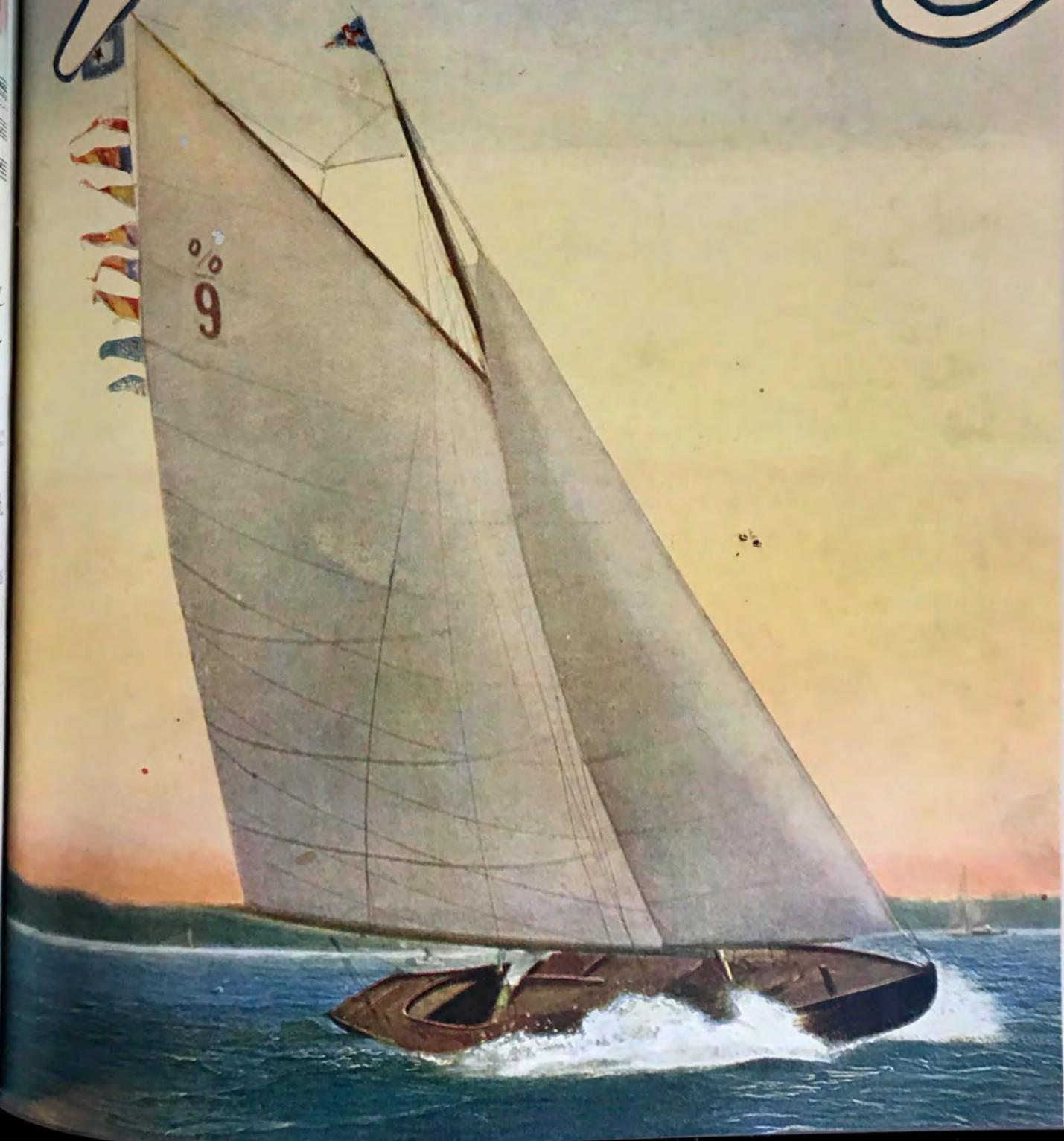


# Yachting





GRAND RIVER OFFERS UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE MOTOR BOAT.

