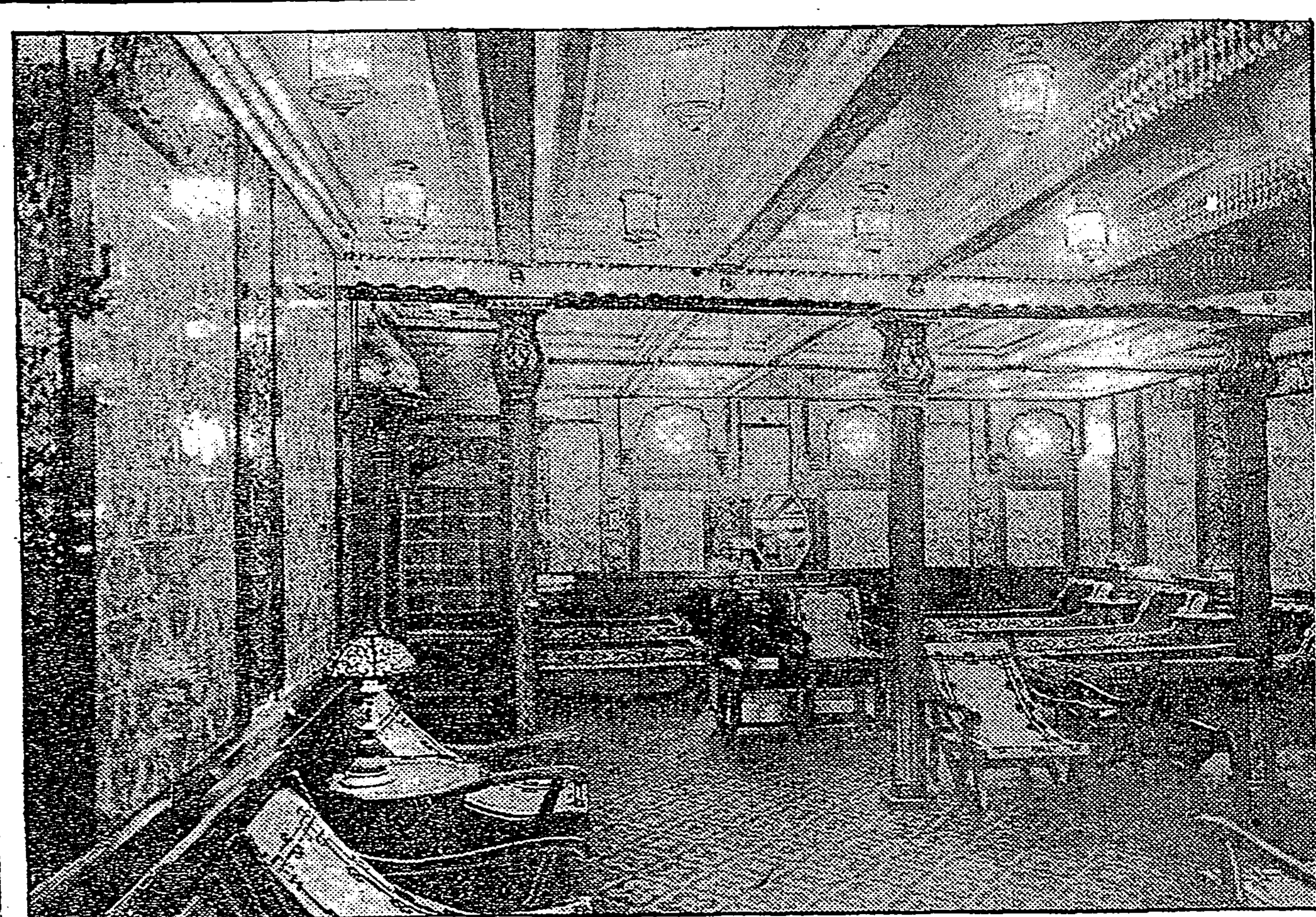
