

able to say, "I'm going into Port Underwood, Port Gore, or Port Hardy," wherever you may be going, and you'll get there, even if it's twice as dark as the inside of Sheol.

The "Muritai."

The new steamer "Muritai," which was launched the other day by Messrs. S. Wood & Co., was built by them to the order of the Wellington Steam Ferry Company, and should help materially to relieve the pressure of traffic on busy days in the harbour. She is to be a general utility vessel, and will be used for towing as well as passenger carrying. She is to have a large water tank aft, capable of holding 14 tons, for carrying fresh water out to vessels in the stream, and will also be fitted with a Duplex two-cylinder horizontal pump, capable of throwing 4500 gals. of water per hour, which will be of use in case of fires occurring to shipping or on the waterfront, and also for salvage jobs.

Her principal dimensions are:—Length, over all, 77ft. 6in.; length, water line,

bridge deck, ventilators, companion ways, skylights, etc., has been added, she will have quite another appearance.

The whole of the after space will be taken up with engine-room, tanks, and bunkers, so the accommodation for crew is forward. She will have one mast, for signalling and derriek purposes. I have to thank Messrs. Wood & Co.'s kindly foreman, Mr. W. E. Bowen, who showed me over the vessel.

The pictures show "Muritai" on the ways just before launching, and a group of the owners, etc., which speaks for itself.

The thing which strikes me most about this locally built ship is the fact that while they had her built here, the United Kingdom supplied the machinery. Surely a local foundry could have done as good work.

I would like to correct an utterance of Mr. A. E. Mabin at the launching ceremony of the "Muritai," reported in "N.Z. Shipping and Commerce" of the 26th ult., that the last vessel built in Wellington was the s.s. "Opawa," fourteen years ago. This is incorrect. Messrs. Bringsings & Bailey launched a 30-ton auxiliary, the "Sally," subsequent to this. I saw her last year at Nelson.

the race described on page 729, "White Heather" winning by five minutes.

I mentioned a while ago that Mr. Miles Hamill was about to purchase in Auckland a new first-class boat for ocean racing. I received a wire from him as we went last to press saying that he has bought the "Ailsa," a similar boat to Mr. Bucholz's "Wairere." She has arrived (see page 729).

The Marine Department has intimated that any breach of the Harbour By-laws by small craft will in future result in prosecution of the offender. This is not a hasty decision, but is the result of numerous complaints by masters of vessels of the utter disregard of the rule of the road by some of those in charge of small sailing and motor boats. The majority of boat owners are careful enough, but it is the small careless minority that is getting us into disrepute with the authorities and the men on the bridge. Only the other day the master of a ship stopped me and asked the name of the owner of a boat which he described to me, saying that he intended to report the man for cutting across his bows



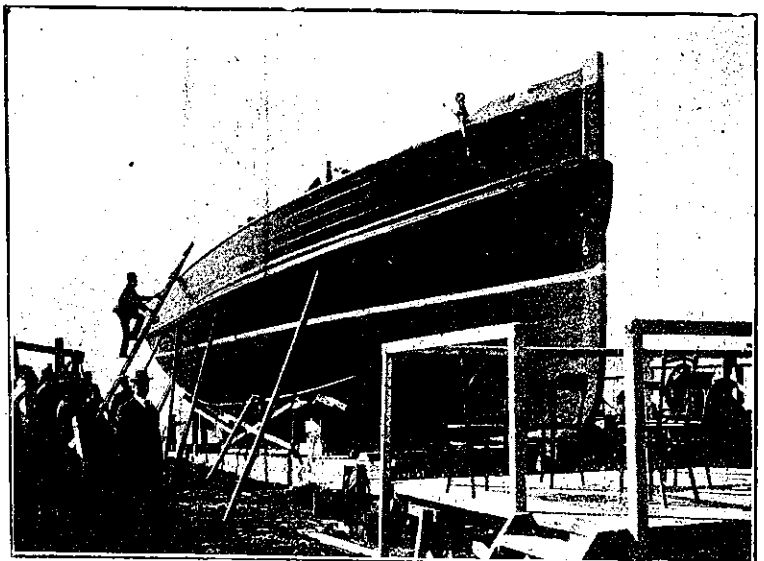
THE LAUNCHING OF THE "MURITAI."

Back—Messrs. Galbraith, Jellett, Pilcher, Burkett, Cable, Short, jun., Bowen, Wood (builders), Mrs. Short, jun., Mr. Short, sen. Middle—Messrs. Huue, Burke, Mabin, Miss and Mrs. Mabin, Mr. Zohrab (Manager), Mrs. Zohrab. Front—Messrs. Samson, Bezar (Super-Engineer), Mabin jun., Silver.

72ft.; breadth, 16ft.; draught (normal), 8ft.; least freeboard, 3ft.; freeboard, bow, 6ft. 6in.

As may be imagined, for towing work her construction is of the strongest, and is a credit to the builders. The keel, kelson and sternpost, are of Ironbark, while the stem is cut from a single piece, a natural grown crook of Rata. The planking is Kauri, fastened to double steam-bent Spotted Gum frames. The deck beams and carlines are Jarrah, as are the hatch combings and rail capping, while the deck planking is 2½in. by 5in. Kauri, caulked and payed with pitch as usual. The topsides are finished in black, with a white boot-topping, and the bottom is muntz metal sheathed. Her power, which is being installed by Messrs. Cable & Co., is a single screw triple expansion job, of 130 i.h.p., built by Plenty & Sons, of Newbury, as was the multi-tubular marine type boiler.

As the "Muritai" lies at present alongside the Ferry Wharf, she does not look much like a ferry boat, but in about two weeks' time, when the superstructure of



TUG "MURITAI."

Built by Messrs. Wood & Co., of Wellington, for the Wellington Steam Ferry Company, and launched during the month of May.

Wellington Cruiser Club.

This Club decided another points race last Saturday (27th May), the starters being "Rona" (scratch), "White Heather" (4min.), and "Kotiri" (16min.). The start was timed for 2.30, but the "Kotiri" was five minutes late. The other two competitors, however, waived their right to a punctual start and waited for the full handicap time to elapse, the race being under the Mark Fog system. The course was from Clyde Quay wharf round Point Jerningham to a dolphin off the Patent Slip, thence round Point Halswell to the Falcon Shoal buoy and home to the starting line.

The wind was nor'-west, light and flukey, and the race was a procession in the order of starting until a short distance from home, when "White Heather" displaced "Kotiri" in the lead and eventually won with about a minute to spare, with "Rona" some seven minutes behind "Kotiri."

The "White Heather" and "Kotiri" were thus equal in points. The result was

in the inner harbour. Fortunately the description he gave me was common to several small craft in this harbour, so I was able to truthfully state that I didn't know. Another instance! The turbine steamer "Maori" was coming up the harbour a few weeks ago at high speed, when a well-known small craft, with some ladies aboard, cut right across her bows, and the captain had to go full speed astern to escape cutting her down.

Now, this sort of thing should never occur. It is so easy to get out of a steamer's way that in fairness to the master, if not with any regard to safety, it should be done. Remember that although you may be willing to risk your lives and property, it is unfair to jeopardise an honest sailorman's certificate and his living, upon which, perhaps, a wife and family depend.

Please think of this, boys, next time, and every time you see a vessel coming down the harbour. It is only a fair thing. Business before pleasure, you know. I'm sure the sailormen will appreciate your efforts not to render their trying calling more irksome than it is.