heads southward, when, after a 65-mile run, the anchor is dropped in Little Traverse Bay. The names "Little Traverse" and "Grand Traverse" (that of the bay just below it) are interesting relics of the *voyageur* days on the lakes, of which many names remain. The *voyageurs* and Indians were forced to cross the mouths of these bays in their canoes, as they were too deep to allow them to follow the shores, according to their custom. Hence the names, meaning Little and Big Crossing. One can imagine them anxiously waiting calm weather, as the mouth of Grand Traverse is 12 miles wide. Little Traverse Bay is a beautiful sheet of water from 7 to 8 miles across, with high, wooded surrounding hills and a little, landlocked harbor formed by a curving point of sand. Here one may lie at anchor behind the trees in a per-

fect calm while a gale is blowing outside. The point, called Harbor Point, and the entire north shore of the bay are lined with resorts frequented principally by Southerners. On the north side of the harbor is the village of Harbor Point, where supplies may be procured. On the east end of the larger bay is the city of Petoskey. Regattas are held each season on the bay for a small, one-design class of sloops and larger craft. A feature of these meets is a race for Indians and fishermen in their mackinaws, a type of boat pointed at either end with a sort of ketch or a double cat rig peculiar to this part of Lake Michigan. They are very handy and seaworthy, and sometimes beat the yachts in a blow.

Fifteen miles south of the Point is Charlevoix, a place of many

(Continued on page 538.)

## Defender—An Unlucky Sloop

By LAWRENCE PERRY

Photographs by J. S. Johnston. Copyright, 1895.

**T**O write of Defender is to write of brave days. Tall sloops raced then, and the red ichor of the sea gods ran trippingly through the veins of the patrons of our international yachting prestige. These were days when a challenge for the famed America's trophy meant a race and not a forensic contest among sea-lawyers, when a point asked was a point yielded in the name of sport, when the footing of bills of defense was money well spent, a patriotic duty cheerfully performed.

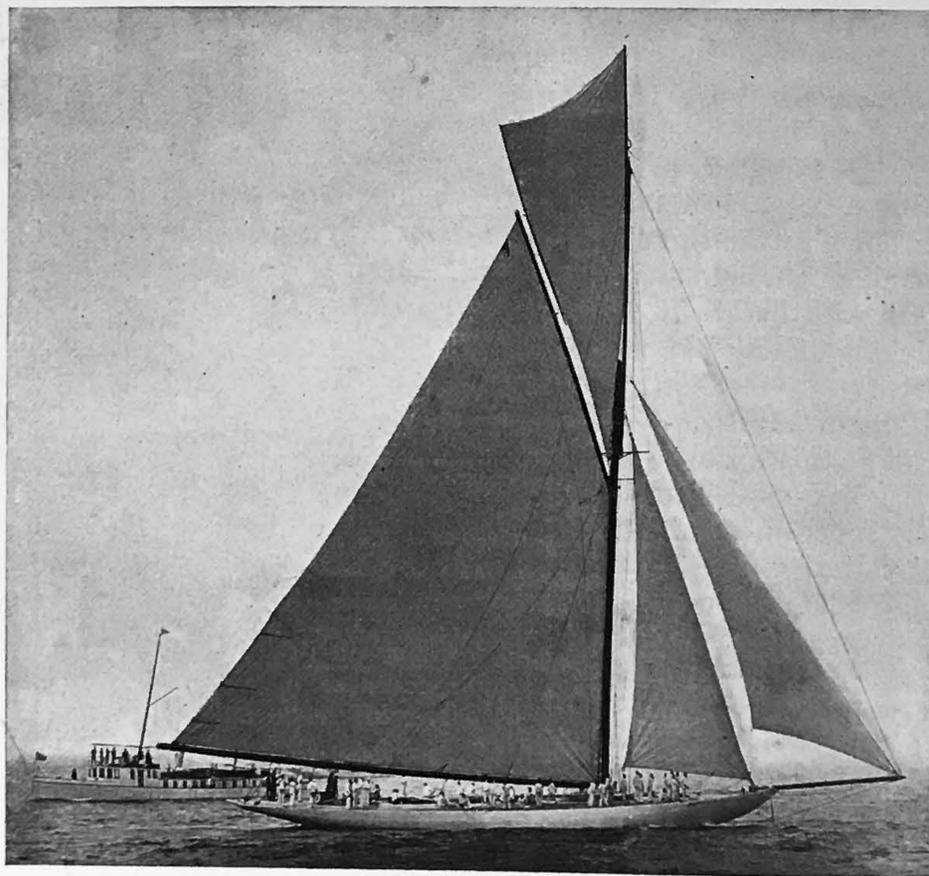
In these drab days of nautical retrenchment international cup racing is a calamity only to be met under dire necessity. You hear great legal talk, intricate and devious, whenever a challenge is suggested; and profound minds deal profoundly with profound problems, when through all, in everything, discerning minds recognize the taproot of it all to be the ever-increasing disinclination of men in whose care have long reposed our world-wide laurels to sign checks aggregating some six or seven hundred thousand dollars to the end that our British cousins may be dis-

