THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW TRANSATLANTIC LINER "BALTIC."

BY HAROLD J. SHEPSTONE.

The White Star Line have added another great vessel to the fleet of the International Mercantile Marine Company in the "Baltic." She is 1,930 tons larger than her sister ship, the "Cedric," making her far and away the biggest vessel ever built. Over all the "Baltic" has a length of 725 feet 9 inches, a breadth of 75 feet, and a depth of 49 feet. Her gross tonnage will be nearly 24,000 tons, her capacity for cargo about 28,000 tons, and the displacement at her load draught 39,800 tons, more than double that of any battleship afloat. It is interesting to compare these measurements with those of other large ships. They work out as below.

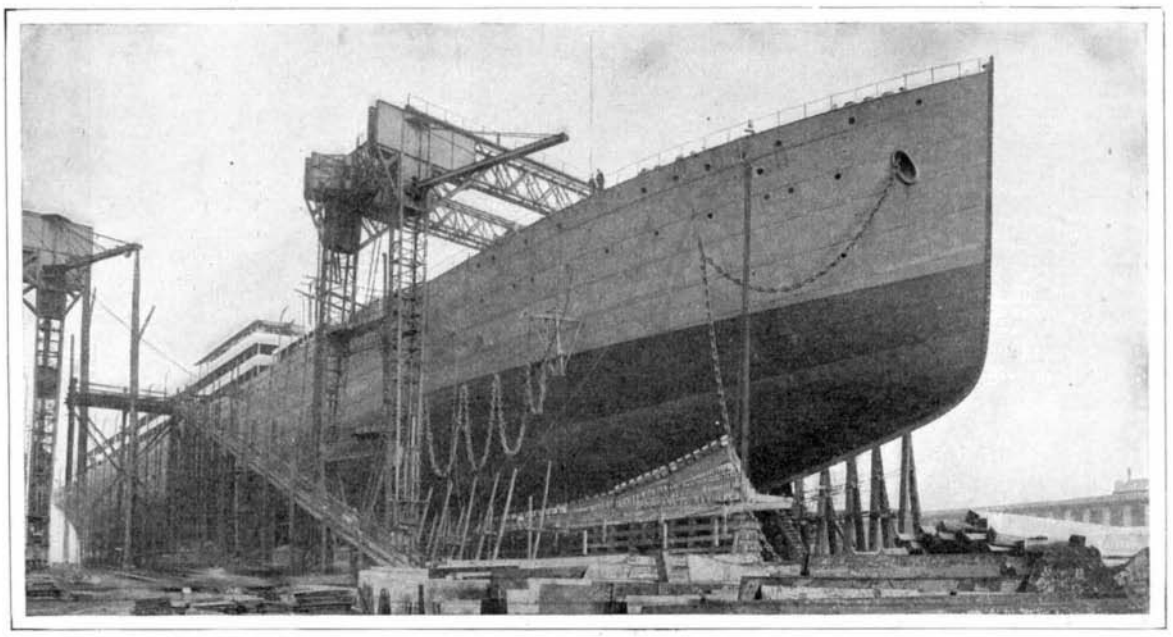
	Length. Ft.	In.	Breadth. Feet.	Depth. Feet.	Gross Tonnage.	Displacement. Tons.	Speed. Knots.
"Baltic"	725	9	75	49	24,000	39,800	16½ to 17
"Cedric"	700	0	75	49	20,970	37,870	16
"Kaiser Wilhelm II"	706	6	72	44	20,000	26,000	*23
"Deutschland"	684	0	67	44	16,000	23,620	23.5

* Contract speed.

The launching, considering the nature of the event, was a comparatively quiet affair. The attendance was fairly large, but not nearly so large as it should have been when we consider that the largest ship in the world was about to be released from her position on the stocks and entered upon her work as a world's carrier. She glided slowly but gracefully into the river, and was brought up to her berth alongside the wharf with very little assistance from the tugs; in fact, she was considerably helped by the aid of the wind, which, at the time, was blowing a perfect gale.

It will be seen at once that the new liner is nearly 20 feet longer than the express steamer "Kaiser Wilhelm II.," and over 3,000 tons bigger tonnage than her sister ship, the "Cedric." She confirms the White Star Line's reputation of turning out the biggest thing afloat, a feat which this company have now achieved on four occasions since January, 1899, when it launched the famous "Oceanic." This ship has a length of 704 feet and a gross tonnage of 17,000 tons, or 7,000 tons less than the "Baltic." A growth of seven thousand tons in less than five years must be regarded as a remarkable achievement, and an example of the wonderful progress in modern shipbuilding. Twenty years ago there was only one steamer, except the "Great Eastern," which measured more than 8,000 tons gross. One has to remember, perhaps, that the great Cunarders will probably measure over 24,000 tons, but there is still time for the owners of the White Star Line to build another vessel larger than the "Baltic" before the Cunard steamers are launched.

The "Baltic" belongs to the same class of ships to which the "Cedric," "Celtic," and "Oceanic" belong. She will be famous for her large carrying capacity, and her steadiness in rough weather rather than for her speed.



Length, 725 ft. 9 in.; beam, 75 ft.; depth, 49 ft.; displacement, 39,800 tons; speed, 16½ knots.

