

## EDITORIAL

Dinghy cruising is adventurous exploration on a small scale. Those who have the money and the time buy ocean-going yachts and circumnavigate the world. We who are bound to return to work on Monday, and who can only find limited periods for our spare time activity, must find our adventures nearer home. In a dinghy, a sail down the Thames can be an adventure - and one can feel as isolated in Lower Hope Reach in a tiny boat as one would off some uninhabited shore. It is possible to extend the range of these voyages - dinghies now cruise across the North Sea, and many cross the Channel every year. These exploits are exciting, and very useful in that they show how dinghies can be made safe at sea., but the weekend cruise to the Isle of Wight or into the upper reaches of some little-visited estuary is every bit as much fun to the beginners.

The essence of dinghy cruising is that it is non-competitive. Some like to race their boats round the buoys and argue about racing rules. Some like to compete for honours and awards. We need no award to spur us on - we sail because we like it, and we do not only like the sense of achievement after a difficult passage safely made - though that is part of the fun. Just as great a part of the pleasure lies in visiting places which can only be seen at their best by water. How many of those who queue for amusements in crowded seaside resorts know of the world of mud and tidal creeks which so often lies close by? It is a world of its own, with a fascination which never pales for those who have discovered it.

But luckily we who like rambling by boat among these quiet backwaters are still a minority. Much as we welcome newcomers, let us be secretly thankful that our pastime is not likely to become so fashionable that the backwaters are quiet no longer!

J.A.

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