

NEW LINCRUSTA-WALTON.

Nothing has been so noticeable during the last few years in England, and especially in London, as the marked improvement which has taken place in building and decoration. Much of the progress, so far as decoration is concerned, may be traced to the invention of a new material, known as Lincrusta-Walton. The recently-built mansions of the West-end, many new country-seats, hotels, restaurants, public halls, and theatres have been beautified with this material, more effectively, permanently, and cheaply than could have been done by any other system of decoration. It is difficult to say where and in what forms it may not be met with. Railway-carriages and ships' saloons have it in the form of panels; it may be seen made into screens, picture rails, window-cornices, finger-plates, toilet table and dinner mats, friezes, dados, and ceilings. What appear to be delicate pine or old-oak carvings in the style of Grinley Gibbons, turn out to be productions of the Lincrusta-Walton Company's works at Sunbury-on-Thames; and often a greatly-admired ceiling, or frieze, or dado, in the elaborate and artistic style now met with, is also indebted for its beauty to Mr. Fred Walton's invention. That a material giving such satisfactory results in this country and on the Continent would be welcomed in the Colonies and in India and other distant countries there can be no doubt. Indeed, this system of decoration possesses especial and peculiar advantages for use in new lands. No highly-paid artisans or designers are required to arrange it or fix it. It can be sent from London ready for immediate attachment to walls, ceilings, doors, etc., it may be compactly packed without danger of breakage, and it is unaffected by changes or extremes of temperature. With a view, therefore, of directing the attention of our readers in the Colonies and abroad, and of the shippers, to the general advantages which have commended the use of Lincrusta-Walton at home, and which are quite as applicable in other countries, we propose to give some account of the samples which we recently saw at the Company's London show-rooms, 9 Berners Street, and of the latest improvements which the inventor introduced.

Lincrusta-Walton may be briefly described as a result of the invention of linoleum, of which Mr. Fred Walton was also the inventor. There was a decided requirement before its appearance for a material in relief for mural decoration—a material which should be capable of receiving and retaining impressions from a matrix, which should also be plastic when required to mould it and rigid after it was once formed, and which should be of a flexibility sufficient to admit of its being fixed upon some base such as canvas, and made up in continuous length. It was also required that the new relief wall decoration should be of a permanent nature, not easily damaged, and superior to the effects of the atmosphere. These conditions the inventor of Lincrusta-Walton, which at first was known as "Linoleum Muralis," has successfully attained. The material with which he fulfils them is a mixture of linseed oil and fibre rolled on to a textile fabric, and subjected to the pressure of machinery and matrices, which stamp out the various designs in a greater or less relief, as may be desired. The present name denotes its general appearance and nature with considerable exactness, *lin* being derived from *linum* (flax) the chief ingredients being solidified linseed oil, and *crusta* (relief). The inventor's name is most appropriately added to prevent other firms using the word "lincrusta" after the first patent shall have expired.

First among the advantages of Sincrusta-Walton are those of a sanitary character, and in these it has no rival. Unlike stucco, plaster, or cement, it does not absorb moisture or infectious germs, and doubtless this quality, among many others, led the jurors of the recent International Health Exhibition to award it the gold medal, the highest distinction in its class. Impervious to moisture, and of a firm surface and unchangeable colour, Lincrusta-Walton is easily kept clean by washing it from time to time. Those, therefore, who want something that will wash and bear scrubbing could not have a better or more durable material on their walls. Another quality coming under the category of hygienic is its non-conductivity. Rooms with damp walls are rendered warm and healthy by its application; and even new and moist walls may be covered with it without waiting, as is the case when wall-papers are adopted, for the house to be thoroughly dry. Its durability will be understood when the nature of the materials of which it is composed is considered. It is not too much to say that, unless wilful damage or fire be encountered, Lincrusta-Walton is everlasting. It has been put upon damp walls in England four years ago, and is as good and artistic now as it was then. The

chipping-off of corners and parts of decorations, a common occurrence with carton pierre, etc., is unknown with Lincrusta-Walton, which has a peculiar toughness, somewhat resembling that of indiarubber or guttapercha. The finest and most elaborate patterns, however, are produced to the minutest details, giving a richly-modelled surface as far superior, from an artistic point of view, to a "dead blank" wall as a plain sheet of paper is to one covered with a beautiful engraving. The half-tones and shadows which have so delightful an effect in oak carvings are fully brought out in Lincrusta-Walton decorations, giving this material an undisputed position of artistic superiority. Even when it is without any elaborate designs, or designs in relief, but merely with a plain surface, this wall-covering possesses sanitary, economical and artistic advantages which ordinary papers or painted walls can lay no claim to whatever.

Recently the inventor has perfected a system of superimposing by means of machinery, different colours in the patterns—an improvement effected at a nominally additional cost, which materially increases the value of Lincrusta-Walton from an artistic point of view. The four colours in which it is made—medium buff, green, drab, a red and a deep brown—have heretofore been diversified by hand-work, gilt and silver leaf being frequently added. By the new process, however, a diversity of shade is obtained without such labour, and with results even more satisfactory. By this means the designs are naturally brought out much more clearly than if but one shade of colour be seen. Many new patterns were shown us during our visit to the show rooms. We have no hesitation in saying that the designs for 1885 will surpass any that have hitherto been brought out. They are more elaborate, more highly finished, and, thanks to the new process, more artistic in effect, with scarcely any noticeable increase in price. Turkish, Persian, Gothic, Moresque designs, imitations in hammered metals, old oak carvings, lace, tapestry, and canvas patterns, are all produced with extraordinary fidelity. The general use of Lincrusta-Walton are also extending, and this is a field in which the application of the material is indefinite. As a substance upon which artists may paint more easily and effectively than on canvas, as panels for the decoration of plain wooden doors and mantel-pieces, as covering for ordinary ceilings when they begin to crack, as novelties in screens, mats, work-boxes, picture and photo frames, mantel-ornaments, showing bronze, silver, and gold effects, and in innumerable other ways, Lincrusta-Walton may be utilized, both with immediate economy and lasting artistic results. It is to the commercial success of the material that attention should be especially drawn. No other substance answering similar purposes can compete with it in price. It is one, therefore, which decorators and others abroad to whose notice it has not yet come should be prepared to introduce, the demand for which is likely to be as permanent as it will be large.—*Ec.*

A MODEL FAST CRUISER.

A practical plan has been given to the criticism on the navy by the submission to the Admiralty of a design for a barbatte cruiser, the chief attributes of which are great speed, powerful guns, long steaming power, and unusual buoyancy. The designer is Mr. Pearce, of Fairfield Shipbuilding Yard; and although the vessel is a novelty when compared with the war ships of the present day, it is in reality nothing more than a development of the fast American liners, and an adaptation of their hull and machinery to the express purpose in view. The essence of the design lies in the speed, and it is concerning this quality that the designer can speak with authority. It has unfortunately happened in the immediate past that defective sailing qualities have been the chief characteristic of the British navy. Not only are the vessels unable to go fast but they are capable only of steaming the shortest distances. Mr. Pearce's design contemplates a speed of 21½ knots per hour, or about 25 ordinary miles, and a coal capacity for steaming as far as the West Indies and back at a speed of 12 knots per hour. This high and enduring speed will be given in conjunction with great offensive power and great staying power. The design contemplates the vessel being pierced by 100 shots, and still being able to use her guns or steam off at full speed.

What may be described as the vitality of the ship, its power of endurance, and its maintenance as a floating object is secured by an elaboration of the cellular system of construc-