



# NEW *The* YACHTS YACHTING AND BOATING MONTHLY



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# THE "SINGLE-HANDER."

BY

CHAS. PEARS.

SINGLE-HANDED cruising is the acme of sailing. In its fully developed state it is the most fascinating form of madness. In the case of such men as McMullen, where to be independent of the shore, keeping the sea for a month or more at a stretch is the height of joy—the joy of apprehension—the development is complete. These fully-developed individuals are dead; they died, no doubt, when the straight stem and the consequent faculty for "heaving to" gave out. We of to-day, with our spoon-bows and fin keels, are prohibited entirely from such practices,



RIDING TO A "LASH UP."





THE SINGLE-HANDER'S COMPANIONS.





A GLORIOUS NIGHT.

and the most we claim for our craft, as opposed to the straight stemmer, is that we can get into port quicker than the old boat.

Still, it is not only the boat that has changed. I fully believe that such a man as McMullen, if he had found himself aboard a modern rater unable to "heave to," rather than give in to the elements and smash through it for port, would ride to a lash up of spare spars and sit tight until he thought fit to move on his course. For there would surely be no sea anchor aboard—I never saw one upon a modern yacht.

There is an old saying, "Ports rot both ships and men." Certainly the man who makes for port at a sign of bad weather has deteriorated. As a rule he gets from bad to worse, finally using his craft as a kind of houseboat. How often when "it's blowing outside" have we gone to "have a look at it," and instead of turning tail kept on? How often has a single-handed craft gone out from an anchorage crowded with sheltering yachts and caused the others to follow suit?

There are many qualities that go to make the single-hander. First of all, let those who would understand him, remember that his cruises are not regarded by him in the light of outings; they border more upon the scientific. Each cruise is an experiment, and, as it is impossible to get two minds to work as one, he becomes a single-hander.

He prefers to be thought of as an amateur sailor; to him the term yachtsman implies a glorified beanfeaster.

He is usually a fine sailor, both at the tiller and with the marline-spike; excessively particular, even to the point of quarrelsomeness in all matters appertaining to the working of his ship. Another reason why he is a single-hander is that by being such things will be done properly. He is an untiring worker, is blessed with more than his share of endurance, has a faculty for avoiding getting into "messes," and, should he be forced into them, has presence of mind and knowledge enough to get out of them with credit. His wants are simple; his thoughts are usually too sacred to bear expression by mere conversation, hence he is thought a silent and often a dull man; his humour is usually deep down somewhere, consequently the obvious does not appeal to him. He loves his ship, and if he is ashore what greater pleasure than to sit and gaze upon her?

People say how deadly dull it must be to be all alone. Such do not realise that the most entertaining companions are thoughts, and we only exchange our own for those of others when they become monotonous. One cannot realise how absolutely crammed with variety are the thoughts and incidents of a day's single-handed cruise. I have known a stretch of two hours' silence between

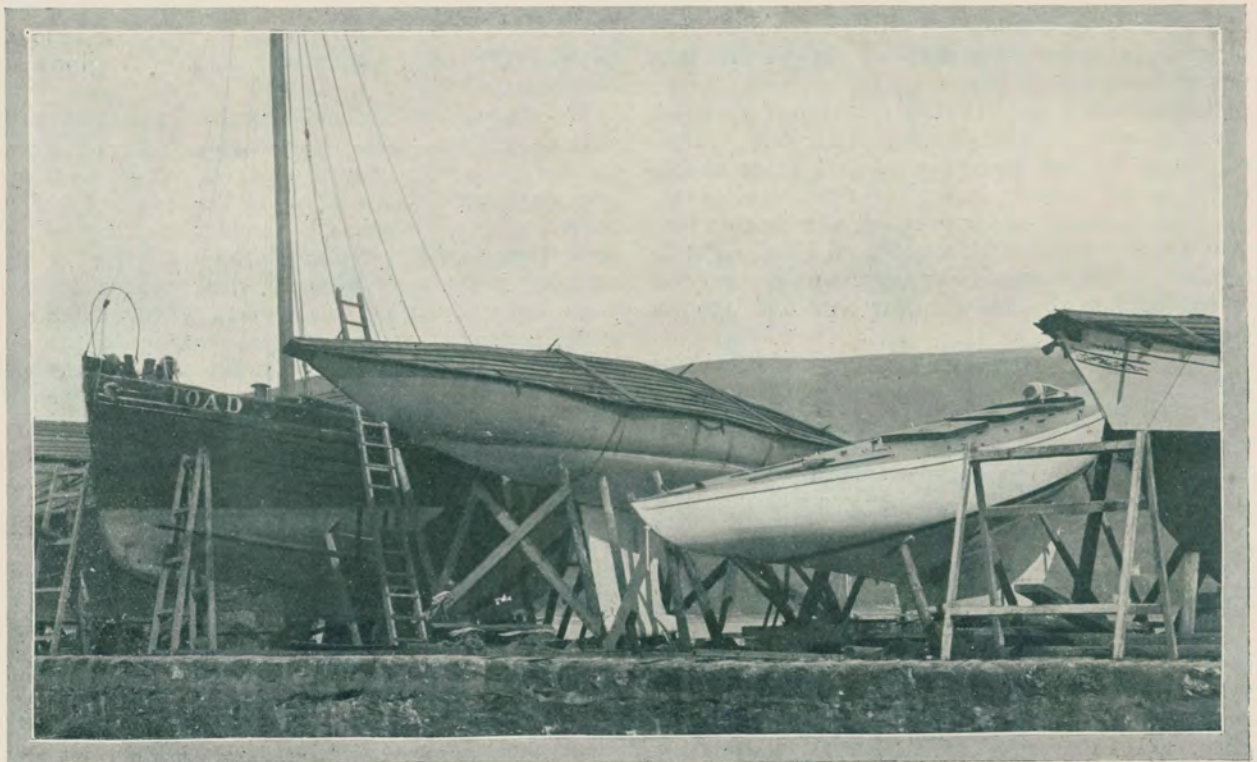




A DIRTY NIGHT.

four men upon a yacht; and the first to break the silence was scowled upon. No, the single-hander is blessed with anything but monotony. Getting out of port his hands are full, and when under way when the working of his ship does not demand in the way of occupation—apart from mere sailing—nature in her ever-changing moods provides sufficient variety to fill the day. It may be a battle with the elements, a glorious sky, a curious effect, the occasional appearance of a school of

porpoises, the sudden appearance of gulls, a bit of wreckage, passing craft, the apprehensions of a dirty night, the glories of a beautiful one, and so on until the ground tackle is dropped overboard, a meal partaken—which, by the way, is sure to be cooked to his liking—and till he finally falls into his bunk, dead tired. After a stretch of fifteen hours' sailing a man can sleep, and it is no uncommon thing for a single-hander to accomplish such a long "trick."



John A. Stewart.

#### A HETEROGENEOUS FLEET AT ROBERTSON'S YARD, SANDBANK.

The fishing-smack Agnes; the "bulb-finner" Helena; the 30-footer Corrie; the 7-ton "plank-on-edge" cutter Quinta.