

from the nearest racecourse, and we have bad roads and no railways. This is a very large and growing district. We have over 200 or 300 acres planted in fruit-trees. If we do not provide our young people with some amusement they will simply flock to the towns. If a permit is granted we have two hundred people here who will guarantee any expenditure on improvements that may be deemed necessary. With a permit we would make our meeting a real good day's sport.

CLIFDEN HACK RACING CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Clifden. This club has been in existence thirty years, and was first the centre of sheep stations—viz., Wairaki, Mount Linton, Birchwood, Merrivale, Clifden, Blackmount, and Otahu; and since the Clifden Estate was resumed by the Government the races have been held here continuously on New Year's Day. The club is registered, and held its last meeting on the 1st January, 1914. A list of the present members of the club and a copy of the club's last balance-sheet have been forwarded. The course is on the Clifden Domain, and is 9 furlongs in circumference. There is erected on the course a secretary's room, weighing-room, and jockeys' room. The nearest club using the totalizer is at Riverton, forty miles distant. The nearest clubs not using the totalizer are at Wairio, twenty-four miles distant; Otautau Hack Club and Birchwood Hunt Club, twenty-two miles distant. We may point out the distance from nearest railway terminus and publichouse is only eight miles; the spot is a holiday centre; there is a terrace which forms a natural grandstand where the public can stand or sit and see the races. We have always spent any surplus money in improving the course and providing accommodation for the public. The Southland Racing Club specially recommends that totalizer licenses be granted to this and to the Otautau Hack Racing Club.

By the Deputation.—We feel we are as far away in the backblocks as it is possible to get. At the present time Government surveyors are in at the back of the racecourse opening up a block of 20,000 acres, which we hope will bring in settlers who will join in making our meeting a further success. We have found it a struggle to make ends meet, but we have always been liberally patronized by the public, and our gate takings are double the takings of any other hack meeting in Southland. Our nominations are double those of any other hack meeting in Southland. With a permit we could enlarge our stakes and make our meeting one of the best picnic meetings in Southland. We have an attendance of just on a thousand each year. We have always done our level best to keep our racing clean. Ours is purely a backblocks picnic meeting, and is not a meeting run by the publican or storekeeper. We have a course of our own, and without outside assistance we have spent £190 on it, in addition to working-bees. Our district extends right to Milford Sound. The course is on a domain reserve which is under the control of trustees, who are all members of the racing club.

OTAUTAU HACK RACING CLUB.

The headquarters of the club are at Otautau. The club was first established about 1883, and for several years had a totalizer permit. The club is registered with the New Zealand Racing Conference. The last meeting was held in January, 1914. A list of the present members of the club and a copy of the club's last balance-sheet have been forwarded. In regard to a racecourse, the club have arranged to purchase a suitable property at Otautau in the event of a totalizer permit being granted. At present the races are held yearly on paddocks placed at the disposal of the club by farmers in the locality. The nearest club using the totalizer is at Wairio, twelve miles distant. The nearest club not using the totalizer is Birchwood Hunt, a local club. We have been continuously in existence for the last thirty years. Previous to 1888 we had a permit to use the totalizer, but unfortunately, owing to the depression that was passing through the colony at that time, the permit was allowed to lapse by the committee that then had control. A few local breeders and enthusiastic sports of the Otautau district then took up the club and raced as a hack racing club, racing as such ever since in the hope of ultimately securing a permit. It seemed like hoping against hope for some years, owing to legislation having been enacted preventing the issue of any more permits. The club prospered to a certain extent for years until the bookmakers were abolished; since then it has been kept going by the people of Otautau and district by voluntary subscriptions. Having no legislative privileges there was consequently no earning-power. The Town of Otautau is the centre of one of the largest sporting districts in Southland, and has always contributed largely to the breeding of racehorses, and has produced many good performers in recent years, such as Magdala, winner of the Winter Cup, Christchurch, and a candidate for the New Zealand Cup this year; Red Earl, killed last year in National Hurdles; Daringdale, Homeward, Geralda, Buller, Cannonade, Peerless; Honest Tom, holder of New Zealand record for two miles and a half steeplechase (Beaufort Steeple, Christchurch—time, 5 minutes), and many others. As evidence of the resources of the district for horse-breeding, we may mention that the remount officers secured over forty horses for the Expeditionary Force from Otautau. We are one of the few hack clubs that continued to race after the abolition of the bookmakers, and as a matter of fact raised our stakes since the bookmakers ceased to exist. We have forwarded last year's programme for perusal. We believe we give the largest stake in the Dominion for a hack race meeting—certainly the largest in Southland. The Town of Otautau is easily the largest and most important town in the South not having a totalizer. It is the county town of Wallace, being the seat of the Wallace County Council; is a progressive centre, being the only town in Southland, excepting Invercargill and Gore, that has a telephone service from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., the number of telephone connections being somewhere in the vicinity of seventy. At the taking of last census Otautau showed the largest increase of population in the Dominion, the increase being over 33 per cent. The accommodation in the town is easily adequate for horses and visitors, there being three hotels and three of the largest livery-stables in South-