

SHIPBUILDING.

Some interesting details are forthcoming respecting the new ships now being built on the Clyde for the P. and O. Company. I learn that in each of the three mail steamers of the Moldavia type, which will be of 11,000 tons gross register, or 500 tons in excess of their predecessors, a number of improvements will be embodied. Each boat, for example, will offer fourteen more single-berth cabins than the other vessels of the same class. This is pretty plain proof that the single-berth system meets the wishes of ocean voyagers, and also pays the steamship owner. Again, there is for the first time to be introduced into these P. and O. boats what is to be known as a divan, or lounge, at the service of both ladies and gentlemen, wherein smoking is to be permitted. The divan, as it is to be designated, will undoubtedly tend to promote friendly intercourse between passengers by bridging over the gulf which ordinarily exists between the music-room and the smoke-room. The three new boats will also have fully equipped laundries, which should prove useful, more especially to families making long voyages. The three big boats are, of course, intended for the trunk line to India and Australia. The new ship-building programme of the P. and O. Company means, I am told, an outlay of considerably over a million of money.

The huge vessel which the White Star Line have arranged to build at Belfast for their intermediate service will (I hear) be 840 feet long, and the Southampton Dock authorities