comfited and American pride correspondingly exalted. Well, seven hundred thousand dollars is a great deal of money, and if the province of criticism of such parsimony lies with anyone it certainly does not lie with those to whom such a sum would represent the wealth of Caius Caligula, in which category the writer

must shamefacedly include himself. Nevertheless, with the situation as it is, it is pleasant to turn from the present to the days of the roaring past fourteen years ago.

The star of Herreshoff was in the ascendant, and, while it still glows serene and alone, it is no more luminous to-day than in the early summer of 1895, when a beautiful sloop slid down into the waters of Narragansett Bay and made her maiden bow to an applauding nation. Defender! Unluckiest of sloops, launched under an evil star and rigged with curses dark; yet out of the alembic of the years she arises glorious, more sinned against than sinning, a boat to carry fondly in memory while stouter spars and stancher hulls slip gradually into the limbo of dim things that were.

Undaunted by the downfall



THE TALL DEFENDER AND HER CREW OF DEER ISLANDERS.

of his ambitions in 1893, when Vigilant thrust her well-turned bows thrice over the finish line ahead of his Valkyrie, Lord Dunraven, in the fall of 1894, submitted, through the Royal Yacht Squadron, another challenge for the trophy, basing the fulfillment of his defiance upon several stipulations, which resulted in the politest sort of a correspondence, in which eventually both sides gave and took; which is to say that the Americans agreed to have racers measured with all weights on board, to allow Lord Dunraven to pick another sloop if, after trial races, he found that some other British cutters were swifter than the challenger, while the challengers, on the other hand, receded from their demand for a one-gun instead of a two-minute handicap start. All details, in short, were conducted as they should have been, and not a hitch occurred. You see, both sides were more eager to race than to talk, and this is a condition always productive of eventualities, as Mr. Kipling says.

Racing spirit was keen here. Two years before Vigilant had romped over the Sound and ocean always in the van of a fine pair of Boston candidates for the honor of meeting the Dunraven boat—Jubilee and Colonia—and later she had shown her heels to the Valkyrie. The next year she had gone to England, and had served more or less as an object for British sloops to sail rings around. Englishmen, as may be imagined, were, therefore, keen for another try at the mug, and Americans, mortified at the failure of "Hank" Haff and his boat in England, and anxious to regain their laurels, were naturally eager that one of England's foremost yachtsmen should make the attempt.

And so, as suggested, Lord Dunraven's challenge went through the various formulas of acceptance on well-oiled wheels, and on January 14, 1895, it was formally accepted. Then came the question of a sloop to retain the cup. The success of Herreshoff's Vigilant, the last of the famed centerboarders, had been so pronounced that when the New York Yacht Club announced that a syndicate, consisting of William K. Vanderbilt, E. D. Morgan and C. Oliver Iselin, would place an order with Herreshoff for a 90-foot sloop, no man, or group of men, had the hardihood to order a boat from any other designer. Herreshoff's superiority was granted, and he showed his class by borrowing from the English the idea of a keel, whereas for years American defenders had been of the centerboard variety, and by incorporating aluminum as one of the chief elements of construction. It is true that in the course of a few years the action of this metal upon the bronze and steel produced so much corrosion that the sloop practically ate herself up; but the main thing is that the utmost lightness consistent with safety and speed was obtained. She was light in all verity; she was the lightest boat of her size ever seen,

before or since. Her topsides plating, deck beams, rails and other structural parts were of aluminum with an alloy of steel and nickel, while her underbody and keel plates were bronze. Altogether, the saving in weight through the use of aluminum amounted to some fifteen tons, which was said at the time to be a conservative estimate.