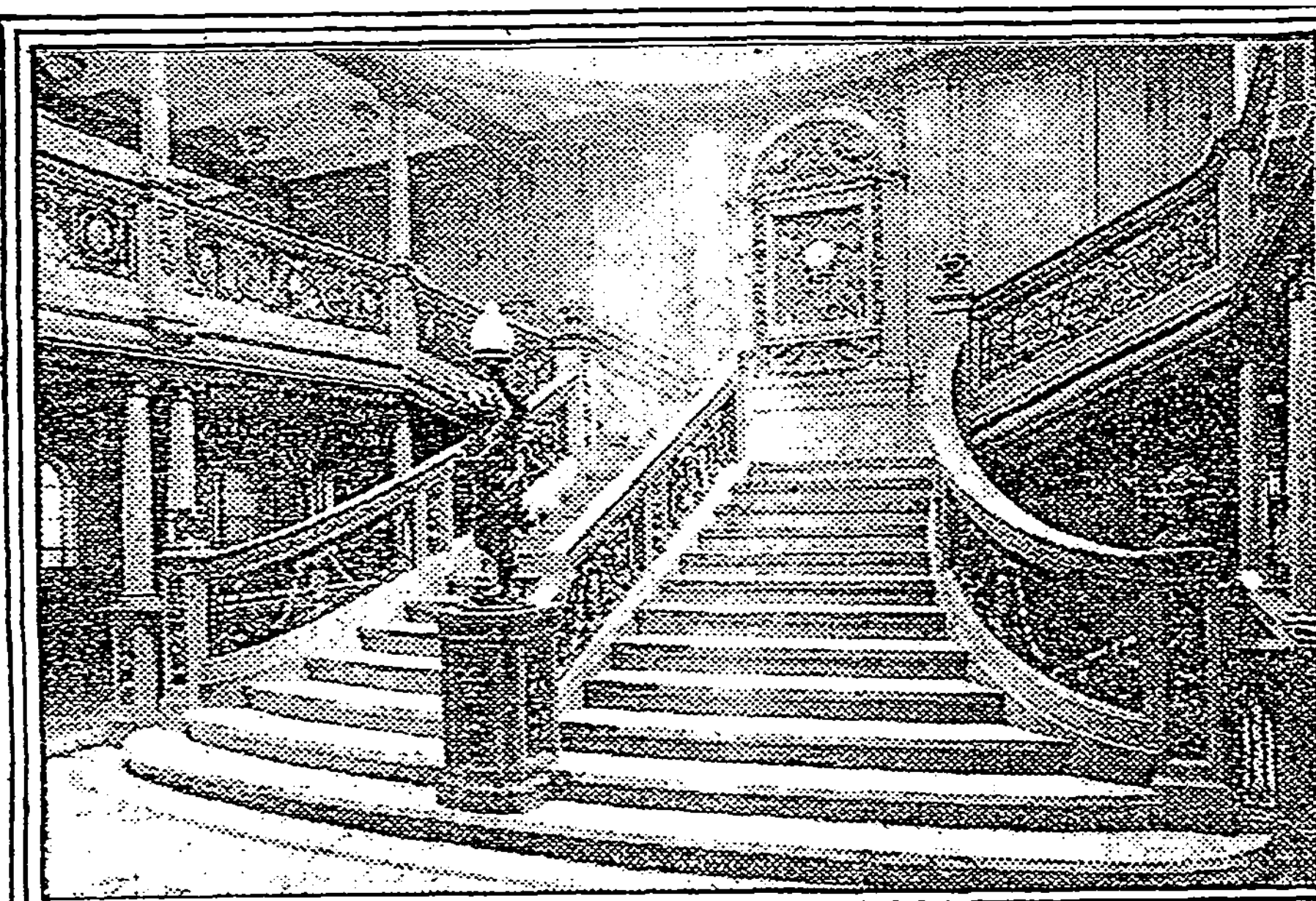


