

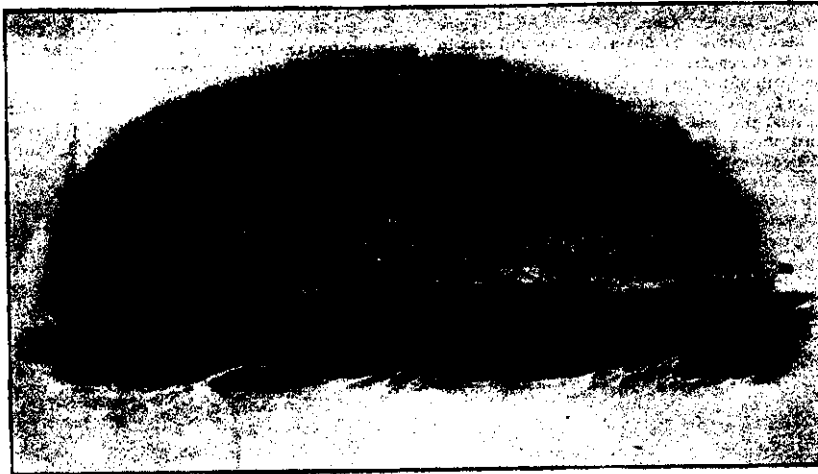
THE TAINUI AND SOME OF THE OFFICERS.

WE give this week some pictures of one of the most magnificent of the great ocean steamships plying direct betwixt this colony and England, and some portraits of the genial commander and his equally genial and popular officers.

A few words may here be interpolated regarding the gigantic vessel, which for nearly six weeks was our 'home on the ocean-wave.' The Tainui was built in 1884 by the world-renowned firm of Denny Brothers of Dunbar-ton, and is a magnificent four-masted steamer of 5,200 tons register, and 5,000 horse power, built throughout of steel. Her length is 440 feet, and her beam 46 feet. Her engines are of the most modern triple-expansion type, with a cylinder pressure of 160lbs to the square inch. The Tainui has twenty-six furnaces, employs 35 firemen and 9 engineers, and attains an average speed of 13 1/4 knots an hour, on a consumption of 55 tons of coal a day; with *carte blanche* of fuel she is capable of steaming 15 1/4 knots an hour. Her saloon is situated amidships, is citadel built, and is fitted up in a most elaborate and sumptuous style. The state-rooms are large, airy, and supplied with every convenience. The advantages to passengers of having the saloon and state-rooms amidships are at once apparent; a minimum of motion is experienced; the disagreeable noises and smells from the engine-room are avoided; and what is perhaps of most importance to those predisposed to sea-sickness, the ceaseless vibration communicated by the propeller is absent. Nothing can be more harassing to the traveller at sea than the vibration produced by the



Kinsey, photo  
CAPT. EDGAR J. EVANS, s.s. 'Tainui.'



SHAW, SAVILL AND ALBION CO.'S S.S. 'TAINUI.'



Kinsey, photo.  
MR WALKER, Chief Officer, s.s. 'Tainui.'

screw during the pitching movement of the vessel, when the propeller is lifted out of the water, and in seafaring parlance is said to be 'racing.' Lastly, the Tainui is provided with excellent machinery and accommodation for the frozen meat trade, and is fitted up from stem to stern with the electric light, the advantages of which can hardly be over-estimated.

As for the commander, what shall be said that shall sufficiently praise without seeming toilsome or gushing? Captain Edgar J. Evans is one of the most popular men in the service, a seaman of experience, a commander respected alike by officers and men, a courteous, tactful gentleman, bluff, hearty, and good natured—one of those men, in short, to whom England and her colonies owe their splendid reputation for their merchant service, which is admittedly the finest in the world. And only those who have sailed in the Tainui with the chief officer Mr Walker know how excellently the commander is backed up in seamanly and social qualities by his first mate, as it used to be the fashion to call the chief, and it is so right through the officers' list. A nicer, better-natured set of men never sailed out of English and colonial ports.

Mr W. H. Pickett, the purser, is always wrapped up in considering the comfort of the passengers, and is a good fellow in every way.

Our pictures of the officers are from photos very kindly supplied by Kinsey, of Lambton Quay, Wellington.

