



WHAT YACHTING COSTS.

WHAT does yachting cost? That to be able to own and properly maintain a large yacht a man must have a good solid bank account to draw upon, is a truth; but that one in very moderate circumstances may enjoy all the pleasures of yachting is also true. Where there is one man who is able to own and run an *Electra* or a *Volunteer*, there are hundreds of Corinthian yachtsmen who have "fun alive" with boats of from fifteen to forty feet in length.

To state exactly, or even approximately, what yachting costs is well-nigh as difficult as to guess the correct number of hairs on a man's head. But a very good general idea may be obtained by drawing deductions from well-known data.

If old Commodore John C. Stevens, the first flag-officer of the New York Yacht Club, were alive to-day, he would be surprised as well as delighted to observe the wonderful growth and improvement yachting has made since his time, nearly half a century ago, and no doubt he would hold up his hands in amazement at the increase in the luxuriousness of the appointments of a yacht during the same period.

The New York Yacht Club was organized in 1844, by Mr. Stevens and others, and was the outcome of the first organized effort ever made in this country to popularize yachting. The yachts of those days were few in number, and of small tonnage. The *Maria*, Commodore Stevens' last yacht, though in her time a giant among her sister yachts, would be rated as only of average size compared with the larger pleasure craft of to-day. Her appointments, too, though far superior to those of her contemporaries, were very commonplace and inexpensive as compared with the palatial luxuriance of the interior fittings of any of the large yachts now afloat. To spend \$20,000 at that time in building and equipping a yacht was considered extraordinary, if not a financial impossibility, for any man except Commodore Stevens, who, as the owner of nearly all of Hoboken and Weehawken, was estimated to be about the wealthiest man in America.

Since the organization of the New York Yacht Club, however, and especially since the success of the yacht *America* in England, each succeeding year has witnessed a multiplication of yachts, an increase in their size, and especially an augmentation of the luxuriance of their furnishings that have excited the wonder and admiration of the yachting world.

The yachts *America*, *Julia*, *Una*, and *Widgeon*, of the early period of American yachting history, were prodigies of their day and generation in respect to speed and size. All four were productions of that famous designer, George Steers, and were invincible against vessels built by other designers of the period. In this respect Edward Burgess, of Boston, concededly holds to-day the place occupied by George Steers thirty-five years ago; and the former designer's *Puritan*, *Mayflower*, *Sachem*, and *Volunteer* have to-day a relative standing among yachts very much like that

which George Steers' productions enjoyed in their generation.

The total cost of all the yachts of forty years ago was less than that of Mr. William K. Vanderbilt's yacht *Alva* alone. Two hundred thousand dollars would have been sufficient to buy the entire fleet. Year by year the amount of money expended for yachts has kept pace with the steady increase of the wealth of the country, till now it exceeds several millions of dollars annually. What the magnificent fleet of vessels which constitute the squadron of the New York Yacht Club to-day cost to build, rig, spar and furnish, represents an outlay of more than \$3,500,000. The yachts at present enrolled in the New York Yacht Club number 184. Of these sixty-seven are schooners, sixty-five sloops, cutters and yawls, forty-six steamers and six launches. The tonnage of these 184 vessels aggregates 18,000 tons. The very best estimate obtainable from figures shows that it costs \$200 per ton to build, rig, and fully furnish the average American yacht ready for cruising.

Instead of the one yacht club of 1844, there were on May 1, 1888, 101 incorporated yacht clubs in America. Of the yachting associations not yet advanced to the dignity of incorporated bodies, there are doubtless from two to three times as many more. These clubs are to be found in almost every harbor on the great lakes, and on every bay, lake, river and creek from one end of the land to the other. In fact, wherever there is a sufficient body of water to sail some kind of a boat upon, there will surely be found some sort of an association for the promotion of yachting. From very careful estimates made from records of yacht building, rigging and furnishing, which have been kept for years, the total tonnage of all sailing or steam vessels owned and run exclusively for purposes of pleasure in this country, on May 1, 1888, was 203,575, representing an aggregate money-value investment of \$40,715,000. In view of these large figures, and they are increasing every year, the widespread and increasing interest taken in yachting events is hardly to be wondered at. The money estimate must be more than doubled, too, when "running expenses" are considered.

It is with a yacht very much as it is with a horse—it is not so much the buying as the keeping that makes the money go. The first cost of a yacht is, of course, very heavy, and it is estimated that this outlay, with the money spent in keeping the boats and running them, annually puts in circulation millions of dollars. The greatest item of expense in running a yacht is the pay of the crew. A vessel like the *Volunteer*, for example, gives employment for six months of the year to fifteen men. Mr. Vanderbilt's steam-yacht *Alva* carries a crew of 100 men, and the smaller of the cabin-yachts, say of about twenty-five tons, require, to properly handle them, a sailing-master, cook, and three men before the mast. All told, the yachts of the New York Yacht Club furnish employment of this kind to more than 2,500 men, to whom the yacht owners pay not less than

\$125,000 per month for six months of each year, or \$750,000 for the six months. As the average number of yachts belonging to each of the 101 yacht-clubs of the country is thirty-three, the result shows that there is, or was on May 1, 1888, a total of 3,333 yachts enrolled in the incorporated yacht clubs of the United States; and carrying out the extensions as based upon the estimate of the New York Yacht Club, the results show that these 3,333 yachts give employment to 45,289 men, to whom wages amounting to \$2,264,450 are paid monthly, or the enormous sum of \$13,586,700 for a season of six months. It may be not altogether proper to base the number and pay of crews for the yachts of the whole country upon figures of the New York Yacht Club, for the vessels of that club undoubtedly ton higher on the average than the vessels of the less prominent clubs; but it must be remembered that in getting at these figures only the incorporated associations have been considered, and the hundreds and even thousands of yachts belonging to minor associations, and the many yachts which fly the flag of no club at all, have not been taken into the calculation. From this point of view, the figures for crews and their salaries as given above furnish about as good an idea of the totals as it is possible to obtain.