THE GIANT OLYMPIC A LUXURIOUS FLOATING HOTEL

Swimming Pool, Turkish Baths, and Tennis Courts Part of the Equipment of the World's Largest Liner—Marking a New Epoch in Ocean Travel.



TURKISH BATH ROOM



MAIN COMPANIONWAY

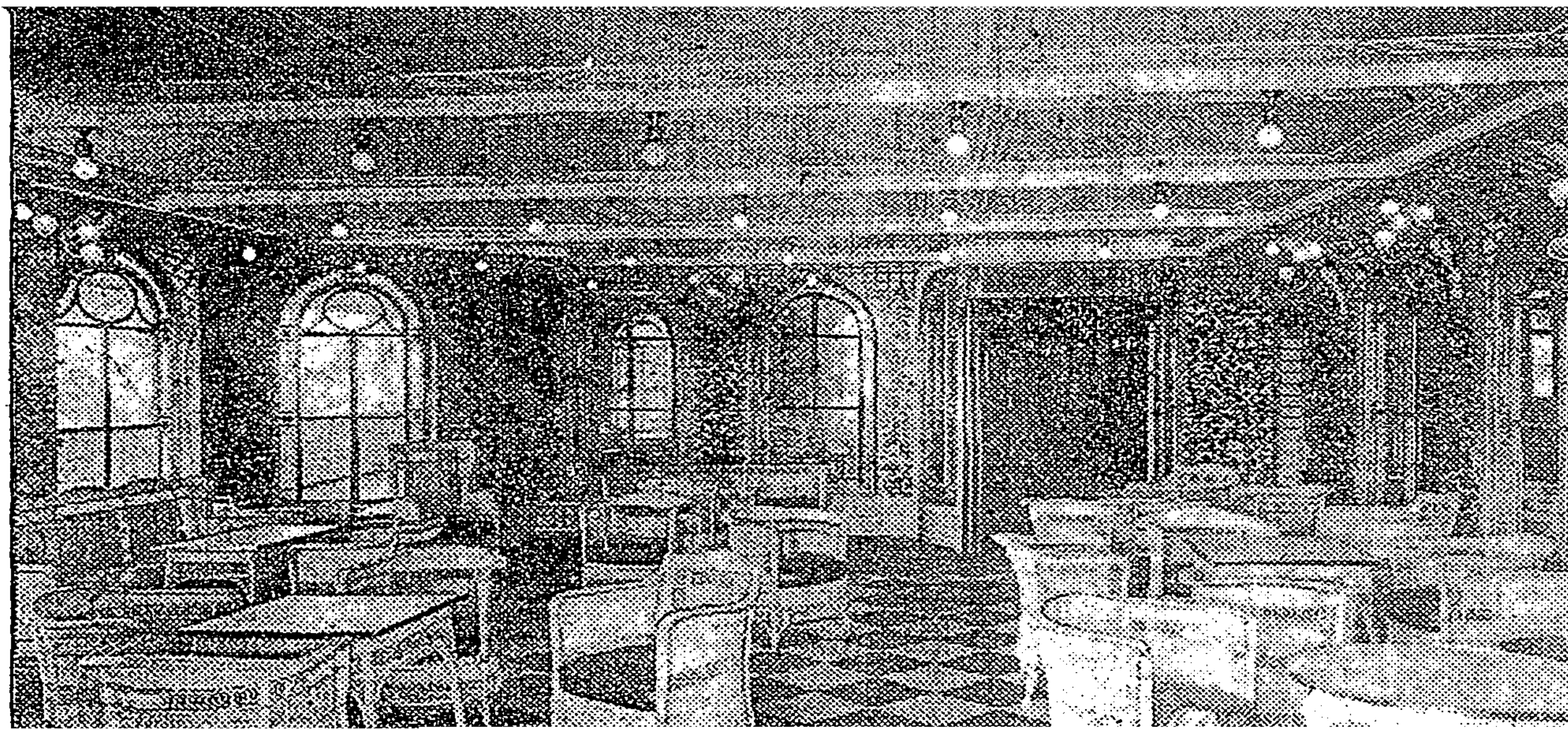


THE OLYMPIC

feet is something. If you stand at one end of the deck and your friend or your wife is at the other you may recognize the familiar outlines of the figure, but the details of features are absent; after all that isn't so surprising. Few eyes can see distinctly at a quarter of a mile.