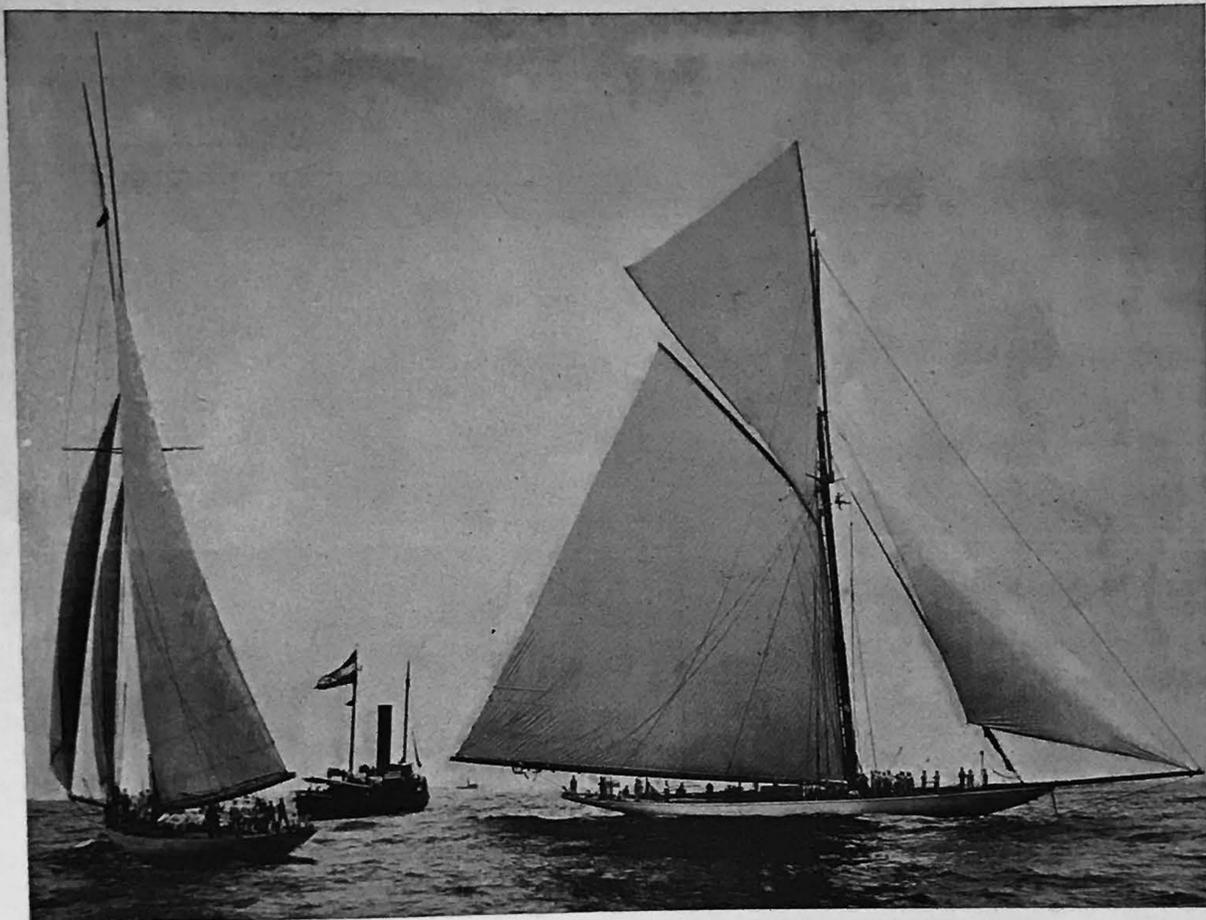
Whatever the saving of weight, it must be admitted that Defender was not the safest boat in the world, especially so in the sturm und drang of ocean racing. Throughout her brief season of glory there were frequent charges of structural wear, and, while these were vigorously denied by Mr. Iselin, the general opinion of that day inclined suspiciously. But she was a fine-looking boat, broad of beam, with a full but finely-turned underbody and a deep keel. As captain, good, old "Hank" Haff was selected, and for the first time in the history of America's Cup racing the defending sloop had a crew of Americans, as hardy, as clear-headed, as strong-armed a band of shellbacks as ever trod deck. All Deer Islanders, they had been reared on the salt sea,

