

[BY SPINNAKER.]

Towns has now challenged the world to row for £500 aside, and he prefers to meet Gaudaur, the holder of the Championship.

North Shore Rowing Club have ordered a new clinker racing outrigger for this season, and expect to have the boat in the shed during November.

The annual meeting of the North Shore Sailing Club was held last week in the Council Chambers, Devonport. There was a very large attendance of members, and Mr A. Alison, Commodore, presided. The secretary (Mr W. A. Wilkinson) read the annual report, which stated that the past season had been the most successful in the history of the Club. Started in 1895, with a membership of 22, and owning six boats, the Club has steadily grown until now the membership was 116, there being 88 active and 28 honorary members, with a total of 56 yachts connected with the Club. The balance-sheet showed that the receipts for the season were £27 12s 6d, and the expenditure £25 15s, leaving a balance in hand £1 17s 6d. The report and balance-sheet were unanimously adopted. The following officers were elected for the ensuing season:—Commodore, Mr A. Alison, vice-commodore, Capt H. Parker; rear-commodore, Mr C. P. Murdoch; hon secretary, Mr W. A. Wil-

J. Maxwell, J. McKenzie, J. Carrigan, R. White, G. Green, J. Bigelow, and W. Rees; selection committee, Messrs J. Maxwell, W. Edwards, and E. H. Cooke.

The West End Rowing Club intend to send a crew to represent them at the Christchurch Jubilee Regatta.

### A NATIONAL THEATRE.

[BY WALTER BENTLEY.]

In this country of progressive legislation, why should not the State interfere in the regulation of our amusements? It may be urged that the law of supply and demand ought to rule the theatre, and that it ought to be looked at from the simple basis of a commercial enterprise, but there is a sentimental side which it is to be feared has been sadly overlooked.

In my travels through Australasia, this aspect of the question has been forced upon my notice, as also several other points which perhaps I may be pardoned in presenting for discussion by those who are most interested.

In this connection I may say that all the facts about the New Zealand buildings, and the support they obtain, have been submitted by me to the Premier and members of the Cabinet, who, while agreeing with me as to the advisability of State interference, say that at present they do not care to interfere unless they find it to be the wish of the people, and it is in the hope that the people will interfere at the next general election that I submit my views.

To begin with, there is a recognised fact that the amusements of a people have a great deal to

the Theatre Francais in Paris, where every performer has graduated in the art, and how high the estimation of the stage accordingly is there.

The Immigration Restriction Bill was drafted to prevent impecunious persons from entering the colony, but just consider how often actors and actresses, who have absolutely no capital of their own, are imported by managers who are likewise impecunious, and whose exodus is only likely to be achieved by chance custom.

As regards the advisability of the establishment of a theatre subsidised by the State, I can only point to the Wanganui Opera House, built by the municipal authorities and managed by them.

In six months it has paid the first year's interest on £5000 original outlay, together with all working expenses, and it is only reasonable to suppose that a school or college, founded in connection with a similar institution in Wellington, would also be a commercial success.

I have taken the first step in bringing these matters before the notice of your Government it remains for you, the people of New Zealand, to urge them to carry out some scheme of legislation. By doing so you raise the status of the profession, and its culture must be reflected on the people. Home influence throughout Australasia is not nearly so strong a factor in social progress as in the older lands, and surely when that is a recognised fact, the nature of public performances should be so directed as to make for enlightenment and elevation.