Faster Than Expected.

At Oceanic House in London, where I booked my passage, I was informed that the Olympic, sailing on her first voyage Wednesday, June 14, would arrive at her pier in New York the following Wednesday at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. That, apparently, was a conservative estimate of the vessel's speed possibilities. The ship actually came into her slip at 9:35 o'clock Wednesday morning. And it had become apparent soon after we made the final pause at Cherbourg that no special



CAFE AND PALM ROOM

soft insinuations. You have, it says, evaded that introductory suggestion. Well, after all, that is not surprising, on a ship as big as the Olympic, where there is every incentive to get into side and by-paths.

The swimming pool is there, deep down in the vessel's bowels, fed constantly with fresh saline water blue as the Mediterranean against its marble tiling. Moreover, there is depth enough to encourage diving from a spring-board, which is provided for that purpose. You may take it plain, if you like, as I did every morning—an invigorating pastime and a fresh incentive to the breakfast for which you are keenly longing after a night in one of the delightfully airy staterooms—or you may use it as the aftermath of a Turkish bath, as complete an institution of its kind as any one could wish, with the accompanying rubbers-down, whose part of the ceremony is admirably accomplished. Again the pool is a delightful supplement to half an hour spent in the gymnasium where, after punching the bag and indulging in various exercises that lots of us neglect at home, you may, if you have the nerve, mount a horse and take a ride. No, it is not a live horse, but an ingenious arrangement, or a devilish contraption, according to your mood, which gives you all the sensations of a swift canter on a bronco, and correspondingly taut sore muscles the next day. If you have not been inclined to athletics previously or are not in the pink of physical condition, a squash racquet court, with an attendant skilled in hitting the ball into places where you are least expecting it, is another feature—one of the many on this ocean hostelry to keep you employed in sports more suggestive of a fixed abode than a floating residence.

In a sense these are the abnormal things. Even in the biggest hotels ashore one doesn't look for things of this sort. I confess that I had to take my courage in both hands before I made my first investigation of the pool, for the fear was that come on ship board at every departure from the usual deck-pacing, like most other people, I make tracks as a rule from the dining room to the deck after each meal. On the Olympic I would have been the exception had I done so. The ship has the usual accompaniment of lounges, reading rooms (with a very good library, by the way), a commodious smoking room, and all furnished comfortably and in excellent taste. Its novelties in this respect are a large lounge adjoining the dining room and the veranda café—two charming rooms done in trellis work, where you may sit and have your coffee and liqueurs, smoke if you like, the meantime enjoying the ocean breezes without a suggestion of discomfort. The dining room lounge, an experiment on the part of the builders, the great success of which was hardly anticipated, proved to be the most popular resting place on the ship. Here a very good orchestra plays before and after meals, and tables

band chairs were always at a premium for the demi tasse.

Where the Sun Never Sets.

Not the least delightful feature of the main dining room is its arrangement of windows on all sides, these being paneled with opalescent glass, backed with electric lights, so as to produce an effect of perpetual sunshine. We had one afternoon of gloomy weather, with rain and fog outside, that gathered shortly after the luncheon hour had started. To all appearances, as judged from within the dining saloon, there were fair skies overhead and the sun had never ceased to shimmer.

