

Enclosure 1.

Mr. BLACKETT to the SECRETARY of CUSTOMS.

SIR,—

Marine Office, Wellington, 30th June, 1877.

For the information of the Hon. the Commissioner of Customs, I have the honor to forward the following report on works executed for new lighthouses during the past year :—

Cape Foulwind.—In the report for last year it was stated that the works at this lighthouse were nearly completed, and that the light would be established in a few weeks. This was accordingly done, and the light was first exhibited on Friday, 1st September, 1876.

The official description of the light is as follows :—Tower, 53 feet high from base to top of lantern, of timber, and painted white; the upper part close boarded, the lower part open framed work. The light is of the second order revolving white light, visible all round; greatest brilliance every thirty seconds. The light is 190 feet above the level of the sea, and allowing 15 feet for height of eye, the light will be seen $19\frac{1}{2}$ nautical miles in clear weather.

The Brothers, in Cook Strait.—In last year's report it was explained that the working party was withdrawn on the 4th May, by reason that the department could not depend on the regular service of the "Luna," that vessel being required for other services. On the arrival, however, from England of the s.s. "Stella," an iron screw-steamer ordered expressly for lighthouse service, the work was again taken up, and a party despatched to The Brothers on the 18th November, 1876, since when the works have been carried on interruptedly and, I am glad to say, without any accident.

The tower, with a surrounding wall or fence of brick and stone, the keepers' dwelling, stores, iron tramway, landing-stages, and lifting gear are all completed, the works having been ably and substantially carried out under an Overseer. The lantern has been placed on the tower, and the light apparatus erected within it nearly complete; a few small items of work still remain to be finished, but the whole will be complete and ready for lighting up in a few weeks.

The light is of the description known as second order revolving, showing a bright flash every ten seconds; the lighthouse is also fitted with a special lens to throw a red light over the site of Cook's Rock.

Portland Island.—At date of last report the works for this lighthouse had been advertised, the tenders had been received, and were then under consideration. The tender of Mr. H. M. Shepherd was ultimately accepted, on the 16th October, 1876, for £1,946, the time of erection to occupy ten months. The Contractor in this case has shown a want of energy in carrying forward his contract, and a considerable amount of work yet remains to be done. He has been twice notified officially to proceed more quickly, but it is certain that he will be considerably over his contract time.

Puysegur Point, Preservation Inlet.—In last year's report it was stated that the preliminary work of road-making had been completed, and the heavy timbers for the tower landed; also that plans were ready for advertising. This was shortly afterwards done, and a tender was accepted on 6th January, 1877, from Mr. W. Birss, for £2,984 2s.; the work to be completed by 6th January, 1878. This includes the erection of tower, three dwellings, and three stores, the materials being conveyed to the landing-place by the Government steamer.

The progress made with these works has not been altogether satisfactory, but it is probable that they may yet be completed within contract time.

Centre Island, Foveaux Strait.—The works for this lighthouse were advertised and let at the same time as those of Puysegur Point—viz., 6th January, 1877—to Mr. William Boyd, for the sum of £2,087 1s. 9d. This includes, as in the case of Puysegur Point, the building of the tower, three dwellings, and three stores; the materials being conveyed to the landing-place by Government.

The works are well advanced at this place, and it is expected that all will be complete within contract time, which expires on the 6th of November, 1877.

In March last I visited, in the s.s. "Stella," Centre Island and Puysegur Point, having been informed by the Contractors that they were ready to begin work. A quantity of materials and stores were then conveyed to each place from the Bluff, and I marked off the exact sites and positions of the several buildings on the ground, leaving an Inspector at each place to supervise the work.

During the last month, July, the remainder of all the materials has been conveyed by the s.s. "Stella" to both of these places.

Moeraki.—On my return from Foveaux Strait I called at Moeraki, under instructions, examined the site selected there, and marked off the road line from the landing-place to the site; also fixed the positions of the tower, dwellings, and stores on the ground. I also made arrangements to have the road formed, to be in readiness for the conveyance of material. The road has since been finished, and plans and specifications prepared for the erection of the lighthouse, dwelling-houses, &c., the work being advertised for public tender.

Timaru: Harbour Light.—This lighthouse has been twice advertised for public tender, the first time it was withdrawn at the request of the Municipal authorities, for the purpose of altering the design and substituting stone instead of wood, and of adding a dwelling-house to the contract. Tenders were received for the works, as altered, accordingly; but the amount of the tenders being in excess of the funds available, all the tenders were declined at the instance of the Harbour Board, and it is now proposed to call for tenders for the erection of a wooden tower and dwelling-house, &c., plans for which are in course of preparation.

Hokitika: Harbour Light.—Nothing more has been done towards the erection of this lighthouse, beyond preparing to a certain extent the plans for the tower, the light originally intended for this place having been transferred to Moeraki, where the early establishment of a light is of much greater importance.

Cape Maria.—Arrangements are being made for the erection of this lighthouse in the same manner as that adopted at The Brothers, and it is expected that they will be so far completed as to allow of the working party being despatched about the end of July or the beginning of August. This plan of operations, which has answered so well at The Brothers in securing good work, has been adopted on