

the conducting of examinations in fruit-culture and the issue of certificates in this subject. This movement will undoubtedly prove of ultimate benefit to the fruit industry in the Dominion, particularly with respect to the youth of to-day who are destined to become the orchardists of the future.

The fourth Loder Cup competition for the best collection of New Zealand native plants took place in Wellington in January last, and was awarded to Messrs. Thos. Waugh and Sons, of Lower Hutt, Wellington, whose display of trees, shrubs, and herbaceous plants was a very comprehensive and interesting one.

ORCHARD REGISTRATION AND ORCHARD-TAX.

The total number of registered orchards in the Dominion now stands at 6,293, of which 2,883 are taxable and 3,410 non-taxable. A sum of £1,687 was collected in orchard-tax, and this amount, less the cost of collection, was paid over to the New Zealand Fruitgrowers' Federation, Ltd., on behalf of the growers, to be utilized in furthering the interests of the fruitgrowing industry generally.

Fireblight-tax was also collected in six commercial fruitgrowing districts during the year, and the proceeds, less cost of collection, were handed over to the fireblight committees concerned, to be expended in their respective districts for purposes directly or indirectly associated with fireblight.

REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION OF NURSERIES.

This work has proceeded satisfactorily, the bulk of nursery stock being well up to standard and clean and free from disease. An increase is recorded in the number of nurseries registered, the total being 686, as against 659 for the previous year. The sum of £684 10s. was collected in nursery-registration fees.

THE BEEKEEPING INDUSTRY.

The season of 1932-33 varied considerably throughout the principal honey-producing districts in the Dominion. While the honey crop in the Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Otago, and Southland Districts was a good average one, that in Auckland, Marlborough, Westland, and Canterbury was only light to medium. No improvement is yet noticeable in the marketing conditions for honey, prices still showing a downward tendency. Notwithstanding the unsettled state of the industry, it continues to attract attention. Extensions are being made to established apiaries, and a steady increase in the sale of bee supplies is reported. Valuable assistance has again been rendered by a number of experienced beekeepers in the capacity of honorary Apiary Inspectors, these services being given free of charge to the Department.

Further tests were carried out for the purpose of ascertaining the value of chlorine as a sterilizing agent for combs infected with foul-brood. The experiment in connection with the forwarding of package bees from the North to the South Island was also advanced a further stage during the year.

There was a further reduction in the quantity of honey received at the various grading stores, the total number of cases graded for export being 2,500.

The total number of registered apiaries in the Dominion is now 7,245, comprising 111,910 colonies of bees.

STAFF.

With the many and varied activities coming within the scope of the Division, together with the increasing demands for advice and information covering a wide field of operations, a busy year has been experienced. I have to thank the staff as a whole for the loyal and efficient service rendered during the year.
