

BRITANNIA STILL WINNING.

LEADS THE AILSA IN THE RACES ON THE MEDITERRANEAN.

The New English Eighty-Foot Cutters Are Approaching Completion— Many Small Racing Yachts Be- ing Built in England and France.

From Our Own Correspondent.

GLASGOW, March 13.—The Prince of Wales must feel well pleased. His Britannia is winning as she pleases, and has not been outclassed by Ailsa just yet. The new mainsail of Britannia is doing the cutter fine service, and when her steel boom is shipped, on her return from the Mediterranean, she will no doubt do better. Ailsa's mainsail was stretched at the Clyde regattas last year, and is none the better for the previous service. Ailsa's topsail yard is fifty-five feet long, an unruly spar, and, with breeze stiffening, the big topsail took charge of the cutter on the second day at Marseilles. It was got down, but not till it had burst. Britannia shifted from jack-yard topsail to jibheaded topsail, but Ailsa, without her topsail, was reaching Britannia level in the hard wind, which she cannot do with all her canvas in moderate breezes. Bue experience has proved again and again that a beamy yacht will not drive at her best speed under too much canvas, while a cutter with less beam will.

It is in reaching that the narrower Britannia has the "heels" of Ailsa—and the same result is seen in running dead down the wind. The elder Fife was watching Watson's beamy forty-rater, Queen Mab, running dead with spinnaker in a breeze in the Clyde, but not getting away from the narrower forties, when Fife remarked that the spinnaker was spoiling her. The spinnaker was lowered, and then the Queen Mab dropped her rivals fast. It was the narrow challenger, Genesta, that ran the Puritan to the lee flagboat, but on the wind, with sheets flat, the Puritan outwinded the Genesta hand over hand.

Duke of Abruzzi's Fast Cruiser.

The Duke of Abruzzi has decided that the cutter with eighty-foot load-waterline that Watson has designed for him is to be a fast cruiser. What the distinction is between a fast cruiser and a racing rater has not hitherto been discovered, but this new cutter, it may be taken for granted, will be as fast as Mr. Watson can design her under the girth rule. The most recent departure is to shorten the heavily taxed load waterline and enlarge the highly taxed sail area to the utmost. Of course, this means extreme overhangs, with a very long and untaxed hull above the waterline, and sufficient lead to carry the excess of canvas. The frames of Soper's eighty-foot racing cutter, for Mr. Rose, are being set up in Fay & Courts's yard, at Southampton. Fife's forty-rater Isolde and Watson's forty-rater Carina are being recoppered at Sandbank Clyde for the season's racing. Carina, with heavier spars and more canvas, it is expected, will race all round the coast and have a better share of the prizes that Watson's later-built Caress had. But the sport to be expected from the forty-rating class does not promise much.

Fife's three new twenties, building from his own design, are in frame, and are the only twenty-raters for racing building in this country.

A pretty large contingent of new cruisers of from five tons to seventy-five tons building in the Thames, English Channel, at Liverpool, and Dublin Bay, will be added to the cruising squadron this coming season, but, curiously, none of this class are building in the Clyde. Small cruisers are becoming popular among the large class who enjoy sailing, but have sickened over the troubles about the measurements for classification of racing raters. Indeed, the building of yachts over twenty tons is rapidly dying out, and the sport of the future seems destined to be confined to raters and cruisers of five tons and under, in the sailing and racing of which the amateur element is predominant.

The new Clyde class of small racing cruisers is filling up, four of these tiny cutters being in hand. The Clyde has all along objected to one design or one designer of classes, and this new class will boast of a variety of designs and designers, with all the additional interest such a wholesome rivalry begets. The designers of this class are, of course, more or less controlled by the fixed dimensions of the class which are 19 feet load water line and 25 feet over all. One of the class ordered is for Corry Clark, to be built at Dumbarton from the design of Linton Hope of the Thames. Another is for G. W. Steven, to be designed and built by Fife. The third is for D. T. Morison, Glasgow, to be built by M. Lean of Roseneath, and the fourth, to be built at Glasgow, is from the design of Alfred Milne, a new and unknown professional. The class only to be established as a class in 1898, but the boats launched in time for the coming Summer will be admitted to race with other classes under handicaps. The boats are completely decked with a low "coach roof" over the small cabin, but quite big enough for the youngsters who intend to sail and race them. For a couple, or at most three young fellows on board, a cruise in the Clyde or the salt water locks connected with the Clyde, will be thoroughly enjoyable, and the training to take the starch out of young swells will be unrivaled. With light counters and Niagara noses the little craft will be both sightly and seaworthy, and clear of the yacht racing association, the members can settle any little troubles they may have among themselves.

The pressure of work at various ports to get small raters and cruisers ready for the season is very encouraging to builders and designers. A year or two since any one would have been laughed at for commissioning a designer to design a 12-foot boat, but nowadays the carpenter dare not bend a frame unless the design is before him. The care taken seems absurd, but then racing boats cost money, and it is cheaper to have a design than to spoil timber.

The Mersey and the Dublin Bay yacht sailors are particularly lively this Spring, and are promising themselves a fine season of racing for small raters and small cruisers. At Kingston, Dublin, three small classes are to be very prominent. These are the "Colleens," the "Droleens," and the "Water Ways," the last being a class started years ago. The Colleen class has just been started. Doyle of Kingston is building two of the Colleens, which, like the class, are to have centre boards. Holloway is building another pair of Colleens, while three Droleens are being completed in Foley's yard, Kingston. From the Menai Strait round to Barrow-on-Furness, the whole coast is alive with the building and fitting out of small raters and cruisers.

The rapidity with which the French have set about establishing small classes is remarkable. In the Riviera regatta there are races for ten-tonners, which class Herreshoff's Dakota has abolished in our waters. The French have besides races for five-tonners, three-tonners, two-tonners, one ton and even smaller, and the competitors are almost exclusively French designed and French built.

Considering the recent boom of yacht racing, connected with the Riviera regattas, this is little short of marvelous, and suggests a great future for the sport in France. But far above every other consideration, as well as the expenditure connected with the sport is the charm of better acquaintance and friendly feeling which the Riviera regattas are bringing to the surface.

Marine and Field Regatta.

The Marine and Field Club of Bath Beach, which has not been active in yachting of late years, will hold a regatta on June 19. The regatta will be open only to yachts owned in the club, and each boat must be sailed by an amateur. The club has arranged for a steamer to run from the Battery daily during the Summer for the accommodation of the members and their guests.

Commodore Gould's Appointments.

Commodore George J. Gould, Atlantic Yacht Club, has appointed Gen. Thomas L. Watson Fleet Captain and Dr. Wisner D. Townsend Fleet Surgeon. These gentlemen served on the Commodore's personal staff last year, and were popular with all the yachtsmen.