Cavour Cigars.  
Smoke Cavour Cigars.  
Frossard's Cavour Cigars, 8 for 1/3.—(Ad. 3.)

SOME REMARKABLE DUELS.

AN extraordinary duel has recently taken place between two Germans in a village not far from Berlin. They are young men, and it appears that both had taken a fancy to a certain young lady, who, after considerable hesitation, accepted one of them. The rejected lover challenged his rival to combat, and made the singular proposal that each should be supplied with a stout piece of rope, and that they should thrash each other as long as they could stand. This was mutually agreed upon, and a terrific contest ensued, which, however, was stopped by the police, but not until both combatants had been severely punished. Report has it that the challenger got the worst of this remarkable duel.

A duel on a tight rope may be fairly classed amongst the most extraordinary and unique of this form of encounter. A Frenchman named Perate and an Italian named Sarfuico quarrelled over their respective merits as performers on the tight rope. Eventually they both agreed to perform upon the same rope in a 'dance of friendship.' Dressed in wigs and ruffles, and wearing rapiers, they mounted the tight rope and commenced their performances. The Italian's foot slipped, upon which his colleague made a remark which roused the Italian's anger. He drew his rapier, and before the audience could comprehend the meaning of the act the dancers were engaged in mortal combat. Both were excellent swordsmen, and the battle waged hotly for some moments without any serious issue. Presently the Italian made a desperate lunge at his antagonist, and, losing his balance, fell from the rope. Throwing away his sword, he caught the rope with his hands. The shock also dislodged his assailant, and he fell to the ground.

A duel between vacqueras was fought in Mexico about a year ago, in which the weapons were lariats. Each endeavoured to lasso the other. After an hour's hard work, one of the combatants was secured by the flying noose, and the victor dragged him off his horse and shot him dead. A duel of a most unique type was fought under water. The combatants were divers who in the year 1792 were sent down to examine the wreck of the Royal George.

France, the land of duels, is responsible for no less than 4,000 of these absurd contests every year. The majority of them are the outcome of senseless foibles and petty spites, and rarely have a fatal ending. Some French duellists have, however, exhibited a distinct sense of originality and humour in their operations. The once celebrated Marquise Merle Sainte Marie, a famous Royalist, who had a passion for duelling, on one occasion insisted that an 'affair of honour' between himself and a certain fiery Bonapartist should be settled by each climbing a tree at fifty paces, and firing upon his opponent from its branches. This unusual arrangement was actually carried out. The duel was fought in a grove of chestnut trees, and the Marquise succeeded bringing his man to the ground by a wound in the leg, 'like a ripe chestnut,' as he grimly remarked at the close.

Another French duel, fought in 1808, was contested from balloons, 1,000 feet above the Tuilleries. The duellists—M. Grandprée and M. de Pisque—had furiously quarrelled concerning the charms of a celebrated actress. Each of them carried a loaded rifle, and fired 700 yards. Pisque missed, but Grandprée sent a bullet through his adversary's balloon, the result being that Pisque and his second were dashed upon a building below, and killed immediately.

Texas is often the scene of a curious form of duelling, unknown, perhaps, in any other country, save Mexico. When a difference in opinion is to be seriously decided by the cow boys of Texas, the two leading belligerents resort to the open prairies, riding mules, and armed with long leathern lassoes. They gallop round in a circle, eyeing each other fixedly, and warily watching for the first opportunity to 'spring the cord.' When the critical moment arrives, the lasso is hurled with unerring accuracy, and the rest is settled by main force. One or other of the combatants is fated to come to earth, and be mercilessly dragged along for some distance over the rough hillocks, to the obvious detriment of limb, and sometimes of life, for these affairs occasionally have a fatal ending.

The last example we shall place on record serves to illustrate, more forcibly, perhaps, than any of the foregoing the utterly unreasonable grounds upon which certain duels are conceived and fought. A certain Neapolitan nobleman fought a score of duels during his lifetime to defend his constant assertion that Dante was a superior writer to Ariosto. In his old age he took humerous pride in saying that he had never perused a line of either of the writers named.

MASCAGNI recently sent to a charity fair at Rome, to be disposed of at lottery, a fan, on each stick of which he had written a bar or two from 'Radcliffe' and 'Sultana Silvano.'