

THE YACHT HAIDEE. (FROM A CORRESPONDENT.)

Foremost among the flotilla which accompanied the Flying Squadron down the bay, to witness its evolutions in the late naval review, might be noticed a hardy-looking little cutter of some fourteen tons, yacht measurement, and at the top of a very taut mast, raking about eighty-three degrees, there flaunted the burgee of the Geelong Yacht Club. This rakish-looking specimen of marine architecture was none other than the yacht *Haidee*, late of the Sydney Royal Yacht Squadron, and now owned by Major Heath, G.V.A. And it is with a certain amount of regret that we must inform our readers that the *Haidee* is the only real specimen of a yacht that Victoria and the maritime queen of the southern hemisphere can boast of, while our more slow-going Sydney neighbors can sport a pleasure navy of crack vessels, fit to cope with anything afloat of their tonnage. How long this is to continue it is not for us at this distance from the seaboard to say, but, certainly, the so-called merchant-princes of Melbourne have become degenerate Britons indeed, and unworthy descendants of the old vikings, or Hobson's Bay, affording as it does every desiderata for a yachting station, would ere this have its yacht club and a flotilla of trim barks ready to meet their Sydney rivals whenever the commodore of the R.S.Y.S. led his high-mettled racers through the Heads to engage in an aquatic tournament in either Hobson's or Corio bay. When we consider the progressive influence the yachting element of Britain has had in the remodelling both of her commercial and royal navies, not to speak of the keen hardy sea lions that it has added to both, but especially to the naval reserve, it cannot but be a matter for regret that *Victoria*, with all her boasted commercial greatness, has not her yachting flotilla and her regular yacht matches.

Can it be that Melbourne is so satiated with McCullochism and shoddy, and that the scramble for wealth is so great, that its leading men have become oblivious to the natural proclivities of Britons, and have lost all pride in the element that made the prestige of Old Albion? Surely something akin to a stolid puritanism, or an almost fetish worship of the golden calf, has seized on their national character, and which develops itself in Young Australia being totally averse to a life on the ocean wave. Yachting, irrespective of the fine manly exercise it affords to its votaries and employees, has much to commend it to the attention of those to whom are entrusted the task of founding a young maritime empire. The stately liners and rakish-looking intercolonial steamers which come and go from our bay, have all taken a leaf from the log of the pleasure navy of Great Britain. And where are a greater lot of dare-devils to be found than those to be met with at the starting buoys in a yacht match? Looked at strictly from a point of defence, there is everything to commend it to the most serious attention of the people of Victoria.

Returning to the subject of our present sketch, the *Haidee*, as seen from the deck of the *Nelson*, presented a most jaunty appearance, and as the breeze increased, soon, with the aid of her topsail, overhauled the latter, then going at least ten knots. Evidently not wishing to pass the stately old liner which led the van, it was noticed that her helmsman had frequently co luff up, and ultimately her topsail was hauled down and safely stowed. Notwithstanding she

hailed down and safely stowed. Notwithstanding she danced merrily up to windward, and ultimately became enveloped in the rain squall, which unfortunately marred the glories of the occasion. On return to her moorings, her crew, together with some friends of the owner—among whom was your correspondent, picked up during the cruise—retired to her more than cosy cabin to change their sea togs (for verily, Sir, the rain came down like marine spikes) and refresh the inner man with Warrenheip, hot tea, a broiled rasher, and biscuits in galore, enough to gladden the heart of the yachtsmen after their exciting tussle with the elements. Such luxuries in a little cutter of 14 tons are somewhat rare in these waters. Her principal cabin is fitted up with every convenience and luxury which those who go down to the sea in ships could desire; even the pencils of Chevalier and Bouvelot have been called into requisition on the panels surmounting the upholstered lounges. The *Haidee* was built in 1866 for James Farmer, Esq., of Sydney, by George Lomax of Balmain, and cost £1400. Her dimensions are—length over all, 38 feet; beam, 10 feet; draft of water forward, 5 feet; aft, 7 feet 6 inches. Intended originally for a racer, one is at a loss to account for her great beam, which, compared with her length, is only something less than four times the latter, whereas the latest additions to the pleasure navy of England and America average between four and a half and five times the beam. The merest tyro is aware that the narrow beam coupled with a quality of form of mid-ship section which gives good lateral resistance, is capable of attaining a higher velocity, with a given spread of sail, than a vessel with a greater breadth of beam. But some aver that the greater the breadth of beam the more canvas she will carry to drive her. This very general conclusion has been proved to be erroneous, not only in the pleasure, but also in the merchant and royal navies of Britain. The *Scylla*, for instance, now sailing under the flag of Admiral Hornby, is five times the length of her beam, while the *Liverpool*, *Phoebe*, *Liffey*, and *Endymion* are about four times, and the *Barrosa* averages nearly four and a half times; yet the *Scylla*, although two years older than her consorts, can with the greatest ease, in any weather, out sail the best of them. But none of the above-mentioned can approach in speed the American frigates *Merimac* and *Niagara*, of six times the length of beam. During the last cruise of the former frigate, prior to being cut down by the Confederates for her sanguinary performances in Hampden Roads, she attained a speed of fifteen knots an hour on several occasions. This has never been equalled by any of the so-called Flying Squadron. The *Alabama* and *Kearsage* averaged from six and a half to seven times their beam, the former being the longest in proportion. Now, all this goes to prove that the narrow beam, while admitting a greater length of entrance and run, is capable of higher velocities when impelled by a given power of either sail or steam. And here we must, all things considered, bring the designer of the *Haidee* in guilty of not profiting by contemporary experience in naval matters. It must, however, be conceded that the more we descend in size and tonnage the more powerful in proportion we should build our vessels, whether for business or pleasure. Local influences must always regulate the form and proportions of all sorts of vessels, yachts included. Sydney harbor, for instance, is noted for its cross currents caused by the different islands, and its southerly bursters and brick-felders, all of which may have impressed the designer