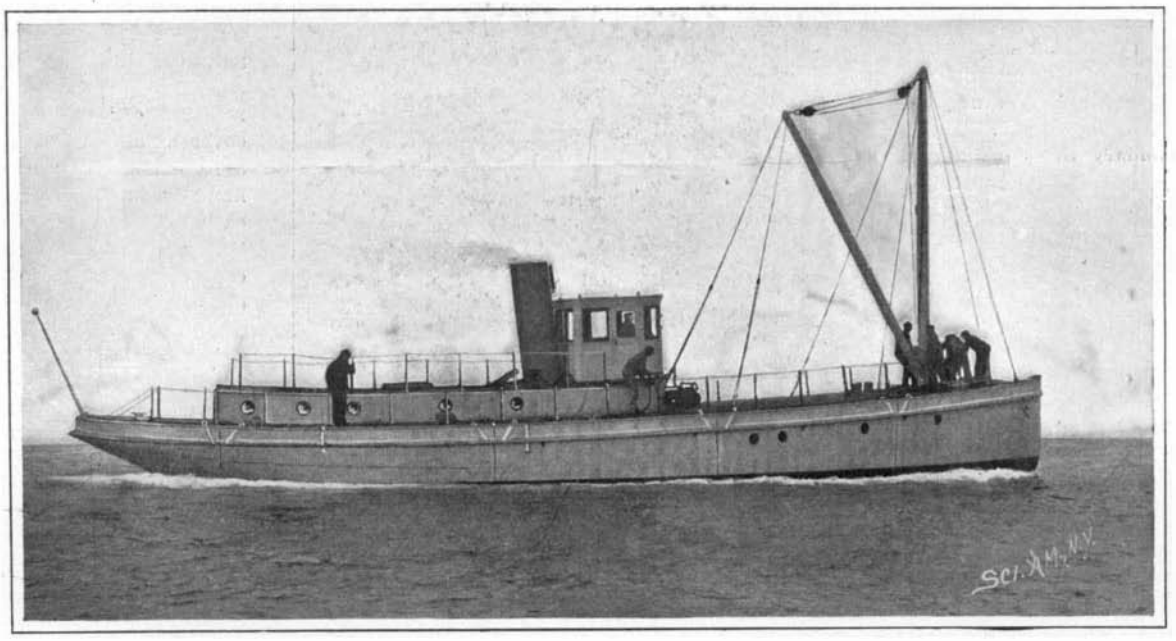
THE "BALTIC," THE LARGEST SHIP AFLOAT.

The new vessel will be well appointed, the interior arrangements and decoration being similar to those carried out on the "Cedric." Being larger, the accommodation will be even more commodious; the first-class dining-saloon, for instance, will be several feet longer. It will be situated on the upper deck, extend the full width of the ship, 75 feet, and will be exceptionally lofty and airy. It will seat 370 persons. Altogether, there will be accommodation for nearly 3,000 passengers, besides a crew of about 350.

The "Baltic" is constructed on the cellular, double-bottom principle, and is divided into many water-tight compartments, exceeding all official requirements in this respect. The engines will be of the Harland & Wolff quadruple-expansion balanced type, having cylinders 33 inches, 47½ inches, 68½ inches, and 98 inches in diameter, with 5 feet 3 inches stroke. Steam is supplied at a pressure of about 210 pounds by eight double-ended boilers, each about 16 feet by 19 feet 6 inches, which will drive the monster at a speed of from 16½ to 17 knots per hour.

Compared to the German fliers, the "Baltic" is a decidedly slow boat. She is nevertheless a money earner. Her working expenses must be less than half those of say the "Kaiser Wilhelm II.," while she will carry nearly double as many passengers besides 28,000 tons of cargo. It is well known that the "Baltic" was insured by her owners against construction, launch, and trial risks for slightly over $1,500,000. If this figure can be taken as any guide to the cost of such a vessel, she is cheap, remembering that the bills for the "Kaiser Wilhelm II." totaled $6,500,000.

It is interesting to note that the tonnage of the White Star fleet now amounts to the huge total of 350,000 tons. It consists of 29 steamers, of which 25 are fitted with twin screws, and possesses no fewer than 21 vessels of over 10,000 tons each, including three of over 20,000, one of 17,000, and two over 15,000 tons. One can well remember the controversy in shipping circles on the wisdom or folly of building vessels 700 feet long when the first 700-footer was launched, only a few years ago. It would seem that the 800-foot boat is a decided possibility in the near future. Curiously enough, however, while builders are increasing the length of their vessels, the widths and depths, particularly the latter, are being but very cautiously extended. The fact is, it is purely a question of harbor accommodation. A draught of nearly 40 feet is a serious matter, even for ports like Liverpool and New York.



THE NEW SECTIONAL STEAMER "PONTONIER" FOR THE U. S. ARMY IN THE PHILIPPINES.

THE "PONTONIER" AFLOAT IN THE DETACHED CONDITION. EACH SECTION IS CAPABLE OF FLOATING INDEPENDENTLY.

A SECTIONAL STEAMER FOR OUR COLONIAL POSSESSIONS.

The accompanying illustration shows a vessel presenting something of a novelty in marine construction, which has been induced indirectly through our recent "imperialism." Since acquiring the various outlying possessions, and particularly those lacking the development of civilization, our Army Department has become cognizant, even through its short experience, of the necessity for improved facilities in the handling of men, provisions, and munitions of war on army transports. A tender which could be taken aboard and transported bodily would have insufficient capacity; and the need for a larger boat therefore conceived the building of a sectional craft with certain new features to be introduced. Numerous boats of the sectional type have been constructed, some of considerable size, but with the intention of providing for one handling, and that they could be assembled where the facilities of shipyards and shipbuilders would be available. Our new possessions are lacking in such facilities; and again, it might be required to put the sectional boats in commission on short

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