

Aquatics.

YACHTING.

OPENING OF THE SEASON.

[BY BOBSTAY.]

This afternoon the yachting season 1894-95 will be formally opened by the familiar manoeuvres of the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron on the Port River. Twenty-one yachts are expected to take part in the following order:—Beatrice, Alexa, Miranda, Idler, Solace, Satanella, Shona, Nyrocha, Doris, Katie, Macmura, Atlanta, Waterlily, Laughing Wave, Siola, Nricha, Neva, Stormbird, Evander, Ivy. The Magic will be the Commodore's boat, and will head the fleet to below the North Arm, where the manoeuvres will be carried out.

The number of yachts which are expected to take part in this year's opening evolutions is slightly in excess of last year, and altogether the prospects for a good season are right. Two yachts new to these waters will be flying the club's burgee. Of these the Magic, purchased in Sydney by a Syndicate of Port Adelaide yachtsmen, is the larger, and she will fly the Commodore's flag to-day. The Magic is a twenty-three-rater, and was built about twenty years ago in Sydney to the order of Mr. Fairfax. Until the advent of the Era she was the crack Sydney yacht. She afterwards passed into the hands of Dr. Elliot. A Syndicate of five gentlemen purchased her a few months ago. The Magic is a very desirable craft, and looks almost as good as new. She is 55 ft. overall, has a beam of 12 ft., and an extreme draught of 9 ft. 3 in. She is fitted with inside drop patent blocks and other late improvements above deck. The sails are from the loft of Messrs. Laphorne & Kasey. The stem is straight, but there is an overhang at the stern. Below everything is as comfortable as could be desired, a special feature being the particularly good ventilation provided. Above the centre of the saloon is a dome skylight of engraved glass, fitted with brass ventilators. The whole concern can be unshipped if desired. There is also another glass skylight at the head of the stairs. The saloon is very roomy, and the panels of the lockers all round being of specially selected hauri give a finished appearance to the room. Lockers seem almost as abundant as ventilators. Aft of the stairs is the ladies' cabin, with two berths. This is in keeping with other parts of the vessel. By making up beds in the main cabin twelve persons altogether can be accommodated. Just off the saloon is a lavatory, and close handy is the forecabin, fitted with a stove and all other necessaries, and also a couple of bunks. The vessel is a pretty model. The Doris—the other boat new to these waters—is owned and was built by Mr. E. N. Dewhurst at Port Augusta in 1889 from a published design for a cruiser by Mr. G. L. Watson. The boat so pleased her owner that he wrote to Mr. Watson expressing his sense of appreciation and received a very graceful reply. The Doris is a 24-rater, 25 ft. 4 in. overall, 22 ft. on the water line, and 6 ft. 2 in. beam. She has an overhanging stem and straight bow, and is rigged as a pole-masted cutter. Double planking has been placed throughout. The Doris comes to the Port with a great reputation as a racer, she having been beaten once only. Most of last year's boats have undergone the customary overhaul, and some have had alterations effected to them. Mr. H. Cruickshank's Satanella has been raised all through from 3 ft. aft to a few inches forward, and her counter has been carried out 7 ft., making 35 ft. over all. A 10-in. skylight admits of 5 ft. 4 in. head room, and wide settees down the full length of the cabin have been added. The galley is partitioned off. The boat has been fitted with a pole-mast, and has been canvassed to a three-rater. At Mr. McFarlane's yard at Birkenhead the Maggie and the Ada are both laid up, and will not be put into commission this season. The favourite Miranda has been overhauled, and the Siola has had her lead keel dropped about 12 in. The Nellie is also in the yard, and will not be out for the opening day. Mr. Wyly's

dropped about 12 in. The Nellie is also in the yard, and will not be out for the opening day. Mr. Wyly's Alexa has been on Mr. Moore's slip for overhaul, and looks in first-class condition. Captain Smith's Katy has had a piece put on the keel, and has shown very good pace in consequence. Solace has had the centreboard taken out. Beatrice, Pastime, and Alfreda are still in their winter garb, but nearly all of the other boats have been overhauled, and will take part in the procession to-day.

The question of the Yacht Club moorings came before the Marine Board again on Thursday, and it was decided to allow the club to resume the old moorings for a time on the condition that the yachts are moved if the berth is required for other purposes. A number of owners are contemplating putting down moorings at Largs Bay.

The squadron has issued its racing programme, and there are six events altogether on the card. Four races will take place at Largs Bay, and the remaining two over the inside course. The Kintore Cup is again placed down for February. There are four handicap races, and only one under the rating time allowance, exclusive of the big event. For the first race the method of handicapping adopted last season for several races will be observed, viz., a list of the yachts entered to compete will be handed to each owner, who will allot the handicaps for each boat excepting his own, and the mean of these handicaps shall be the handicap for the race. In the other three handicaps the handicaps will be allotted by the Commodore and two members selected by the committee. The *Model Yachtsman and Canoeist* (England) for September, referring to the matches between the Vigilant and Britannia, shows that out of sixteen matches the former won five and the latter eleven, and then continues:—"It will be gathered that when favoured with her own wind Vigilant is considerably the faster yacht of the two, while Britannia has the more successful all round qualities for match sailing under the varying conditions that racers have to meet with from day to day; therefore, Britannia is undoubtedly the better boat of the two for the purpose for which she was built, whilst the Vigilant would only be the better boat with conditions just to suit her. We must not forget, however, that Vigilant's mission was to win the America Cup, and that the races for that trophy cannot be won in very light airs on account of the time limit, whilst to experience a very hard blow is an unusual thing in the America Cup races, at any rate not of such frequency as to make it necessary to build a hard-weather craft. Taking these things into consideration, then, we see that the medium wind is likely to be the factor to decide the America Cup races, and this is just where Vigilant shines, so that for the purpose she was designed for she is undoubtedly a stroke of genius."