and, throughout, they justified themselves in every way. Yet as they were the first crew of Americans to sail a cup defender, so they were the last, future defenders of the cup running strongly for Scandinavians, who, if a trifle slower witted than the Maine men, are more likely to stand being sworn at.

Defender had her first trial on Narragansett Bay early in July, 1895, and demonstrated her ability in a wind of average velocity. For one thing, she impressed observers with the speed with which she swung in and out of stays—a quality in which heretofore

English challengers were supposed to have been superior. The next day, July 7, she raced and defeated Colonia, now the schooner yacht Corona, in the meantime awaiting Vigilant, which had been brought back from England by Mr. George J. Gould as a trial horse for the new sloop. It is interesting to observe that her captain was Charles Barr, who, arriving in this country in 1889, had already begun to attain fame as the skipper of Gloriana and Navahoe.

With the first race, a test contest between Defender and Vigilant on July 22, began that series of untoward incidents which eventually ruined the America's Cup series and sent the handsome Defender to retirement under a cloud which never lifted from her. She bore down upon Vigilant at the start of the race, which was off Sandy Hook, in such a manner as to cause Mr. E. A. Willard, Vigilant's sailing manager, to make a protest. In a race off Block Island in August, Defender, while leading Vigilant, Volunteer and Jubilee, broke her gaff and had to retire. On August 6 she met Vigilant, and a misunderstanding in manœvering the two sloops occurred, which caused Mr. Willard to with-



DEFENDER (TO THE LEFT) AND VALKYRIE III HANGING AROUND THE LINE FOR THE PREPARATORY SIGNAL.

draw Vigilant from further racing against Defender. He refrained from a formal protest on the ground that the rules of the New York Yacht Club held that a yacht against which two protests have been lodged and justified shall not again race under the auspices of the club. Mr. Willard had no wish to deprive the club of its defender; but he nevertheless felt he had been wronged, and announced that he was through with the racing. The affair gave birth to a torrent of letters and a great deal of bad feeling.

But the matter was finally smoothed over, with the result that, after Defender had met and defeated Jubilee by over nine minutes on August 8, an agreement for a series of three races between Defender and Vigilant to formally select a defender for the America's Cup was made. So, on August 20 Defender and Vigilant sailed to the starting line off Sandy Hook Lightship for the first race of the series, a beat of ten miles to windward and return, the course to be sailed twice over at the discretion of the regatta committee.

In the course of the first race Defender withdrew, because the band on her mast had slipped several inches, and she started immediately for Bristol for repairs. On the way she ran aground on an island in Narragansett Bay, but was not injured by her contact with the bottom, and on August 29 she was back off Sandy Hook prepared to complete the trial series with Vigilant. She won two races handily, and was accordingly selected as the boat to meet Valkyrie III, which, by the way, had been racing in English waters against Britannia and Ailsa, and beating them in such manner as to demonstrate that she was the most eligible craft to compete for the America's Cup.

And so in the latter part of July the new challenger left Scotland for New York. In those gallant days challengers observed the spirit of the rule that yachts seeking to lift the cup must cross the Atlantic under sail, and Valkyrie III made the trip under jury rig in twenty-two days and some odd hours. She did not have any too much time in which to tune up. She did not have half enough time, as a matter of fact; but, well or ill prepared, she appeared at the line off the Jersey coast on the morning of September 7 for the first contest of the series. She was a fine boat, the best that Great Britain ever sent over here. She had beautiful lines, a broader beam even than Defender, and spread a suit of flawless canvas. William Cranfield commanded her, and Edward Sycamore, who later sailed Shamrock II against Columbia, was his assistant.

