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VICTORIAN ROWING ASSOCIATION

On Saturday afternoon a general meeting of rowing men took place. There was a large attendance of the respective members of the Civil Service, University and Warehouse, men's rowing clubs, while the Melbourne and Banks were partly represented, and the other clubs, such as the Albert Park, Footscray and Williamstown, were not represented at all. Mr. Nichols occupied the chair. The balance-sheet and report were read by Mr. T. H. Young, the secretary of the association. The former showed a balance to the credit of the V.R.A. of £55 8s.5d., and the report read as follows: -

Gentlemen, - The first committee of the Victorian Rowing Association, in submitting for your approval their balance-sheet and report for the past year, have every reason to congratulate you upon the present position and prospects of aquatics in this colony.

The association was formed by the clubs then in existence on 7th October, 1876, at a similar public meeting to this. It was then resolved that a committee for the arrangement of rowing affairs should be found from those of the associated clubs who were willing to guarantee £10 to the regatta funds, each club by a representative, and also that ten gentlemen should be elected by such clubs to work with the representatives. Accordingly the associated clubs were called together, but only five of them, viz. Banks, Civil Service, Footscray, Melbourne and University, responded to the invitation and guaranteed the money. It is hardly fair that the burden of providing funds should be borne by so few clubs. It is therefore desirable, for this and other reasons, that more clubs should send representatives to the committee, who are able and willing to perform the required duties, and bring the necessary grist to the mill.

Your committee commenced office last October, and took over from the last Melbourne Regatta Committee a credit balance of £17 14s. 4d. Through the energy of several of the members, that has been enlarged, and a balance now appears to the credit of the association of £55 8s. 5. after paying all expenses for the prizes presented to the winners at the late regatta.

During the year sixteen committee meetings were held, the attendance being as follows: - Messrs. Nicholls, 11; Rolls, 12; Willan, 13; Watson, 13 ; Cope, 1 ; Shew, 8 (resigned); Irvine, 11; Reid, 5 ; Barker, 5 (resigned); Hood, 10; McIntosh, 14; H. A. Williams, 1 (resigned); Hodges, 3 (lately elected); Coates, 12; T. H. Young, 14; Carter, 6; Ward, 13. Messrs. Nichols and Shew were appointed hon. treasurer and hon. secretary respectively. Mr. Shew, through the pressure of other

engagements, found it necessary to resign. Mr. Young was elected hon. secretary in his place.

The boating season was opened very successfully with scratch eights, no less than eleven crews competing. The winners were found in Messrs. Taylor, Sneddin, W. Clegg, Hyslop, Lang, Carlile, Forrester, A. Nichols (stroke).

As the means for the safe transit of boats over the "falls" were very indifferent, your committee, per Messrs. Rolls and Watson, with the department of Public Works, representations being made to the Minister of the department of the requirements. A capital platform has been built and other suitable work performed, thus adding to the safety of the property of the various clubs, and the convenience of rowing men generally.

The first Melbourne Regatta under the auspices of this association was held at the Saltwater River on the 24th March last. Although the weather was as usual, very disagreeable, the attendance of the public was satisfactory, and allowed that an increased and more general interest is being taken in aquatic sports. The entrance fees, the largest yet received, amounted to £114, no less than 128 men entering for the various events on the programme. The racing, however, was not very exciting. The principal prize of the regatta, the Footscray Challenge Cup, for Senior Eights, resulted in a walkover. The winning clubs were: - Melbourne Challenge Eight, Ballarat Maiden Sculls, Zingari Challenge Sculls, Warehousemen Maiden Pair, Banks Junior Scull, Murray Maiden Four, Barwon *The Leader* Challenge Cup. The proprietor of the *Australasian*, as usual, gave the winner of the Challenge Sculls a handsome trophy, for which your committee express their thanks.

Protests in connection with that race were received from Messrs. W. Stout and Jas. Cazaly against each other for fouling. But the protest not having been received within the time prescribed it was dismissed without the case being discussed. A protest was also entered against the winners of the Maiden Four-oared Gig Race by the Williamstown crew, on the ground that a man in the winning crew was a senior oarsman. After due consideration had been given the matter, your committee were of opinion that the evidence showed that the man in question had not won an advertised race, as stated by the Williamstown crew. The protest was therefore dismissed.

The prizes won at the regatta were distributed on the 23rd April, at a meeting of rowing men called for the purpose.

A special prize will be added to next year's programme, by the generosity of a gentleman who has placed £10 10s. in the hands of the hon. treasurer. With it, it is proposed to initiate a race for maiden scullers in double-sculling boats. An extra prize will also be added for maiden four-oared crews in clinker-built outriggers.

It has been felt by the rowing community generally that Intercolonial boat races should be established, and in a class of hosts suited to contests of such importance. With this object in view your committee communicated with the Sydney oarsmen. Your committee are now in a position to state that the challenge issued by them for a race in eight-oared boats between this colony and New South Wales has been accepted. The first Saturday in March next has been fixed on our side as a suitable time for the match to come off. Messrs. Coates, Hood and Rolls have been appointed to select a crew. Your committee have no doubt that with the rowing talent on the river the colony will be ably represented, and that the crew on the day will give a good account of itself.

Your committee now resign their functions, with a view to the appointing of their successors. In accordance with rule No. 34 of the Victorian Rowing Association. (Signed) T. H. Young, Hon. Sec. V.R.A. (Signed) A. Nichols, Chairman.
Melbourne, 29th September, 1877.

The report and balance-sheet were adopted.

The ballot was then cast for the new association, and the following were elected:
— Messrs. Carter, Carlile, Michie, Colles, Hood, Cook, Bridges, Nichols, Young, Dr. Morton.

The meeting then closed with a vote of thanks to the chairman. Great credit is due to Mr. Edwards for the manner in which he comfortably provided for the meeting.