It is here, too—in this dining room—that

in your mouth, the former to be hastily threaded and the other promptly lighted by a young girl making a wild dash to beat her competitors in this amiable domestic pastime? If so, you may perhaps have experienced the sudden sensation of the needle penetrating your nose at the moment of the impact of the cigarette and match. These are not essentially sports of a big ship, more than a little one, nor is the cotillion on the deck with a big moon reinforcing the spotlights, confined to such a vessel, but here the conditions for the pastimes are ideal since the decks are in effect solid, unyielding platforms. Unusual, indeed, is the sense of freedom from a crowd, no matter how many people may be on board, the complete absence of those innumerable little things, subtle in effect though not easily defined, which serve at times to make an ocean voyage at least annoying, if not actually unpleasant. Even for good sailors, the novelty of the first voyage once behind one, there is often the depressing sense of monotonous detail. On such a ship as this the possibility is reduced to a minimum, becomes practically nil.

Do you object to the set fare—a figurative phrase, for the menu is so comprehensive that only the confirmed gourmet would ask for more—or do you desire to have a special little function, the French restaurant will provide you with as faintly and well-served a meal as could be wished. A little city in itself, with the individual conforming for comfort's sake to the requirements of the general; there is yet on a ship so large the opportunities for individuality and exclusiveness in entertaining. The daily distribution of bouillottes and other desirable breaks in the morning and the afternoon, when the freshened appetite begs for a morsel to encourage patience till the meal time, may be varied with a little personal function. You will have an appointment one afternoon to meet Mrs. Smith and her friends for tea in the veranda café, or the following afternoon Mrs. Jones, to add the novel touch, will entertain you and other friends at bridge in her own suite, the tea served there at a proper moment, having all the suggestion of a private and personal function, with the ship's steward acting as general provider of refreshment, though his interest in the proceedings is discreetly veiled.

It is all very charming, very interesting, and very restful, and in effect it makes of the ocean a site for man's dwelling whereon and wherein he may take his ease, may satisfy his hobbies, and have his comforts as if he were on land and at home.

James Bruce Ismay, President of the International Mercantile Navigation Company, who crossed on the Olympic and returns by her to Southampton next Wednesday, said yesterday that she had more than realized the expectations of the company in every way. The ship had not been driven at her full speed on the westward voyage, he said, and still she had averaged over twenty-one knots. "Leaving New York on the return voyage," Mr. Ismay said, "the Olympic will steam about twenty-one knots the first day, and then gradually be increased until the maximum speed of the engines is attained, and then we shall have a good idea of what the ship can do. Coming over this time there was no bad weather to try her seagoing qualities, but we were pleased to hear the steadiness of the Olympic at sea and the lack of vibration from the engines."

"Do you believe that the combination of two reciprocating engines with a centre low pressure turbine is the best method of propulsion for big liners?" he was asked.

"Well, we think so," Mr. Ismay replied, "and that is why we have ordered engines of the same principle for our big Australian steamship now building. In addition to the steadiness of the ship this method of having two reciprocating engines with one turbine in the centre is the more economical, as the turbine is fed by the exhaust steam from the reciprocating engines which would be otherwise wasted."

"What is the rough cost of a round trip for the Olympic?"

"About \$175,000," replied Mr. Ismay, "including the wages of the crew and the cost of food for the passengers and the insurance."

"Do you insure the Olympic in the company?"

"We cover a risk of \$500,000, and the rest is taken by the underwriters."

"What was the cost of the ship to build?"

"Between \$8,000,000 and \$9,000,000, plus with fittings, furniture, etc., but, &c., it would amount to close upon \$11,000,000."

"Do you believe that the Olympic demonstrates that the limit in the accommodation has been reached?"

"No," said Mr. Ismay. "I do not see why ships should be limited in size in any way except in the facilities extended to them for docking. For instance, here in New York we had to put up a long, expensive pier with the War Department to get a permit for the extension of a pier to accommodate the Olympic, and then pay for the construction of the extension. It would be very desirable to have a vessel moored to a pier in the North River with her stern projecting seventy feet out into the channel."

"We feel very pleased at the manner in which the advent of the Olympic into the traveling public. There were 700 passengers on the westward trip, and passengers on the eastward trip, and cabin passengers booked for the eastward voyage next Wednesday, which will be the record number ever taken out of any port in the world on one ship as far as cabin passengers are concerned."

