

WARSHIP WITH SILVER FITTINGS

A luxury yacht, reputed to have cost £250,000 to build, is flying the White Ensign. The yacht - now H.M.S. *ATMAH* - was originally built for a King of Egypt, but was purchased before completion by a member of the Rothschild family. She has been lent to the Navy for the duration by her owner.

Although the *Atmah* has been converted for war use, much of her former luxury still remains. There are more than a dozen bathrooms, some of them attached to cabin suites. Most of the cabins have their own running hot and cold water. Other bathrooms are tiled throughout and shower-baths are fitted.

The owner's cabin suite has now been turned into the sick-quarters.

Panelling in walnut and other rich woods has been untouched. Cabin bulkheads are still lined with fine flowered silks.

Radiators, finger-plates and door handles are of silver. Spacious promenade decks are unspoilt, although a war-time "protected" bridge has been built.

The saloon, now used as a wardroom, is still decorated in apple-green and white. In the ante-room there is a walnut, built-in desk and a settee with Royal red covers.

The *Atmah* was lying at Le Havre until shortly before the fall of France, when she raised steam and was sailed to England.

On one occasion she was machine-gunned by an enemy aircraft. A bullet went through the ante-room bulkhead and through a tray carried by a steward. The bullet passed between the steward's legs without hurting him. Now they keep the tray as a souvenir.

The *Atmah* was built in 1898 by the Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering Company of Glasgow.

At one period in her career shipbuilders performed a delicate surgical operation on her. They cut her in half, built in a new section 31 feet long and joined her together again.

During the last war she was used by the French Navy in the Mediterranean. She is still classed as 100 A1 at Lloyds.