

THE RACE FOR THE CUP.

THE sporting event par excellence of the year will of course be the race for the America's cup. Yachting, although a pastime in which none but the wealthiest can take an active part, never fails to arouse the enthusiasm of English-speaking people. It seems to appeal to their instincts as no land sport can do, and the fact that the race for the America's cup is an international contest—a contest for supremacy between the two great branches of the race that have for centuries been the "sea-dogs" of the world—gives a dramatic importance to the impending event which no other similar competition possesses.

The widespread interest taken by people of all classes in the international yacht race is indicated by a little incident related by a New York paper. A drummer was on his way to see the Columbia at New Rochelle, and stated that he had no special interest in the contest, but that he was going to see the sloop and take some pictures of her for purely business purposes; because, when he visited his customers out West, everybody wanted to talk about the yacht race, and if he could say he had seen the new Columbia and show some pictures of her, taken by himself, it would sell a lot of goods. The people of the great inland States, who have never such salt water, enthuse as much over international yacht racing as those of New York and Boston. And it is the same in Canada. Everybody, whether in the Maritime Provinces or on the waterless prairies, is deeply interested in the forthcoming match, and should the Shamrock carry back the cup to the Old Country we Canadians will feel that we each have a right to share personally in the rejoicing. Yet, few Canadians could

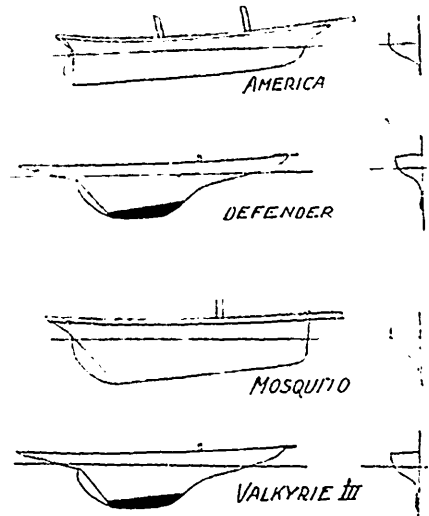


tell, off-hand, just what the America's cup is—how it came into existence. About 1850, the commodore of the New York Yacht Club, John C. Stephens, who had watched with interest the progress of a young ship carpenter's apprentice named George Steers, conceived the idea of having Steers build him a schooner yacht, to sail to England and compete in the races at Cowes. Steers built the schooner *America*, 94 feet long on deck and 88 feet long on the water-line. She was modeled on the New York harbor pilot boats, carrying no foretopmast nor jibboom. No formal challenge was sent, but the *America* sailed for Havre and arrived there early in August, 1851. She rapidly fitted up for the race and then proceeded to Cowes. The visitor

arrived on a dark night and the first light of dawn revealed to the wondering eyes of the Englishmen a craft about as different from an English yacht as could be imagined, with her great beam and shallow hull, while the typical English cutter of the period was of the "plank-on-end" variety. In the race round the Isle of Wight for a cup offered by the Royal Yacht Squadron, the *America* beat eighteen British competitors, her time being eleven minutes better than that of the rest over the line. The cup thus won on August 22, 1851, remained in the hands of the owners of the yacht till 1857 when it was handed over to the New York Yacht Club, as a trophy for races with challenging yachts from any foreign country of not less than thirty nor more than three hundred tons. Eight contests have since taken place, and in two of these Canadian yachts were the challengers—the *Countess of Dufferin* and the *Malanda*.

The present challenger, Sir Thomas Lipton, is a millionaire merchant with immense interests in Great Britain, Ceylon and

the United States. His full name is Thomas Johnstone Lipton. He was born in Glasgow, of Irish parents, and his career has led him prosperously on through the paths of business. To the British public he is best known as a tea merchant; his name is literally a household word throughout Great Britain.



He owns extensive tea estates in Ceylon. He is president of the Thomas J. Lipton Company, packers, of Chicago, and he owns the Lipton Refrigerator Car Lines of the same city. He received his title last year.

Until 1897 he had never been connected with the sport of yachting. He knew how to sail a small craft in a crude fashion, but of yacht-racing he was entirely ignorant. In 1898 he joined the Royal Ulster Yacht Club, his first affiliation to any yachting organization. His avowed purpose in this was to challenge for the America's cup. In this object he was aided by the Prince of Wales, who deplored the ill-feeling following the race of 1894, and was anxious to see another contest for the cup. In the search for a designer Sir Thomas had the choice of two naval architects of celebrity—George W. Watson, of Glasgow, and William Fife, jr., of Fairlie, in Ayrshire. Now, Watson was burdened with the harassing handicap of three previous defeats in races for the America's cup—the *Thistle*, *Valkyrie II*, and *Valkyrie III*. Sir Thomas, being a believer in good luck, chose Fife in preference to his rival. The *Shamrock* was built on the Thames.

The designer of the *Columbia* is "Nat" Herreshoff, who also built the *Vigilant* and the *Defender*. Fourteen years ago when Mr. Herreshoff figured on a yacht to beat the *Genesta* at \$30,000, his price was considered exorbitant, but it has been stated that the Iselin-Morgan syndicate, owners of the *Columbia*, will expend fully \$250,000 in defending the trophy this year; and if the cost keeps on mounting up in the future as it has of late years even the wealthiest citizens may well hesitate to involve themselves in a contest.

Both the *Shamrock* and the *Columbia* are racing machines pure and simple, everything being sacrificed to the requirements of speed. The Americans are fond of saying that the English have been forced to adopt their lines, but the accompanying figures showing the models: first of the *America*, as compared with the *Defender* and, second, of the *Mosquito* (1848), as compared with the *V. lkyrie III*, show that almost as great a revolution has taken place in the American type as in the British.

The triumph of virtue is not in resisting temptation, but in not having temptation.