experiments are to be undertaken next season. The apiary is under the charge of Mr. A. B. Trythall, who has a wide knowledge of beekeeping in New Zealand, and who takes a keen interest in experimental work. During the season a number of cadets gained the Department's certificate in beekeeping.

PUBLICATIONS.

The increasing demand for literature on the many phases of fruitgrowing, &c., has necessitated the writing of special articles for the *Journal*, and also the preparation and revision of bulletins, which work is of considerable magnitude.

STAFF.

The work of the Division has been interfered with to a large extent by enlistments of officers for active service from both the field and clerical staff. A large number of the temporary employees at the horticultural stations have also gone to the front.

In February last Mr. W. H. Taylor, Manager of Arataki Horticultural Station, was promoted to the position of Horticulturist to the Department, with headquarters at Wellington. This was a very necessary appointment, and Mr. Taylor's long experience of horticultural matters should prove of great help in carrying out the work of the Division. I have much pleasure in reporting that all officers have, under the adverse circumstances, carried out their duties in a satisfactory manner.