

SECTION 2.—APPLICATION BY TROTTING CONFERENCE FOR EIGHTY EXTRA DAYS

289. Clarity demands that at this point we should deal with the application of the New Zealand Trotting Conference for licences in respect of eighty additional days. At the moment licences for eighty days are granted to clubs whose programmes are exclusively made up of trotting events. There are, however, as we have mentioned, racing clubs in the South Island which consistently include trotting races on their programmes. On the basis of eight races to a day, these races, so interposed in racing programmes, aggregate $15\frac{1}{2}$ days, so that there can be said to be $95\frac{1}{2}$ days of trotting races in New Zealand.

290. Beyond question, the sport of trotting has achieved a high degree of popularity. One witness in an excellent, if not the best, position to express an opinion, said that in the early days of the century the standard of the trotting sport was low, but that in 1912 there was a change, and from that date to the present time there has been a continuing improvement in the sport. This is undeniable. There are localities where there is no trotting and no apparent desire for the establishment of the trotting sport, but there are no localities in which there are trotting meetings to-day where the popularity of those meetings has not increased; while there are localities so favourably disposed towards trotting that the racing clubs have found it advantageous to put trotting races on their programmes. In two localities to which reference has previously been made the racing clubs became moribund, but on conversion into trotting clubs, one (Methven) became highly prosperous. There are thus indications of a possibility that trotting may in some localities supplant racing in popular favour. This tendency has been, and is being, assisted and fostered by the alertness shown in the administration of the trotting sport and by the settled determination of its administrators to do everything possible in the interests of the sport and for the comfort and welfare of its patrons. Nowhere was complacency and self-satisfaction manifested by any of the administrators of the trotting sport, as it was on occasion by racing administrators.

291. The increased and increasing interest in the sport of trotting, taken in conjunction with the characteristics which have been given to it by the Trotting Conference, has produced difficulties by reason of the limited number of days in respect of which totalizator licences can be granted. These difficulties are of two characters. The first, and the more readily understandable, is the dissatisfaction provoked by the restricted opportunities for competition caused by the very limited number of totalizator licences granted in particular localities, such as Southland, where enthusiasm for trotting is both widespread and keen, and where, in consequence, many trotting-horses are bred and maintained