

Star Boating Club.

THE ALLEGED BLACK-BALLING COMBINATION.

The 21st annual meeting of the Star Boating Club was held in the clubhouse last evening, Mr. W. FitzGerald, Captain, being in the chair. The attendance was very large, 138 members being present.

The annual report and balance-sheet, which have already been published in these columns, was taken as read.

Mr. P. P. Webb expressed surprise that no mention was made in the report of the fact that ladies had used the plant for racing purposes during the past year. He considered the innovation a very pleasing one, and thought it should have been referred to in the report.

Replying to Mr. George Campbell, the Chairman said that during the year the plant account had been gone through and the assets thoroughly revised.

Mr. C. O'Hara Smith thought it high time the £10 set apart for the purchase of club plate should be expended and the names of the winners engraved upon it.

The Chairman replied that the amount would be shortly expended in the manner intended.

The report and balance-sheet were then adopted.

Before proceeding with the ballot for new members, the Chairman referred to the report that certain members had combined to blackball a number of the candidates. He said that as some paragraphs had ap-

with very great reluctance he alluded to it. It was of course the privilege of every one to exercise the power of blackballing, but if there was a combined effort to blackball candidates, it would be a new and a regrettable departure for the club to take. (Hear, hear.) It would have various effects. One would be to cause bad blood between coteries in the club, and injure the club outside. Any man against whose character nothing could be said was eligible. (Hear, hear.) If he was a good man and a good oar—or if there was a possibility that he would develop into a good oar—he was eligible for election. He (the speaker) had heard it said that the object in blackballing was to limit the number of members, so that there might not be too great a run on the plant. If that was true those who intended to exercise the power of blackballing were under a misapprehension, because, as a matter of fact, the membership was smaller now than at last annual meeting. The club had lost 27 members through resignation during the past twelve months, and if all the present

past twelve months, and if all the present candidates were elected the number would be about sufficient to fill the vacancies. The committee had based their estimates for the next year on the supposition that there would be an increase of membership, but if candidates were to be blackballed wholesale, the membership would not increase as much as expected, and the committee would have to cut down their estimates, one of which was the engagement of an assistant custodian. He wished to appeal to the younger members of the club not to be led away by a request to vote against people they did not know anything about. If every member of the club would use his discretion in voting, no objection could be made, and he was not afraid that any person would get into the club who ought not to be admitted.

Mr. H. D. Bell said he wished to be permitted, as a member of 13 years' standing, and one who had held office as trustee for the greater part of that time, to add his appeal to that just made by the Chairman. The club had obtained great concessions from the public bodies in Wellington, and their interests might be damaged seriously if it were to get abroad that for private reasons—because, perhaps certain candidates did not belong to a certain set—members prevented them from joining.

Mr. J. M. King said that at last meeting he gave notice of a motion in respect to the election of members, viz., that anyone who was not 19 years of age should be ineligible. He asked whether the motion should not be dealt with before the election of members.

The Chairman said that as the candidates about to be balloted for had been put up under the existing rules he did not think any alteration should be made, as suggested by Mr. King, until after the election.

Mr. King asked that the sense of the meeting should be taken as to whether the motion should be discussed before the election.

The Chairman offered no objection to the sense of the meeting being taken.

The question was accordingly put, and leave to discuss the proposal was not given.

Mr. George Campbell said he intended to propose that in future the proposer and seconder of every candidate should be present, in order that they might be questioned as to the character of their nominees.

Mr. P. P. Webb re-echoed the sentiments of the Chairman and Mr. Bell in regard to the blackballing question. He added that he could not but think the persons who had combined to blackball candidates had some ground for their intention, and he thought, therefore, that they should be asked to state why they intended to proceed in such an extreme manner. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Campbell asked Mr. W. Copeland, as the proposer of a certain candidate, whether it was true that on election night the nominee had thrown rotten eggs. (Cries of "Oh! oh!")

Mr. Copeland replied that he did not know. He was not the keeper of the gentleman in question, but he did not think the candidate would do such a thing as throw rotten eggs. (Applause.)

Mr. Campbell subsequently explained that he had ascertained that the gentleman mentioned had not thrown any eggs. It was another candidate who was the culprit. (Laughter.)

The Chairman said he could not but help thinking that the writers of the paragraphs about a combination to blackball were quite mistaken.

The election of new members was then proceeded with, the voting being by ballot. All the candidates were elected, the names being as follow:—W. H. Tylee, W. H. Pownall, Chas. Cockburn, F. C. Millward, F. G. Hartley, D. B. Lawrence, G. Hume, W. Devenish, D. C. Innis, A. G. Millward, C. H. Lucena, C. H. Smith, H. Mackay, J. M. Lightfoot, A. W. Phillips, T. Young, C. Young, A. D. Matier, J. E. Wales, W. G. Cruickshank, H. Dick, L. Storey, E. Holmes, H. M. Heywood, H. E. Green, E. Davy, H. Brabazon, M. Willeston.

The election of office bearers resulted as follows:—President, Mr. E. Pearce (re-elected); captain, Mr. W. FitzGerald (re-elected); deputy-captain, Mr. W. H. Field; secretary, Mr. E. C. Batkin (re-elected for the 14th time); treasurer, A. O. Gibbes (re-elected); committee—Messrs. C. A. Cornish, A. S. Biss, M. Chapman, C. A. Knapp, R. H. Govett, and Dr. Fell; auditors—Messrs. R. S. Hirschberg and E. N. Barrand; Match Committee—Dr. Fell and Mr. W. H. Field, and the Captain (ex officio).

The Chairman stated the committee re-

commended the presentation of silver medals to winners of senior races at regattas, and of bronze medals to winners of junior and maiden regatta events, oars to be presented to the champion four, and prizes for club races to be as at present.

Mr. Campbell thought that if oars were to be given as trophies the club ought to brand its oars, otherwise gentlemen might be seen with oars in their possession which they had not won. (Laughter.)

Mr. G. Bishop moved that the winners of champion pairs, double sculls, and sculls should be presented with silver oars.

This amendment was lost, and the proposition of the committee, that oars be given, was carried.

In accordance with notice, Mr. King moved an alteration of rule 3 to the effect that no one should be allowed to join the club who is not 19 years of age.

Mr. J. E. Smith seconded.

An amendment was moved by Mr. C. B. Morison to the effect that there should be no restriction as to age, but that no one should be allowed to row in a race who is not 19.

Mr. H. D. Bell pointed out that Mr. Morison's amendment could not be put without notice, and the Chairman ruled accordingly.

The motion proposed by Mr. King was negatived, consequently the age remains at 17.

The Chairman, pursuant to notice, moved a resolution that in future proposed alteration of by-laws may be made at any meeting provided 14 days' notice has been posted.

Mr. Batkin seconded the resolution, which was carried.

On the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Chapman, it was decided that the club should join the New Zealand Amateur Rowing Association.

It was further resolved on the motion of the same gentleman, that delegates to the Association should be appointed by the Committee.

The by-laws agreed to at last meeting were confirmed.

Four members whose last year's subscriptions are unpaid, were struck off the books.

On the motion of Mr. A. W. G. Burnes, seconded by Mr. G. Bishop, it was decided that the season should be opened with a procession of boats as in former years. The date of the opening was left with the Committee.

On the motion of Mr. Batkin, a son of the the custodian was appointed to assist his father for the season at a weekly wage of 10s.

The usual compliment to the Chairman terminated the proceedings.