Again, a yacht which is kept up in good shape has to have her rigging renewed constantly, and then there are the items of new sails, repainting and overhauling on the dry dock. These expenses cannot be estimated, and it is simply impossible to make a respectable guess, but it amounts to hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.

One of the largest, and in some respects the largest, item of expense in running a yacht is the steward's department, but it is impossible even to approximately estimate what is annually spent in this very important department. One yacht owner may spend \$15,000 a year entertaining a great number of guests at his table, while another man, with the same yacht may find one-third of that amount ample for the same purpose; but the sum of money put in circulation for ship stores and table furnishings may safely be put down as double the sum per month paid to the crew and officers in wages, or \$1,500,000 for the yachting season of six months of the fleet of the New York Yacht Club alone. Thus the total amount of money put in circulation in one season by the yacht owners of this one club will not fall short of \$3,500,000.

If the expenditure for maintaining the 184 yachts of the New York Yacht Club is \$3,500,000 a year, it is not improbable that not less than \$7,000,000 is spent on the 3,333 pleasure and racing craft of the 101 yacht clubs of the entire country for a like period of time.

There are other expenses which can be neither classified nor estimated, such as, for instance, the hiring of extra men for races; the payment of prize money to the crews of race-winners; repairs following collisions, running ashore, carrying away of sails and spars, and a thousand-and-one other things. Altogether, it is not overestimating the case to say that American yacht owners put \$7,000,000 into the hands of workmen and tradesmen last year, and this amount bids fair to increase annually. That which is put into new boats is not included in this calculation at all, and easily amounted to \$1,000,000 more.

The steamers and the large sloops built of recent years have tended to very greatly augment the expenditure of money on yachts. The steamers, especi-

ally, are a very expensive luxury. With them the coal bill is an additional and large item.

Some very wild estimates have been made as to what it costs to run one of the largest steam-yachts. It has been said that it costs Jay Gould \$3,000 a day to run the *Atalanta*. This is absurd. Vice-Commodore E. A. Bateman, of the American Yacht Club, who owns the steam-yacht *Meteor*, once was heard to say that he ran her at an expense of \$35 a day; and several years ago, when Mr. James Gordon Bennett owned the *Dauntless*, and was commodore of the New York Yacht Club, he is said to have remarked that it cost him \$25,000 a year to entertain his guests alone. Probably the most expensively run yacht to-day is the *Electra*, the flagship of the New York Yacht Club. It is said that she costs Commodore Gerry \$35,000 a year. But a yacht of fifty tons, if economy be practiced, and she be not raced, may be run at a very modest cost.

Many thousands of men enjoy all the sport to be had out of pleasure-sailing in a craft whose first cost, completely equipped, was but \$1,000 or less. Such a yacht can be run at a very slight expense. Craft of this kind are called "single-banders," from the fact that it requires but one man to handle them. Their number is large at present, and they are rapidly growing in popular favor. If the cost of such vessels, of yachts which are not enrolled in any club, and the boats of the numerous canoe-clubs, were added to the figures given as representing the amount invested in the pleasure vessels of the United States, the aggregate would be something enormous.

ROBERT DILLON.

HOW'S THIS FOR BASS?

THERE are odd places in and around the waters of New York where the enthusiastic fisherman can find plenty of sport at his favorite pastime. One day, toward the close of September, W. E. Sibley, of this city, an angler of some repute, and a companion, Mr. Del. Ruch, of Clifford's, Staten Island, set out to troll for striped bass in the Great Kills. After they had trolled for some time, and had landed only a few one and two pounders, the sport grew tame, and Del. Ruch left Sibley's boat and joined another fisherman to change his luck. Instead of Ruch finding luck it came to Sibley. In a few minutes after Ruch had left, Sibley's troll was seized, and he found himself struggling with a bass of more than ordinary fight. A lively tussle took place. The fish had no idea of surrendering, and for half an hour the fish and the fisherman had a nip-and-tuck time of it. Finally the bass, wearied and worn out, yielded slowly, and when it was brought alongside of the boat it showed up magnificently. It was a monster. Though conquered, the fish was not captured. A difficulty arose regarding the ways and means about getting it into the boat. There was no gaff-hook handy. Mr. Sibley was perplexed. The thought of losing that bass, when it was so near and yet so far, nearly unnerved him. He was equal to the occasion, however. Holding the line stiff, Sibley ran his hand along the fish, slipped it in beneath the immense gill covering, and lugged the big fellow into the boat after a great effort. When measured and weighed, it lacked just half an inch of three feet, and tipped the scale at eighteen pounds. It is said to be the largest striped bass on record caught within twenty miles of New York.