

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

BEING EXTRACTS FROM THE FORMAL APPLICATIONS OF THE CLUBS AND REPORTS OF THE DEPUTATIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATIONS.

(NOTE.—For convenient reference the Racing, Hunt, and Trotting Clubs have been arranged in geographical order in their respective classes.)

RACING CLUBS.

WAIPAPAKAURI RACING CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Waipapakauri. The club was formed twenty years ago, and has been registered since 1906. The last meeting was held in December, 1913. A list of the present members of the club and a copy of the club's last balance-sheet have been forwarded. The racecourse is a good one, and is perfectly level. The circumference is 7 furlongs. This club holds a legal and permanent lease of the racecourse. The accommodation consists of buildings for the sale of light refreshments, &c., for the convenience of the public. The committee contemplates the erection of a grandstand at an early date. At present the course is not fenced on the inside, merely flagged, but the committee has decided to fence the course, and this will be done as soon as possible. The nearest club using the totalizator is at Whangarei, two hundred miles distant. The nearest clubs not using the totalizator are at Houhora, over thirty miles to the north, and Kawakawa, over one hundred and twenty miles to the south. Situated as our club is in the centre of the Mangonui County, in the Kaitaia district, a district which is rapidly forging ahead, and is without doubt destined to become a densely populated area, comprising as it does thousands of acres of good land eminently suited for horse-breeding, the granting of a totalizator license would be an incalculable benefit to the breeding of horses in this district. It would also be highly appreciated by a very large population who appreciate clean sport. A glance at the map will show the tremendous area north of Whangarei, which at present is unfavoured by the benefit of a totalizator license. If a license is granted we intend to pursue a progressive policy, and as the finances of the club increase under the benefit of the license, improvement to racecourse and accommodation, and also increase in prize-money, will certainly be made, in keeping with the financial status of the club. The prize-money for this year's meeting is £150.

By the Deputation.—At our last meeting we charged 1s. to go on to the course, and we took nearly £50 in gate-money. That is exclusive of members and their families, who are admitted free. We have a membership of nearly sixty. We had really good fields, and practically all the horses were local horses. The chief point on which we base our claim for a license is the enormous extent of country in the North which is by no means developed, and which is going rapidly ahead. There is no totalizator permit whatever north of Whangarei. The people up here are very fond of sport, and they have absolutely no opportunity of attending a totalizator meeting. Very few can afford the time that it takes to get to the nearest totalizator meeting. The club has decided, in the event of a permit being granted, to fence the course right round with posts and rails in time for the next meeting, and they will also make a start on a grandstand and proper judge's box. The club will guarantee to do that work. Our course is held on a ten-years lease with a right of renewal. Our Cup race is run over a distance of a mile and a half, and one race on our programme is reserved exclusively for horses bred and owned in the Mangonui County. This meeting and the meeting at Kawakawa are the only meetings held in the whole of the electorate. Both Waipapakauri and Kawakawa are centres of population. No doubt it is a bit disappointing to you to come here and see no appointments at all, but we have had a tremendous struggle to carry on and give decent stakes. In this electorate we have double the population of any electorate in New Zealand, for the simple reason that we have as many Maoris as Europeans in it. We live a long way from Kawakawa, and it takes a person five days to go to Kawakawa and return here. A license at Kawakawa would be of very little use to any one in the far North because of the time it takes to go and come back here.

KAWAKAWA RACING CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Kawakawa. The club was formed forty-five years ago, and is a registered one. The last meeting was held in January, 1914. A list of the present members of the club and a copy of the last balance-sheet have been forwarded. The circumference of the course is 5 furlongs. The tenure is leasehold, being a yearly lease. The accommodation consists of a grandstand. With a totalizator permit we shall be in a position to make a 6-furlong track, and also to secure a twenty-one-years lease of the ground, and erect up-to-date appointments. The course is not fenced on the inside. The nearest club using the totalizator is forty miles distant. The nearest clubs not using the totalizator are at Waipapakauri, about ninety miles distant, and Ngunguru, about sixty miles distant. We have held a meeting annually on the 29th January for the past forty-five years. Kawakawa is the centre of a large district,