

the number of members was about forty. With the ever-increasing population to the north of Waitara, and, further, owing to the fact that a "no-tote" club existed and raced at Waihi, some six miles to the north of Waitara, and, like this club, became *non est* when the new Act came into force, the members of which would become members of this club, if allowed a permit certainly a membership of at least eighty could be counted on. A copy of the club's last balance-sheet has been forwarded. The course is situated at Lepperton Junction, that being a most convenient place for the public and owners, &c. The course is just short of 7 furlongs. The property is of an area of 45½ acres, is freehold, and the only amount due on it is that shown on the balance-sheet owing to the Bank of New Zealand. As will be seen, the buildings have almost been written off, and this would have been done in its entirety had the club raced another year, when the proposal to put new structures up would have been gone on with. As it stands, the property, without buildings, is worth £40 per acre. There is a grandstand, stables, and other outbuildings, which, however, are now in a state of disrepair owing to the fact that it was the club's intention to erect new buildings entirely. There is a fence right round the race-track on the inside. The distance from nearest places at which race meetings are held by clubs using the totalizator are—New Plymouth, seven miles, Stratford, twenty miles south, and Opunake and Egmont Clubs. The total number of race-days allocated to the whole of Taranaki is eleven. Prior to the passing-out of the Patea and this club there were thirteen days' racing in Taranaki. The club would like to impress on you that Taranaki, with its ever-growing population, especially to the north of Waitara, enjoys such meetings of a picnic nature as were provided by this club. We used our best endeavour to have clean sport, and until the position was forced on us we scrupulously kept the bookmaking and speling fraternity off the property, and for the whole of the time we held race meetings we went to the expense of retaining the services of the late James Waldron to keep undesirables off the course so that patrons ran no risk of being either taken down or robbed by light-fingered gentry; hence our being able to call it a picnic meeting for the country folk. It cannot be said by any stretch of imagination that Taranaki is overburdened with race-days. In fact, we venture to say that even with the thirteen days that existed previous to the finding of the Commission no one ever suggested that there was too much racing in the province.

By the Deputation.—We have done nothing to the course since we stopped racing, as we did not feel justified in spending money on it in the circumstances. We have spent about £30 in the last twelve months in putting up boundary-fencing. The course is let for grazing at £1 per acre, which brings in just sufficient to pay our interest charges and pay for maintenance. We owe about £288 by way of overdraft, which is guaranteed by the trustees. We are a comparatively old-established club, and we do not like the idea of being knocked out, especially as we hold the freehold of the ground. We lost our permit under the old Commission. We are a fairly good sporting community. In Waitara there are about sixteen of us with from twenty to twenty-four horses, and we keep between ten and twelve horses in training. We think it is hard to have to take them away to be raced. There is no other club between here and Te Kuiti to the north, a distance of 105 miles. Waitara is the town that serves the northern country. The Te Kuiti Club came into existence when we went out. We were the second club in Taranaki to give £100 for a Cup race. At our last meeting we gave, roughly, £405 in stakes, the £100 Cup being the biggest stake. Ours was just a big picnic meeting for the whole of the country to the north. People came from as far north as Mokau. A fair average of the money put through the machine would be a sum between £3,000 and £4,000. We were in the unfortunate position of not having a public holiday for our meeting. A point in our favour is that our course is right alongside a railway-junction. We do not race for the benefit of stables and hotels in the town. This is a most convenient place for the whole countryside. The course could be enlarged by acquiring more property on the northern side. The land would cost us on an average £40 to £50 per acre to buy. We would require another 10 or 12 acres.

PATEA RACING CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Patea. The club was re-formed about 1889, and is registered. The last meeting was held in April, 1912. 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 8 furlongs. The tenure is leasehold, with eight years to run. The accommodation consists of grandstand, jockeys' room, totalizator-house; stewards', Press, secretary's, and clerk of scales' rooms; judge's box, and twelve stalls for horses. The racing and training tracks are securely fenced on both sides. The nearest clubs using the totalizator are ten miles to the south and twenty miles to the north. The nearest club not using the totalizator is the Egmont-Wanganui Hunt Club, forty miles south. After having had a totalizator permit for so long we look upon the loss of the permit as a very great hardship. This meeting has been looked forward to by residents both in and outside of this district as a very pleasant outing, being the only meeting held on Easter Monday on this coast. Meetings such as we have conducted here are very necessary as a stimulus to the breeding of horses, as in many cases the excellence of a horse would never have been known had it not been for the smaller meetings, which act as a nursery for the bringing-out of the racehorse.

By the Deputation.—This is one of the oldest clubs in the North Island. The reason this club was struck out of the list and Waverley left in was largely because at present it has only a leasehold course. We think we have a very just claim to be reinstated now that the opportunity to put us back presents itself. Naturally the course is not at present in very good condition, as it has not been used for a number of years. After losing our license we ran one meeting and lost £300. The day was wet. We had no bookmakers. Just prior to losing the permit we spent £380 on improvements, so the course could quite easily be made a very good one. At our last