It was a clear, warm day, with a light southerly wind, which eventually shifted a bit to the eastward and so held. The ocean was jammed with a crowd of excursion boats, commanded by men whose habits and instincts, as revealed that day, were essentially porcine. There isn't much to say about the race. Starting at 12.20 on a course fifteen miles to windward and return, Valkyrie III led the way over the line by about four seconds. At 1.57 o'clock Defender passed to weather of the challenger, crossed her bows and took the lead. She was never headed, and won the race

by more than nine minutes. Little did that howling, hooting mob of patriots who returned from the race on the excursion fleet realize that trouble was brewing which would deal America's Cup racing a blow from which it probably never would recover. (It has not recovered yet.) The New York Yacht Club cup committee was aware of it, however, immediately after the race, such intimation coming in the shape of a notice from Lord Dunraven that, in his opinion, Defender had sailed the race with a waterline eight inches or a foot longer than her measurement made by John Hyslop on September 6 would indicate. He requested a re-measurement, and accordingly the two boats went into the Erie Basin on September 8, and the tape line was again passed over them. The results showed that Defender's waterline length was practically the same as when she was formerly measured. Of course, if she had taken on extra ballast the night before the race it would have been an easy matter to have dumped it overboard before re-measurement. So Lord Dunraven held later, but for the time being he held his peace. It would be pleasant to record that all Americans were against him in his contention; but this

could not be said at the time, and may not now be said, although of course no suspicion attached to the owners of Defender.

On September 10, the day set for the next race, there was a good southerly wind, and the course was laid with a leg ten miles to windward and two legs of similar length, involving close and broad reaches. The excursion fleet was present in undiminished numbers, and the least that can be said of the assembled craft was that they were ubiquitous. A minute or two before the start the two racers were making for the line with the wind coming over the starboard beam. A big excursion boat was in the way, and Defender went one side of her and Valkyrie the other. When they were clear of the interfering hulk it was seen that the two yachts were bearing for the line upon converging courses, Defender being to



DEFENDER DOWN THE WIND.

leeward and holding straight for the line. Valkyrie also held her course. When the two sloops were so near together that a collision seemed imminent, Valkyrie luffed, with the obvious intention of clearing the American boat by the shortest possible margin. But she did not quite make it. The tip of her boom caught Defender's topmast stay, there was a loud twang, and the topmast of the big sloop was pulled over to leeward. Mr. Iselin hoisted his protest flag and set about repairing damage as best he could. The topmast was hastily lashed, and then, seeing that Valkyrie had not turned back, but was kiting for the windward mark, Capt. Haff put his charge over the line, one minute and fifteen seconds late. She sailed a gallant race, did Defender. Those who saw her in that hopeless effort to offset the odds against her, sailing like a bird with a broken wing, struggling bravely to beat a boat which was able to carry thousands of feet more canvas, will never forget her. On the last leg she succeeded in outsailing the British cutter; but the handicap was too great, and she lost the race by 47 seconds, corrected time.

In the controversy that followed Lord Dunraven maintained

1909

Defender luffed into Valkyrie, but photographs taken of the accident did not bear out his assertion. His statement that he did not see the protest flag of course could not be disproved. The committee in charge of the series approved the protest and gave the race to Defender. That the committee would have been more successful and wise, all things considered, had they ordered the race resailed, will not be gainsaid by any fair-minded sportsman.

A few hours after this race Lord Dunraven wrote to the cup committee, complaining that the crowding of excursion craft made their racing impossible, and threatening to withdraw his sloop from further racing if the course was not kept clear. He suggested no plan by which this might be accomplished. The cup committee could devise none, and so on September 12 the course was jammed, as usual, with steamboats, whose captains were bound that their patrons should see the race even if they had to sink one or both of the contestants. But no race was seen. Valkyrie III came out to the line, under short canvas, and, after watching Defender start, returned to Sandy Hook.