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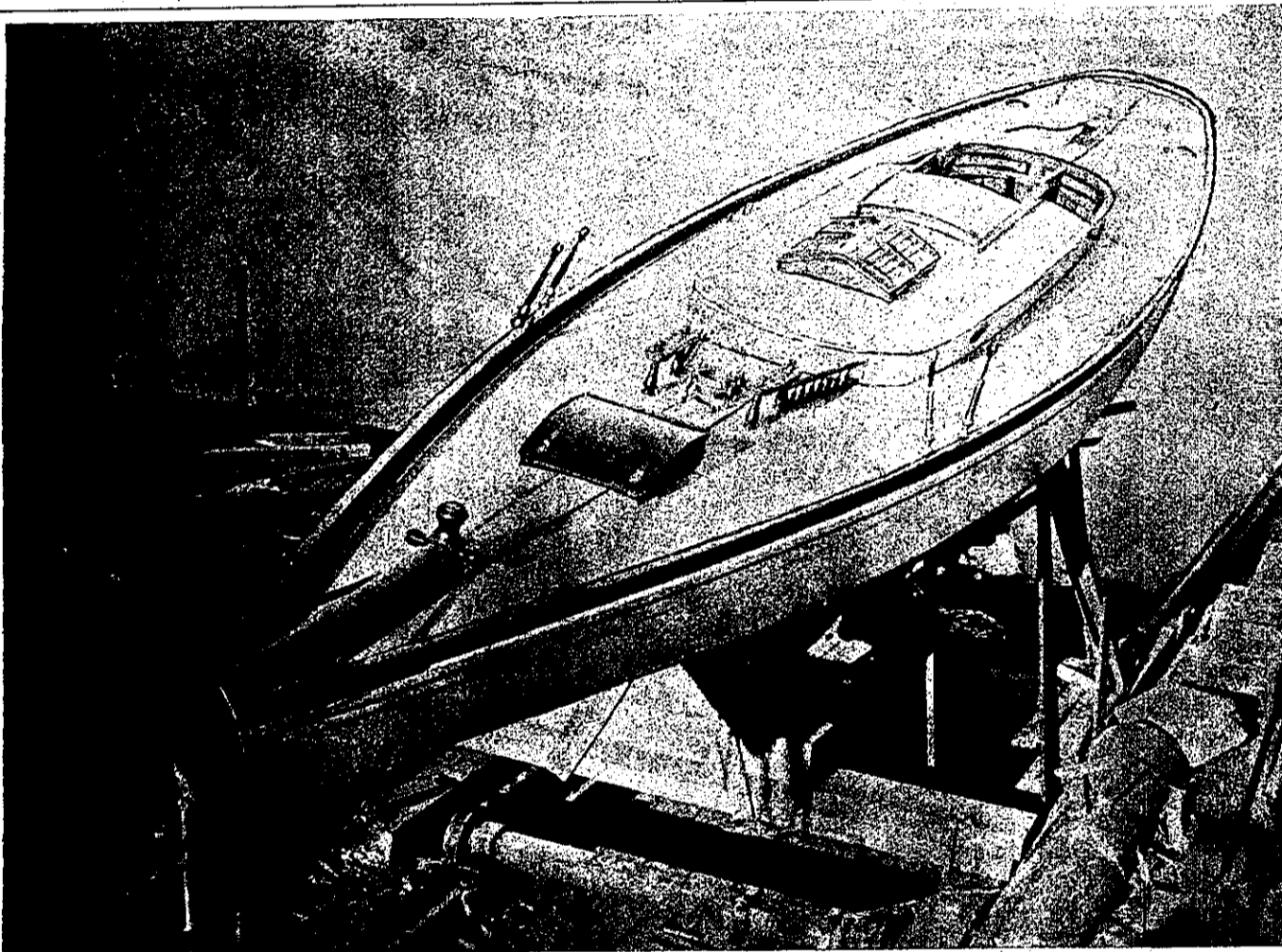


Photo by A. L. Claver, Ellerslie.

