

nished throughout with incandescent lighting, the "Manapouri" (1882); first turbine-driven ship, the "Loongana" (1904); first passenger vessel using oil fuel under Board of Trade certificate, the "Niagara" (1913); at the time of her entry to the Pacific mail-service, the first large ship using motor engines, the "Aorangi" (1924).

The "Rangatira," the first steamer propelled by the turbo-electric system to sail in Australasian waters, was launched in the yards of Vickers, Armstrongs, Ltd., at Barrow in Furness, on the Clyde, on April 16, 1931, by Lady Wilford, the wife of the High Commissioner, Sir Thomas Wilford. Lady Wilford, with the best wishes of the builders, was presented (according to a newspaper report) with "the little memento of a diamond brooch, in the form of a true lover's knot with a big centre diamond, and on behalf of the company, with a bar brooch with three diamonds on platinum." The ceremony was as quiet as possible because of the great depression in the ship-building industry at that time; and with her launching the hope was expressed that she wouldn't last as long as the "Takapuna" (in service round New Zealand from 1883 to 1924) because of the need for further orders.

In all ways the "Rangatira" came through her trials successfully (developing on the Skelmorie measured mile in the Firth of Clyde more than 22 knots without the full overload capacity of her engines). After an uneventful voyage via the Panama Canal at the easy speed of 13 knots, she arrived at Port Chalmers; she carried no passengers and made no stops except to refuel at Curacao and to navigate the canal.

With the arrival of the "Rangatira" there passed from active service another of New Zealand's pioneer steamers, the "Maori," the first ship to be built specially for the inter-Island run. In her twenty-four years of regular, uneventful service she saw the retirement of the "Rotomahana" and the "Mararoa," and the coming of the "Wahine," for many years her partner on the run, and the "Rangatira." To-day, in spite of her age, she stands by to take over service when

necessary. On November 5, 1931, the new steamer berthed to the minute after her first trip. It was the "Maori's" last regular run; and to the new arrival she sent a message of greeting which, when translated from Maori, read:—

Welcome O Son, the aged must
give place to the young.
Quit you like a man, be
strong, be brave.

The "Rangatira" replied:—

Farewell O mother of mine. Thy
son will till the fields you
have prepared.

And from the "Wahine" to the
"Rangatira" came the greeting:—

Greetings from your brother. We
join in service for our people. Love.

It's hot enough, we said tugging at our ties, to grow bananas down here; and although we had been down below only a minute or two our hands were clammy and hot when we shook hands with the "Rangatira's" engine-room Chief. We were wearing light summer battledress, and the night on deck had been chilly, the wind keen from the sea; perhaps for that reason we found the heat so noticeable. The Chief said no, it wasn't hot enough to grow bananas to-night, it was only 115 degrees F.; sometimes in the tropics the temperature had risen to more than 140 degrees. After we had been below for thirty minutes or more, we understood more clearly what had caused a fireman on a ship in the Mediterranean to rush from his stoking one noon to the deck where he took a flying jump over the side.

Apart from the heat, the engine-room is more suggestive of a steam-driven power-house than the usual "underworld" of a steamer. And a steam-driven power-house is what it really is: 11,000 kilowatts are generated, enough current to supply all the needs of a small town. In fact, the Chief said, once when Arapuni broke down and Wellington was short of power, a suggestion was made of employing the generating power of the "Rangatira" to relieve the need of the city; the means were there, and it was only technical difficulties that stopped the change-over.