

"The result of their enquiries and deliberations is that they consider the present condition of the French Merchant Marine a critical one, especially in regard to its ability to successfully compete with that of other nations. This is notably the case with lines of steamships. Its relative inferiority, already demonstrated, becomes more and more apparent each day, and with each advancing stride made by steamship lines of other foreign countries. This state of affairs, if prolonged would lead to the most disastrous commercial, social, military and political results, and it is quite natural that the government should give its attention to the best measures for remedying such a serious situation, the power to ameliorate which from the nature of things cannot emanate from private sources."

The London, G. B., "Siren and Shipping" says:—

"The French Compagnie Transatlantique have determined to outdo the Hamburg American line which is building a boat designed to beat everything afloat. France is resolved not to be left behind, and the Compagnie Transatlantique have been ordered by the Government to take the shine out of the Germans. Therefore they are contracting for two masters to steam twenty-two and one half knots at sea, which is about six knots more than the records of this line hitherto. Their mean record is 16.71 knots, as against 19.25 of the Cunard line, 18.76 of the American line, 18.72 of the Hamburg American line, and 17.24 of the White Star line. The two new French boats are to be ready by 1900, and are to be followed by two others [excelling all other boats afloat. Meanwhile, the American line are negotiating with Messrs. Cramp and Son for a new boat to beat both the new Hamburg-American and the North German Lloyd's boats."

The industrial success of Germany, the extension of her commerce—more recent and more rapid than in the case of other nations—are largely ascribed to cheap and uniform transportation, through State ownership of railways, and aid [to foreign steam communication.

A foreign exchange commenting on the recent Imperial Government contract with the Lloyd Steamship Line, says:

* The Deutschland, 686½ feet long, 67½ feet broad, 44 feet, 16,000 tons, 35,000 h. p., 23 knots average speed.