AND I had a swim in the ocean every morning. The man in the next chair—it was in a "tonorial parlor" not far from the Times Building—this man, whom I had never seen before, but who represented the great unconvinced, had been listening to the conversation, and now interrupted.

"How'd you do it?" he asked; "hang on to a line and jump overboard?" I ignored the impertinence. After all, a man who had just crossed the Atlantic on a ship that ought to be called a bridge—the comparison is another passenger's, not mine—who for six days or more has had the immeasurable satisfaction of laughing in "the teeth of the gale," which for once is fact, not figurative, and the inestimable pleasure of a voyage from which all dangers of mal de mer are permanently absent—such an one can afford to be charitable.

I am, I suppose, what is called an average good—or is it had?—sailor. When I get on an ocean liner for my regular Summer's outing I figure that, all things being equal, I will see the dining room regularly the last three days of the voyage, making occasional sallies there previously, and generally settling that I enjoy the open sea much better than the joy of the open air, and who regard such weakness in others as evidences of a misspent youth or ill-advised bringing up.

Deck Stewards Free from Care.

For once the poor deck stewards, first aids to the inviolable, whose ministrations of rugs and baked potatoes has kept the souls in many poor bodies wearily sighing to be divorced from this life, and the inconceivably distressing effects of head winds and more or less uncertain seas—these amiable servants were, comparatively speaking, among the unemployed. The steamer chairs, too, usually the repository for sad blue and lemon colored wrecks of what had once been human beings, were deserted for the greater part of the time, and this in spite of the fact that the broad and this in spite of the fact that it is possible to stretch one's self full length without inviting the rude encounters of trippers taking their after-dinner strolls or inviting the maledictions of active, healthy souls whose freedom from unpleasant symptoms must be flaunted in your face on every ocean voyage, and who regard such weakness in others as evidences of a misspent youth or ill-advised bringing up.

Some Comparisons.

But to come back to the Olympic, and begin at the beginning—if the muse may be controlled so long, since there is such an obvious incentive to wander on a ship so big, to comment and make comparisons before the reasons for them are quite clear to those who have not yet had the satisfaction of being numbered on her list of passengers. I fancy it will not be necessary to go into any very extended details in the way of figures and facts regarding this leviathan, since her dimensions and the various items of construction have been pretty well advertised since she first began to be something more than an idea, and took form for that concrete mass of iron, steel, and timber which picked its way slowly into the extended pier on Wednesday morning. The voyage is pretty sure to live long in the memories of the thirteen hundred people who were on board for the initial trip across the deep.

In general, one's friends have a way of speculating. It must have been an interesting experience." They add that they wish they might have the opportunity to make the first trip on such a ship. In reality, the effect is one that cannot be readily grasped unless one has actually experienced it, and to best appreciate it calls for a capacity of imagination. To begin with, there is always to the imaginative person the joy of speculation, the mystery of untried things, perhaps the lingering uncertainty as to actual accomplishment. You know, for instance, that ship building and navigation are scientifically accomplished, that the least possible ele-

ment of chance enters in, that the departure and arrival of the ocean steamer is almost as definitely fixed, under normal conditions, as the rising or the setting of the sun. And yet in the case of an untried vessel there is always that feeling of an added element of chance. What if this man or that has erred in his estimate. What if the unexpected should happen for just once, what if a dozen different ifs should develop to up-

