

141. Is it a joint-stock company?—Yes; decidedly it is.
142. But not a public company?—I do not know what you call a public company.
143. *The Chairman.*] It is a company under the Companies Act?—Yes.
144. *Mr. Hogg.*] Have the shareholders access to the books?—Decidedly, the same as in any other company. No shareholder could be refused if he wished to inspect the books. He can compel inspection of the books.
145. You have received entrance-fees from time to time?—That, I think, goes into the private affairs of the Association.
146. Do you publish an annual balance-sheet?—Decidedly.
147. Is it printed?—Yes, it is printed; I have no doubt you could get one from a discontented shareholder.
148. Is it circulated among the shareholders?—Decidedly.
149. How often do they meet?—Once a year.
150. Do they meet in one particular place?—Well, they hold their meetings in Wellington at present.
151. Are the meetings universally held in Wellington?—For three or four years they have met in Wellington; prior to that they were held at other places in the colony. Many of the shareholders in different parts of the colony had to be considered.
152. When was the last meeting held?—In October last.
153. Where?—In the Press Association board-room.
154. Were you present?—Yes, I was present.
155. Could you give us an idea how many were present, as near as you can?—There must have been a certain number to form a quorum.
156. Do you think there were twelve?—About that; possibly over that. For the last few years there has been more interest taken in the Association, and more members attended.
157. Could you give us an idea of the largest number?—I should say, twelve or fifteen. In order to induce them to come they are paid their travelling-expenses.
158. Who, the shareholders or the directors?—The shareholders. That was initiated by myself. We had a difficulty in getting them together, and I thought that persons giving their time to the business of the Association should be paid their steamer and hotel expenses.
159. You do not remember more than fifteen attending?—No. It is not easy to get men to leave their business and go about anywhere they may be called without their expenses being paid.
160. The directors are elected every year?—Every year. There are three evening and three morning papers represented on the directorate; that has been for some years. Prior to that there had been a preponderance of morning papers on the directorate.
161. That is the rule, is it—three evening papers and three morning papers?—It is so now: it has been so for three or four years. About five years ago that was brought about by the proprietors of evening papers, who were anxious that the evening papers should have as much power on the board as the morning papers.
162. Have you rules?—Yes, decidedly; articles of association.
163. Any other rules?—None outside the articles of association.
164. Books?—Only the same as any other company would have—a minute-book and books of accounts.
165. Three evening papers and three morning papers, you say, are on the board?—That is in the articles of association.
166. That is not a recent rule?—It has been so for four or five years.
167. The articles, have they been altered?—They have been remodelled; only once.
168. You do not remember how the system of entrance-fees came to be established?—No, I do not remember.
169. Do you recollect when you joined the Association first whether you received a circular embodying the objects of the Association? Do you think that a copy of that is still procurable?—I do not know whether it might be in the hands of any shareholder. It is sixteen years ago. I have not one.
170. You do not know whether you have a copy among your own documents and papers?—No; I am sure I have not.
171. Do you remember when you joined the directorate there was a schedule of entrance-fees?—I do not remember anything of the sort.
172. Since you have been connected with the directorate, do you know whether the entrance-fees have been altered frequently?—Not frequently. "Revised" would be the proper term. Some places have grown, other places have gone back: that would be simply the groundwork of it.
173. Do you remember a paper established by Mr. Clayton at Hastings?—Yes.
174. Do you recollect what entrance-fee he paid?—No. That must be seven or eight years ago.
175. Can you say whether it was £150?—I could not say. Mr. Atack may be able to inform you.
176. Can you say when it was altered whether it had an upward or a downward tendency?—I should say, upwards. Take, for instance, the addition to population in many places. If the principle of the addition to population is to be acknowledged, would you not say that the Thames should pay a higher fee than it paid twenty or thirty years ago?
177. Are entrance-fees regulated by population?—I think you are now asking me about what is matter for the directors. As a director, I do not feel called on to discuss that.
178. You may answer all my questions in the negative if you please?—I do not wish to be thought hostile to the Committee. I have gone further in the way of explanation than perhaps you might have expected. I have been desirous to give you a fair statement of what has transpired.
179. Are you prepared to say what entrance-fees have been paid since the beginning of this year?—I do not think any.