THE HISTORIC AMERICA'S CUP.

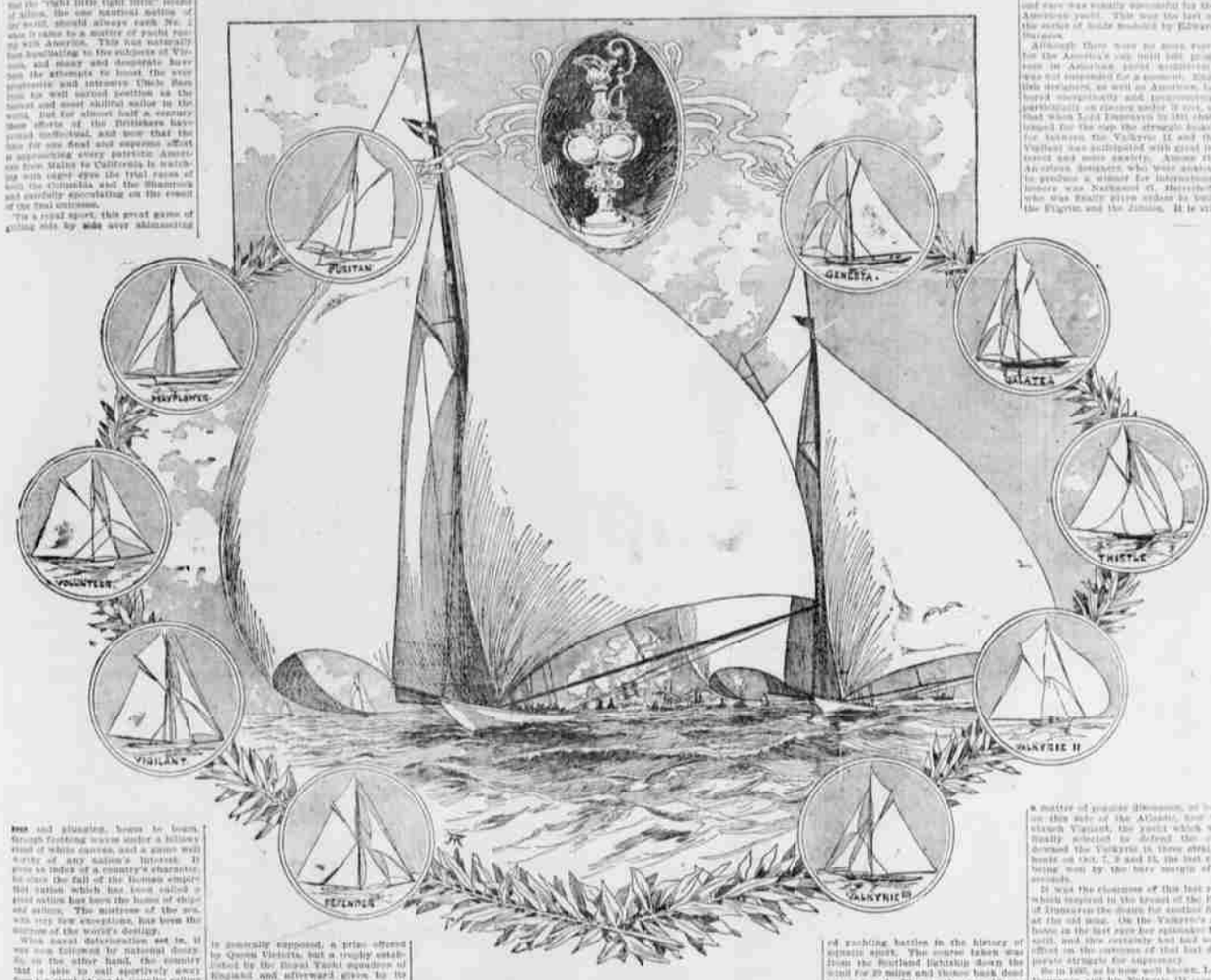
The Two Yachts Which Will Compete For the Highly Prized Trophy--Something of the Former Famous Contests.

WORKING TOWARD SIMILAR TYPES.

ENGLAND since the days of Drake, has claimed herself upon being the mistress of the sea. But there are one or two occasions when Britannia does not always rule the waves.

For, in fact, one of Old's little tunes for the "right little tight little" island of albion, the one maritime nation of the world, should always rank No. 1, also is a matter of yacht racing with America. This has naturally been humiliating to the subjects of Victoria and many and desperate have been the attempts to boost the ever proteanic and interesting Uncle Sam into a well earned position as the fastest and most skilled sailor in the world, but for almost half a century most efforts of the Britishers have proved ineffectual, and now that the time for one final and supreme effort is approaching every patriotic American from Maine to California is watching with eager eyes the trial races of both the Columbia and the Shamrock and carefully speculating on the result of the final outcome.

