

A MONTH'S CRUISE ON THE YACHT EMPRESS.

Yachting will doubtless receive an impetus through the appointment of Lord Brassey to the Governorship of Victoria. The noble Lord has intimated his intention of sailing his own yacht out from the old country and yachtsmen will doubtless be ready to extend a hearty welcome. Already there are rumours of several wealthy men in the adjoining colonies arranging for the latest and most improved yachts to be built to order. The pastime has been increasing in popularity for some time in this colony, and it is supposed that Mr. Wylie's "Alex" is the best yacht in Australia. Be that as it may, the advent of Mr. Burford's Empress gives the knowing ones an opportunity to defer judgment for the present or until the next season's races, when the Empress will meet the crack boat for a trial of speed. A party of gentlemen, eleven all told, left Glenelg on Monday, February 4th, by invitation of Mr. Burford for a month's cruise. The yacht left her moorings at 3.30 and had to beat down to Noarlunga, which was reached at 6.15. Taking advantage of a slant of wind a bee line was made for Troubridge which was abreast at 11 p.m. From Troubridge it was necessary to slaken sail, double reef the mainsail and slow the mizzen in consequence of the wind freshening, and with a high headsea, during which the yacht behaved splendidly. Port Lincoln was reached and the anchor dropped at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday. Here the time was passed in shooting, fishing, walking, and driving, several days being most pleasantly spent, and special attention being paid to the oysters. On Thursday several local gentlemen accepted an invitation for a sail, and a most enjoyable three hours' cruise to Spalding Core was the result. Bidding farewell the beautiful port, at 7 p.m. on Sunday a start was made for Port Augusta. The trip across Boston Bay to Sir Joseph Bank's Group was accomplished in double quick time under all sail, with fair wind. Shortly after midnight, however, the wind fell away and the rest of the day was open in beating up to Baccy Bay, where anchor was dropped for the night. On Tuesday, a course was shaped for Port Augusta, but adverse winds prevented good time, and the port was only reached on Wednesday. A stay of three nights enabled the party to appreciate Port Augustian heat and flies as well as the locally produced fruit, this latter was excellent. During the stay the shipment of 104 camels on the S.S. Bullimba for W.A. relieved the monotony. Early on Friday morning the Empress cast off for Port Pirie, and with a fair wind made good sailing until Harvey Bay was reached, when a dead calm necessitated anchoring for the night. On Saturday morning a fresh start was made and Port Pirie reached early in the evening. Here some of the party left the yacht and returned to the city. Several days at Port Pirie, and on Wednesday sails were again hoisted for the run home. Some time was spent at Port Broughton. Moonta. and Wallaroo, and Glenelg

Port Broughton, Moonta, and Wallaroo, and Glenelg reached on Sunday evening, at 9.30. The party thoroughly enjoyed the holiday and all returned with much better health and good spirits. Captain Mountifield, who has charge of the Empress, is a veritable yacht captain. Ever since he was 12 years old he has been engaged in yachting, and has had charge of some of the finest yachts of the old world. For a number of years he was yachting in the Mediterranean Sea, and since his arrival in Australia has commanded Judge Bunday's Wanderer, Mr. Honey's Zephyr, Mr. Sison's auxiliary steam yacht White Squall, Commodore Munton's Alfreda, the Magic, and others, and altogether a most careful navigator. His latest command, the Empress is a credit to him and his crew, everything about the yacht being in excellent order. The Empress is a yawl-rigged yacht of 40 tons, 76 feet overall, 13 ft. 6 in. beam, and draws 8 ft. 6 in. She was built in Sydney, in 1887, from designs by Mr. Walter Reeks, naval architect, for Mr. J. H. Want, Q.C. She is excellently fitted up, and can accommodate ten visitors, besides the crew. Every modern improvement has been adopted, including the handy billy capstan and gipsy racket winch; cooking and other arrangements are simply perfect. The yacht has two boats in davits. When in racing form, she carries about 5,500 square feet of canvas, including spinaker, and will no doubt give a good account of herself in the next Kintore Cup race.