set the calculations and bring you face to face with the hitherto unencountered. Just so much then the flavor of adventure hangs about it all and adds a zest to each day's progress of events—events, it must be admitted, that were not so far from normal on this first voyage—except in such experiences as involved the question of a bigger ship than had ever before made the passage across the seas. Briefly, the Olympic, with her 45,000-tonnage, exceeds in size by 15,000 tons her largest rival; she is, moreover, 100 feet longer, and though possibly less ornate in some of her interior fittings, is sufficiently sumptuous to satisfy the taste of a most particular person. For the person of very ample purse there are the Empire rooms, or suites, the latter lacking a kitchen only to make them complete housekeeping apartments, and sufficiently commodious to house a small family in comfort. They are charming in decoration and luxurious in detailed appointments. Of a less pretentious sort, and yet so roomy and well furnished that they have nothing in common with the ordinary "cabin" on a steamer, are the majority of the rooms in which the ordinary type of bunk has been discarded for twin beds—real downies," as one woman described them. Added to these, by way of making the thing homelike, is a dressing table in place of the piece of planking generally construed as such, and two commodious closets, in the door of each of which a full-length pier mirror makes for feminine happiness at the dressing hour. Then the final joy of all—or should this last be first—hot and cold running water—a plentiful supply, and not missing at crucial hurried moments because your steward happened not to fill the old-time tank.

The Olympic is a hundred feet longer than her biggest rival on the seas. When you write it just like that, or say it quickly, a hundred feet may not sound so very much. When you start to walk the long decks—four circuits of which make a mile—you begin to realize that a hundred

effort was being made to force her. It was common gossip that the fires under five of her boilers had not been lighted at all, the casual explanation to the layman being an absence of dock workers at Southampton having necessitated the employment of a number of green hands whose ability at stoking fuel was considered below the average of the regular workers. Notwithstanding this fact, and the necessary caution observed in the case of a ship as yet practically untried, our arrival on June 21 at 2:24 A. M. represented an average speed of 21.17 knots, and a passage of five days sixteen hours and forty-two minutes, the departure from Daunt's Rock, the first point of actual measurement on the ocean passage, having been made at 4:22 P. M. on June 15. There had been the usual delay at Cherbourg for a relay of passengers embarking at that point, and a subsequent stop at Queenstown for another batch, varied by the familiar visits of the ladies with the soft Dublin accents soothingly asserting bargains in Irish lace, and ready with a witty rejoinder to the individuals of whom there are always some—who make a point of driving a bargain to the bitter end. One such was an extremely homely little man—the prize pug of the ship's table—who had made a show of investing and was ready with an offer of £3 for a collar for which the vendor had demanded £3 10s.

"All right, me darlint," said the woman quickly, "I'll take off the shillin's because you're so very handsome." "The sale was not made.

In an Iridescent Sea.

Once away from Queenstown, with its iridescent sea—a blend of greens and blues and purples so lovely that the pen of a Lafcadio Hearn alone could put its glowing shimmer into words—the voyage may be said to have fairly begun. It is the middle of the afternoon, trunks and bags have been opened and their contents strewn about the staterooms, the purser

has answered the same series of questions a thousand times, and is still answering them. (If you see HIM first, and the ordinary routine of ship life has begun. There are nearly five hundred people in the first class cabins. You look about you and wonder where they are.

Three days later, possibly, you will have decided that you know every face on board, especially as there haven't been the usual absentees from table on a ship which is nearer like a big London or New York hostelry than anything else you can imagine. But after all, five hundred is a goodly number. The last day out you may meet fifty or seventy-five people who seem to have come on overnight. This intrusion of seeming strangers into the big family helps to keep up interest.

The most amusing instance of this sort on the Olympic involved a prominent Russian woman—the fact of her prominence having been disclosed only after the arrival in New York—whose appearance on the big ship was unsuspected by most of those on board. A few of us had seen her quite by accident. Happening to be in her cabin, we had lingered late on deck.

All of the women had retired and only a solitary group of men was there to keep the vigil. Suddenly a figure all white seemed to be waiting toward us. As she passed we had the gleam of a pair of wonderful black eyes, a suggestion of tawny hair woven into a tight coil at the nape of the neck, a gown of pure white, so closely fitting that every line of the figure was displayed—and always that ineffable air of mystery. We waited for her to return after making the circuit of the long promenade deck. But from that moment—the third night in the vigil—she was not in evidence again. A little thing to make much of, but even on big ships little things are interesting.

Swimtrains in Mic-Ocean.

"And about that swimming in the ocean?" "The voice of the doubter is whispering