'Tis a royal sport, this great game of getting rich by side over skimmering



THE AMERICA'S CUP RACERS OF 1899 AND FORMER YEARS.

Fifty years ago its entire original cost was only $25. Yet several million dollars have been expended by Great Britain and about as much by the United States, for the possession of this precious little relic. This cup was set, as it is generally supposed, a prize offered by Queen Victoria, but a roughly established by the Royal Yacht squadron of England and afterward given to its original winners, the owners of the yacht America, to the New York Yacht club. Since that day it must be acknowledged that the Britishers have not lavished any great amount of enthusiasm from this historic one of their own making. In fact, American flies have quaffed little but gall and wormwood from its lees.

When the little schooner yacht America of the United States, with every inch of canvas drawing and every conceivable sail over the finish line of the first international yacht race between Yankee and English craft 40 years ago, she established a record that has since then been beautifully and picturesquely sustained.

The America's victory was so decisive that none of the British fleet was in sight at the finish of the race, and for many years the cup was allowed to remain in America without a challenge or an effort to have it restored to its native isle. This first race took place at the Cowes regatta, off the Isle of Wight, and there were 15 schooners and cutters at the start, some three of the very cream of all England's sailing craft. The triumphant America was a mammoth schooner of 170 tons, though there were at least four vessels among the contesting fleet which outweighed her, six thousand tons nearly doubling the size of the American yacht. This initial race was sailed in variable weather, but for all this there was sufficient breeze at times to be strong enough to carry away the America's flying jib boom when rounding the Needles. The owners of the successful yacht were Commodore J. C. Stevens, Hiram A. Stevens, J. B. Foley, Hamilton Wilkes and George L. Schuyler, and these gentlemen it was who decided to present the cup in question to the New York Yacht club as a perpetual challenge trophy to be contested for by clubs of any foreign country. The conditions and specifications for an challenging yachts were: Draft, measurements being open to any craft of not less than 30 and not more than 200 tons, national lines measurement.

The real object of such a gift was patent to the rest of the world. It was not, however, until 1866, and 17 years after it had first been carried off by the America, that the gentlemen of Great Britain made any serious attempt toward the recovery of the cup, which their surrening countrymen had lost. Some time after the close of the civil war, however, and after much discussion among British yachtsmen, a challenge came out from England. This was in 1866. The race was sailed on the 8th of August, 1866, and was won by the American boat Mystic the race being run over the regattas course of the Royal Yacht club. The American victory was a most decisive one, and as great and national pride was taken in the result a renewed and national interest in the sport was thereafter observable.

So when Mr. Ashbury, the owner of the English challenger, made one more effort, in the following year, to recapture the cup he found quite a number of gentlemen ready enough to enter into the struggle. Mr. Cozzens, the owner of the Magic, accepted the challenge, and the races were sailed on the 18th, 19th and 20th of October, 1871. The new defender of the cup for America was the Columbia, while the English challenger was another the name of Livonia. On Oct. 18 and 19 the Columbia defeated the Livonia, while on the 20th the Columbia was defeated. Two days later the American yacht Sappho defeated the Livonia and repeated the trick on the 23d of October. On the race of Oct. 19 the Columbia was disabled, so it was necessary to substitute the Sappho.

The result of these races was somewhat of a disappointment to the British, who did not care to challenge for the cup again until 1875. The third series of races took place during the summer of the following year, on the 13th and 15th of August. The Canadian challenger who was willing to act as the hare to be sacrificed on the Scotland altar of Dundee Hook was Mr. C. Gifford, one of the most famous yachtsmen who ever hailed a tiller. The gallant man brought down the Countess of Dufferin, which sailed against the American defender Madeline, owned by Mr. J. S. Dickerson.

In the first race, which took place over the regular New York Yacht club course, the American boat won by 10 minutes and 10 seconds, and the following day, in a race of 30 miles to windward off Sandy Hook lighthouse and return, Madeline proved an easy winner, crossing the line over 17 minutes before her English rival.

So for another five years the British lion retired to his master lair, and an English keen parliament's Union Jack fell and flutter about New York harbor until then when a second attempt took place in 1881. The races of that year took place later in the season than usual, the first being on Nov. 8 and the second on Nov. 10. This time the first of Queen Yacht club of Canada was the challenger, and Captain Cormbert was the best Canuck who brought the Atalanta down out of the cities of the Dominion for the event. The Canadian crew had a hard time getting down, though, for she was found wider than deep, which sailed against the American defender Mischief, owned by Mr. J. S. Dickerson.

In the first race, which took place over the regular New York Yacht club course, the American boat won by 10 minutes and 10 seconds, and the following day, in a race of 30 miles to windward off Sandy Hook lighthouse and return, Mischief came home over 17 minutes before her English rival.

The next three years the British lion retired to his master lair, and an English keen parliament's Union Jack fell and flutter about New York harbor until then when a second attempt took place in 1885