So that was the end of the racing between Valkyrie III and

Defender, a series in which the relative merits of the two rivals was never adequately tested. Lord Dunraven took his boat home, and later renewed his charges that the waterline length of Defender had been increased on the eve of the first race. The New York Yacht Club appointed a committee, consisting of J. P. Morgan, William C. Whitney and George L. Rives, to which Capt. Mahan and Edward J. Phelps were added, to investigate. The outcome of the matter was that the committee decided that Dunraven's charges were unfounded, and he was dismissed from honorary membership in the New York Yacht Club. As for the Defender, she retired from the public eye, not to reappear until 1899, when she served as a trial horse for Columbia. Two years later they decided to break her up. She was at New London, and W. B. Duncan, Jr., if I remember aright, sailed her down to City Island. She sailed as she had never sailed before, sailed as though she knew it was the last time she would ever breast the crested wave. On and on she boomed, making the eighty-odd miles faster than they had ever been made before. So she will sail in memory as long as men hold their love for good boats.



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THE BEAUTIFUL HOME OF THE DETROIT COUNTRY CLUB AT GROSSE POINTE. THIS ORGANIZATION HAS DONE MUCH TO FOSTER YACHTING ON LAKE ST. CLAIR.

## Power Boating and Sailing on the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair

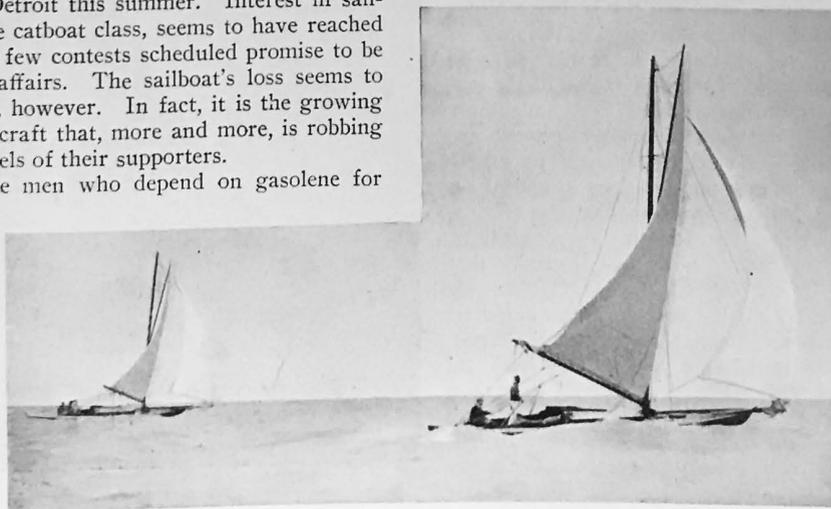
By EDW. A. BATCHELOR

JUDGING from present indications, the motor boat men and the catboat sailors will have things very much their own way in the vicinity of Detroit this summer. Interest in sailboat racing, except in the catboat class, seems to have reached low-water mark, and the few contests scheduled promise to be tame and uninteresting affairs. The sailboat's loss seems to be the motor boat's gain, however. In fact, it is the growing popularity of the power craft that, more and more, is robbing the canvas-propelled vessels of their supporters.

Never before have the men who depend on gasolene for their propulsion had such rosy prospects on the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair. There were hundreds of motor boats in Detroit last season, and more have been added during the winter to a fleet that probably is among the largest claimed by any one city in the country. A number of prominent

yachtsmen recently were discussing the number of these craft making their home port in the City of the Straits, and their estimates ran from 1,000 to 1,200. Such figures seem almost incredible until one sees the myriad of boats swarming on the river on a bright summer afternoon.

The racing game will be strong among the chug-chug people, and promises to be more generally satisfactory than ever before. This really is not saying a great deal, for in past seasons there has been much of the comic about the contests. Poorly understood rules, which, in many cases, were not



SPRITE AND OTSIKETA RACING IN 21-FOOT CLASS ON LAKE ST. CLAIR.