MR S. DEMPSTER'S 30-FOOTER PETREL. BUILT BY MESSRS LOGAN BROS.

kinson; hon treasurer, Mr W. Oliver; treasurer, Mr G. V. Edgecombe; timekeeper and umpire, Mr J. Alexander; starter, Mr W. Oliver; handicappers, Captain Gibbs, Messrs J. C. Webster and H. Oliver; committee; Captain Gibbs, Messrs C. Bailey, J. Parker, J. Alexander and E. Stevenson. A special class for 24ft lr was added to the programme. It was resolved to support the resuscitation of the Auckland Annual Regatta, Captain Gibbs and Mr W. Oliver being appointed delegates. It was decided to adopt the new sail measurements for patikas, as submitted by the Parnell Sailing Club. Several trophies were promised for the season's races.

St George's Rowing Club formally open their season next Saturday, when all members, after taking part in the usual procession, will proceed to some convenient place, where arrangements will be made to have the assemblage photographed.

The annual meeting of the West End Rowing Club was held in the boathouse, St Mary's Bay, on Saturday afternoon, Sept 22nd. There was a good attendance of members, and Mr O. J. Parr presided. The annual report stated that the Club had had another successful year. The membership numbered 232. Out of the 20 events in which crews competed during the year, 16 had been won, the amount of prize money being £113 19s. The balance-sheet showed that the receipts had been £379 16s 10d, and the expenditure £350 17s 8d, leaving a balance in hand of £28 19s 2d. The assets were valued at £879 14s 2d, and there were no liabilities. The report and balance-sheet were adopted. Mr Thomas Peacock was re-elected patron; Mr M. McLean, president; and the vice-presidents and honorary members of last year were also re-elected. The officers for the year were then elected as follows:—Captain, Mr W. Edwards; deputy-captain, Mr R. H. Cooke; treasurer, Mr Hunter; secretary, Mr E. M. Douall; committee, Messrs

do with their morals, and it may surprise many to learn that a low computation as to the numbers who attend places of amusement in New Zealand in one year brings the whole to the enormous total of 2,500,000. This sum embraces theatres and halls and of course means that many of these persons go to an entertainment much oftener than once a week. The figures which give this result have been submitted by me to several competent judges and confirmed, while the startling fact is not generally known that all the programmes at these theatres and halls are exempt from any sort of supervision save that of public opinion. Is it not the duty of the politician even on this ground to interfere. True, the theatres are licensed, but so are public houses, and in the latter case much more supervision, and a great deal of it vexatious, is exercised, while the theatre is allowed to open its doors at any time, and give to the public whatever its managers please. Then, as to the houses themselves, one has only to look over them to see that they are certainly not what they ought to be either before, but more especially behind the curtain.

With perhaps a few exceptions, the dressing-room accommodation for the actors and actresses is disgraceful, and I often wonder how any woman of refinement can be induced to even change her costume in such places, and then afterwards be able to give an artistic performance.

Again, and probably this from the sentimental aspect is the strongest point, where is the recruiting ground for actors and actresses. There is none; they are mere accidents, and the crude attempts at acting, which it is not their faults that they display lower the position of the stage. Certificates are rightly deemed necessary in art or science, and yet for the actor, who ought to be an encyclopedia and an anatomic illustration of both, no such precaution is taken. What a pleasure it is to see a performance at

### THE SARONY STUDIO.

Undoubtedly one of the attractions in that handsome building, the Strand Arcade, is the Sarony Photographic Studio. Sarony has long been known for his artistic work, and for the tasteful decoration of his studio. In the new quarters everything is thoroughly in keeping with Sarony's idea that pleasant surroundings go towards making a successful business. On the ground floor of the Arcade is the showroom and office, where appointments are made with sitters. There are very many pretty photographic pictures here showing the latest styles and mountings. When we called there was a very fine enlarged photo of Mr Walter Bentley on view. That picture is an admirable specimen of artistic work. The lift is only a few yards away, and one is quickly up in the studio. Truly it is excellently fitted up and arranged. The lighting appears to be perfect, the waiting and dressing-rooms are daintily and prettily furnished, and the different workrooms have been designed with evident care and attention to detail. The Sarony atelier is certainly one of the places in Auckland that must be visited.

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