unremitting islands, and its southerly thrusts and brick-felders, all of which may have impressed the designer of the Haidee with the necessity of building a more powerful vessel for her tonnage than any of her imported English rivals. In Sydney, where yachting has been so long an institution, and where vessels such as the *Xariffa* have been built, which has beaten every imported yacht, even some of the cracks of the English Channel, we should incline to the opinion that some such reasons as the foregoing accounts for her bulky proportions, were there no other appearances in the Haidee conflicting with the proved experiences of English and American builders. For instance, the Haidee has no sheer line, and is as straight as a board on deck. This at once robs her of symmetry of form, so notable in the English cutter; nor can we discern any practical advantage in the straight deck line. On the contrary, it adds to the bulk of hull out of water, every square inch of which affords resistance to the wind, and consequently blows the hull bodily to leeward. The low long hulls of the sea rovers and blockade runners are pretty good evidence of their superiority. To our mind, a craft without a graceful sheer line is very much like a young damsel without a waist. It has been asserted by a celebrated American naval architect, that the finest and most symmetrical hull that could be fashioned in the immersed portion would look ugly and cloggy without a sheer line. The next point of interest in the Haidee is the peculiarity of her water-line; and here again she differs from the modern cutter. Her parallels to the line of flotation show a bold flowing convex line forward, and a concave line aft. Want of time and space prevent us from entering into the scientific points of the water-line question. We would simply state that from the time the celebrated iron cutter *Mosquito* was built down to the present extraordinary performances of the cutters *Fiona* and *Omarion*, every successful vessel, whether schooner or cutter, has been built on the hollow or wave-line principle, invariably beating vessels built in accordance with the parabola curve entrance. The schooner yacht *America*, and the now equally celebrated English schooners *Egeria*, *Galatea*, and *Albertina*, attest this assertion. But here we are met with the extraordinary performances of the Sydney yacht *Xariffa*, of 31 tons. The parallels to the line of flotation of this vessel, both fore and aft, are simply segments of circles from the water-line to the garboard streak; even the outline of the keel is the shape of a half moon, so much so that the rudder is curved out to get the most peculiar shaped stern-post that was ever attached to a vessel since the time of the coracle of ancient Britain. The *Xariffa* has most unquestionably proved herself to be the thing salt water likes, in her numerous matches, especially those with the crack schooner *Chance*, of double her tonnage, and the equally crack cutter *Alerte*, of 80 tons, both Channel first-rates. We have, however, some grave doubts as to the handling of the latter vessels in their respective matches with the Sydney crack. Rumor hath it that their crews were not up to the mark, and were blissfully ignorant of the currents and soundings of Sydney harbor. The Haidee tumbles home very much in her deck, which has the effect of keeping her chain-plates and shrouds clear of the water when she is pressed, and it is an unquestionable advantage in a small vessel. It will be seen from the following list of her performances that the Haidee has proved herself not only a dangerous but also a successful rival in many a hard fought race:—

Balmain Regatta, 1866—Vivanne, 12 tons, first; Ella, second; Haidee, third. Woolloomooloo Regatta, 1866—Neried, 12 tons, first; Haidee, second;

Ella, third; Vivanne, fourth. R. S. Y. Match, 1867—Ella, first; Neried, second; Haidee, third. Anniversary Regatta, 1867—Haidee, first; Ella, second; Little Australia, 5 tons, third; Neried, last. St. Patrick's Regatta, 1867—Haidee, first; Vivanne, second; Australia, third; Ella, ashore. Balmain Regatta, 1868—Neried, first; Haidee, second; Ella, third; Vivanne, fourth. Anniversary Regatta, 1868 (Handicap)—Neried, first; Haidee, second; Ella carried away her throat halyards, third. Ten yachts competed, amongst which were the *Xariffa*, 31 tons; Vivid, 25 tons; and Neried. R. W. Squadron, 1868—Haidee, first; Ella, second; Pert, third; Vivanne, fourth; Neried, fifth. Her masts at present rake too much aft, and is slipped three feet too far forward; this makes her bore by the head. Her weatherly qualities are, however, unquestionable; her forte being on a wind. The yacht Southern Cross, belonging to the same owner, flares out above the water line, although modelled with straight sides. This was, however, more the fault of her owner than her builder; but we notice the same objectionable feature introduced in her *fac simile* the *Corio*, as also the most unpardonable lowering of the gunwale line on the lower margin of the counter. The Haidee, on the contrary, finishes aft with a fine clear run, which causes her to leave only a faint outline of wake astern. In the approaching Geelong regatta the *Corio*, sailed by Alex. Holland, will test the powers of the new-comer; and should the wind prove light and little beating to windward, the Geelong yacht will not be beaten much, if any, by the Sydney crack. On the contrary, should the wind be strong and plenty of beating to be done, the *Corio* might as well remain at her moorings. The Haidee was purchased by Major Heath during his late visit to Sydney, and notwithstanding our strictures, he has every reason to congratulate himself on his purchase. She encountered some very rough weather in her passage round, and proved herself beyond all question a splendid sea boat.