

fence along the inner side of course, but it is fenced on the outer side for a third or more of the distance round. The public are kept off the course, and said fence protects them. The nearest club using the totalizator is at Whangarei, forty-five miles distant. The nearest clubs not using the totalizator are the Wairoa Racing Club, thirty-five to forty miles distant, and the Helensville Racing Club, sixty miles distant. Our club is situated in the Otamatea County. The course is in Matakoho, about the centre of the county. We are a very representative club, and are supported by residents of all the surrounding districts for many miles. We find that owing to not having a totalizator permit we are seriously handicapped. The district is growing. In a very few years the railway-line will be completed to Paparoa. The district adjoins Matakoho, the North Island Main Trunk line being the line in question. The line will be the means of greatly increasing the attendance of the public, also of horse-owners being able to get horses to and from the course easily. The buildings on the course are of recent erection, and have cost well on for £100.

By the Deputation.—Our first claim for a permit is based on the fact that we are the only club that has been racing continuously in the North Auckland district for thirty-five years. There is nothing of a proprietary nature about our club. We get no assistance from outside sources. All our funds have been provided by the settlers of the district for the love of the sport and to provide an opportunity to try their horses. People have brought their horses here from Whangarei and Dargaville to try them when there was no other meeting north of Auckland. We have not much to show in the way of course and appointments after thirty years of existence, but we have been looking forward to the time when the railway would be opposite to us, and when we should be in a position to give better stakes and to get horses from Auckland. We are now negotiating for a course nearer the railway, and if we succeed we have no hesitation in saying we shall be in a better position to race than either the Whangarei or Dargaville clubs. We think we have a prior claim to a permit to any club north of Auckland. Our club has been fighting under difficulties ever since it started. Our district is becoming more thickly populated. The population in 1911 was 3,548. The unimproved value of the district is £571,304, and the capital value £949,386. The number of occupiers of 1 acre and upwards in 1911 was 624, and the total area of land in cultivation was 114,715 acres. The number of sheep in April, 1912, was 63,410; horses, 2,716; cattle, 24,376; and pigs, 2,757. As to the tenure of our present course, the club has the right to purchase the property at £20 per acre within a period of twenty-one years, and we have decided to exercise that right. We have proved that we can breed horses in this part of the country, and we consider we should have the privilege of trying the horses we breed. We have always had the very best of police reports in regard to our racing. Our meetings are run purely and simply for sport. We have never had an accident on our course or any nasty spill. The course is not all it might be, but it will be improved if we are put in a good financial position. If we get a permit we can say that at least £1,000 will be spent round the course in the next two years. We give over £100 in stakes now. Our club has always been sound. Practically every member of the club is a farmer directly or indirectly, and is here to stay. The advent of the railway makes this place a half-way stop between Auckland and Whangarei or Kawakawa, whichever may be the racing centre.

HELENSVILLE RACING CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Helensville. The club was formed about forty years ago, and is registered. The last meeting was held in May, 1914. A copy of the last balance-sheet has been forwarded. The course is perfectly flat, and the making of one of the best in New Zealand. The circumference of the course is 8 furlongs. The tenure is leasehold. There is accommodation for thousands of people. The course is not fenced on the inside. The nearest clubs using the totalizator are Avondale, thirty miles to the south, and Whangarei, one hundred miles to the north, and none to the east and west. The nearest clubs not using the totalizator are Otamatea, about forty miles distant, and Northern Wairoa, about sixty miles away. From the first formation of the club until the bookmakers were wiped out we had most successful meetings, and as the district is going ahead we feel assured that we only require a totalizator permit to run them again with success. The course is perfectly flat, and has the makings of one of the best in New Zealand, while the elevation in front forms a natural grandstand which would accommodate thousands of people; and we are prepared, in the event of our getting a totalizator permit, to fence the inside of the course and to erect suitable buildings. The railway-line runs right past the property, and in the past the Department has allowed the train to stop opposite the course. At present there is not a totalizator permit in the whole of the Kaipara Electorate.

By the Deputation.—Helensville is one of the oldest racing districts north of Auckland. We started racing in 1864, and we continued successfully until the curtailment of the totalizator. This is a district which has gone in for breeding, and a good many horses have been turned out through this little meeting, but that has been stopped through the loss of our permit. We have a course which could be made second to none in the Dominion. It is a course which always gave fast times when in good order. The fastest time in the Auckland Province was made here. We are prepared to fence in the course and put it in order if we get a permit. The course belongs to Mr. Hand, and it is at the disposal of the club on any terms that we wish. We held two meetings without the bookmakers, but we could not make a financial success of it. The course proper is 1 mile 2 chains in circumference. The course is not fenced on either side. The club has never paid for the use of the course in the past, and we have the word of the owner that we will not be called on to pay anything in the future. There is no lease in existence at the present time, but the owner is prepared to sell or lease the course to the club as we wish.