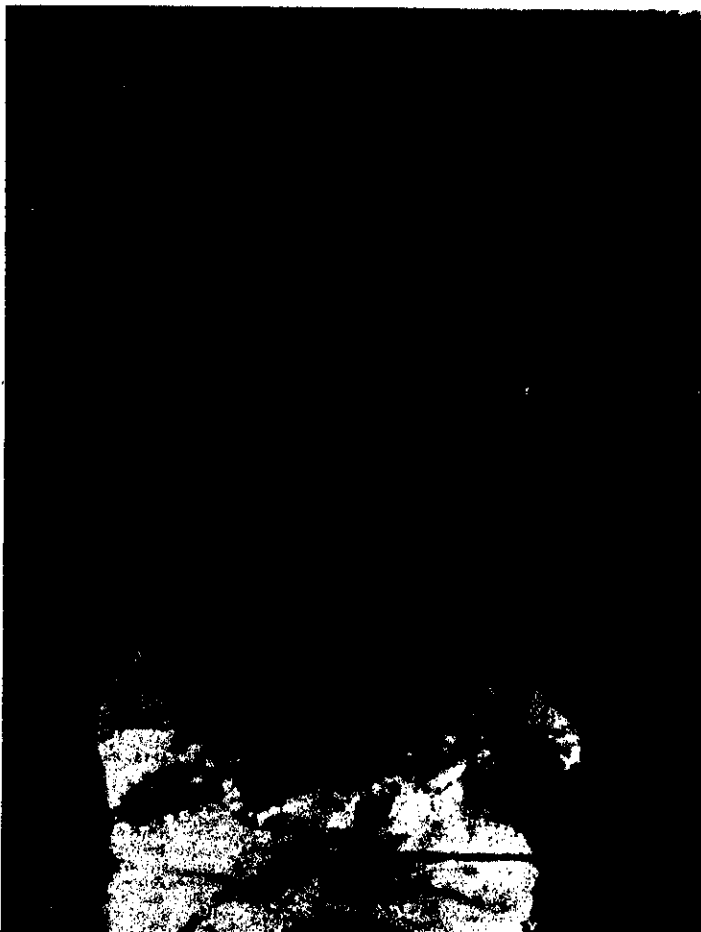


A SEA PALACE FOR THE SEA QUEEN.

Under the above heading the "Daily Telegraph" describes the launch at Pembroke Dockyard, by the Duchess of York, the new Royal yacht built for the use and state of Her Majesty. She is, as she ought to be, says the journal, the most beautiful pleasure ship in the world. The Imperial yacht of the Tsar, the Standart, is larger by eight hundred tons, but, like the State vessel of the German Emperor, which is smaller by six hundred tons than the new Victoria and Albert, that Muscovite craft is merely a man-of-war transformed. The Queen's yacht is most properly constructed for peace and pleasure only. She will carry no cannon except such as may be called dress guns, for returning salutes and making signals, and will simply bear the air and aspect of a sea palace for the Queen of the Sea. Built of steel, with twin screws, of four thousand seven hundred tons displacement, and steaming easily at twenty knots, with beam of fifty feet and draught of eighteen, her deck three hundred and eighty feet long, which is eight more than the present vessel shows—being, moreover, coppered upon a wooden sheathing—she will be able to take the longest as well as the shortest voyages with the utmost comfort to her passengers. She will be lovely and stately to look upon, as should be the maritime home of such a Sovereign, with the motto of the Star of India, "Heaven's Light our Guide," on the shield at her bows, blazoned with the rose, the thistle, the shamrock, and the leek—fourfold badges of the United Kingdom. Along her topsides will run the same parcelled cable in gold which we have seen so long on the old ship, and the Queen will retain among the internal fittings many of those which characterised that serviceable predecessor which, after more than forty years of duty, retires with honour to secondary uses. Nothing, naturally, has been spared in the way of beauty, taste, and richness of detail for the handsome structure, which will cost the larger part of four hundred thousand pounds



Andrew, photo.

VIVANDIERE OF GAUNT'S BRIGADE.



Andrew, photo.

A LAULU BEAUTY.

sterling before she finally hoists the Royal Standard and floats upon the waters admittedly the finest and most perfect ship of pleasure to be seen upon them.

It is in such a ship that the loyal people of the Kingdom and the Empire will rejoice and be proud to see Her Majesty now and again pass upon that Greater Britain of the Billows which she rules as well as her vast dominions of terra firma. Yet it would puzzle a poet—even if he had the technical genius of Mr Rudyard Kipling—to set to work singing in any such style as that by which Shakespeare has made the river boat of the Egyptian Queen immortal, in describing her passage on the silver Cydnus: "The sails were silk, and so perfumed that the winds were love-sick with them." And goodly and manly as the picked bluejackets will be on board of the Royal yacht, they can but poorly match with the "seeming mermaid" who steered for Cleopatra, and the graceful girl sailors, "like the Nereides, who made their bends adornings." There must be, alas! coal and coal smoke and the smell of oil, so that we shall never say of the Royal yacht, "A strange invisible perfume hits the sense of the adjacent wharfs." Yet the romance, the eternal romance, of the sea is all there still, translated indeed by many ages and changes into modern methods and appliances; while the stately galley, or caravel, or ship of pleasure of these bygone potentates was but as a "cock-boat" to the grand and graceful fabric which will carry our Queen. In those ancient models, nevertheless, and even in their proud and powerful successors, the clipper ships which came before steel and steam, the mariner was the slave of the winds and the seas. Now he is their master. What lover of the waves does not think with honour and affection of the famous clippers Red Jacket and James Haines, whose average time between Melbourne and Liverpool was between sixty-five and seventy days; the Black Ball liner Lightning, which did the passage between those ports in sixty-three days, and made the return trip in sixty-four days; the