

GULF DISASTERS

Yachting Half a Century Ago

(By 'Vagrant.') Yachting, like all other sports, has its calamities. Fortunately there are in South Australia fewer in these days of small yachts than in earlier times. The explanation seems to be that years ago there, was more deep sea cruising in large yachts, whereas small craft now rarely go far from the shore.

Yacht Hygiea Collision

The late Sir William Milne. Vice-Commodore of the Glenelg Yacht Club, had a schooner of 84 tons built and beautifully fitted. During summer months every week-end he, his family and friends, used to sail from Glenelg across the gulf or to Kangaroo Island. She used to look a picture with her white sails as she sailed away. About 45 years ago Sir William decided to take a trip in her to Melbourne with some friends on board, the only one I can remember was Mr. Bussell, then a clerical student and now Archdeacon Bussell. They left Glenelg about 6 o'clock in the evening in a light breeze, and with all sail set that evening was partially moonlight, and when in Backstairs Passage the captain of the Hygiea, thinking he had enough moonlight, did not show his red and green lights. The steamers running to and from Melbourne in those days were not the palatial boats they are now. They included the old Aldinga, Adelaide, and Penola, and others from 300 to 1,100 tons. That night the Penola on her regular course was steaming inward, Capt Snewin was on the bridge. Suddenly the bowsprit of the Hygiea loomed over the side of the steamer. It knocked Capt. Snewin into the sea. The captain was picked up injured. The bowsprit raked the Penola doing considerable damage besides injuring herself. The Penola proceeded to Adelaide, as did the Hygiea. Litigation arose, but I think the matter was settled amicably between the parties. It cost a good deal in repairs, and Sir William Milne sold the Hygiea to a wealthy Victorian yachtsman.