

PORT OF TIMARU.

THE Port of Timaru, which is the natural outlet of the large and fertile district of South Canterbury, whose export business in a few years will equal that of any port in New Zealand, is situated at a slight projection of the coast-line at the south-west extremity of the Ninety-mile Beach, south of Banks Peninsula. The town of Timaru stands near the sea-shore, partly on a rise. The lighthouse and flagstaff (only 40ft. apart) are on a cliff towards the north end of the town, in latitude 44° 23' S., longitude 171° 17' 20" E. The breakwater, which is now completed, is 2,78ft. long, it extends from the beach in a N.E. by N. direction, and will be seen when viewed from the sea to be in a line with the flagstaff.

The coast-line from Banks Peninsula to Timaru is low, and cannot be seen in thick weather or by night until close in with the breakers, while southwards of the Town of Timaru the cliffs are from 30ft. to 50ft. high. This is a sure guide to Timaru, viz., low shingle beach northward, moderately high cliffs and headlands to the southward.

If the weather is clear the high mountain range will be seen behind Timaru long before the coast-line has risen. Burke's Pass, a remarkable gorge, almost directly behind Timaru, is a good landmark, showing a distinct gap, and should be stored for on a course W.S.W. magnetic; the cliffs above mentioned will prevent any mistake.

Directions.—Vessels bound for Timaru, after rounding Banks Peninsula, should steer S.W. by W. southerly, unless the wind be strong from E.S.E., which causes an inset, when it is necessary to keep three-quarters of a point more southerly.

The shore from the end of the breakwater to Patiti Point, a long mile, S.S.E., is fronted by sand and shoal patches, with outlying reefs of rock and kelp, always breaking, the reef extending nearly two-thirds of a mile direct to seaward from Patiti Point, and one and a half miles to the south-east from the breakwater at Timaru. The reef off Patiti Point runs out a quarter of a mile farther than is marked on the charts, and should have a wide berth.

From Patiti Point southward the coast is again formed of low cliffs, fronted by a shingle beach, and extends thirty miles in a south direction to Waitangi (chart Waitaki) River, with several small streams intervening. A high mountain range, 3,500ft (the Hunter Hills), approaches within a few miles of the coast, between Timaru and Waitaki River.

The Timaru lighthouse is 30ft high, built of wood, and painted white. The light is a fixed white light of the fifth order dioptric, and shows a green sector of 45° (four points) from W. to S.W. magnetic as viewed from seaward. It stands 85ft. above the sea-level, and, allowing 15ft for the height of the observer's eye, should be visible in clear weather at a distance of fourteen nautical miles.

The green sector is intended as a guide to vessels approaching Timaru during the night or bringing up in the roadstead.

Masters of vessels are particularly cautioned that on nearing the port, and while lying at anchor, they must not lose sight of the GREEN LIGHT; and that, if compelled to make the harbour, they must when within half a mile of the breakwater (owing to the extension of the work) come out of the GREEN into the WHITE LIGHT, and get the light to bear S.W. by S. $\frac{1}{2}$ S., and come in on that bearing until inside the breakwater; and that while under way the lead-line must be kept going. Masters are likewise cautioned not to bring the light to bear S. by W. on account of the "Lyttelton" wreck.

A contract has been let for the construction of a rubble wall to enclose the harbour on the north-west side. The work is now well in hand, and is expected to be completed early in the year 1890.

The accommodation for shipping under the shelter of the breakwater is very considerable. Moorings are laid down, to which several vessels can be well secured, moored head and stern. There are, besides, about 1,500ft. available wharfrage for berthing vessels. The depth of water is from 10ft. to 23ft. at low-water spring tides, and vessels drawing up to 19ft. are discharged and loaded with great facility, as the railway runs the whole length of the wharf, and steam cranes are always available.

In order to give despatch to sailing-vessels the Harbour Board maintains a powerful tug of 36 h.p. nominal.

The towage rates have been made exceedingly liberal, to induce masters of vessels to avail themselves to the utmost of the services of the tug.

A patent slip has been built capable of hauling up vessels up to 200 tons register.

Signals.—The New Zealand General Signals are used.

It has been notified by the Harbourmaster that vessels frequenting the port should be provided with at least one extra heavy anchor and strong cable, and that vessels of large tonnage, say 800 tons register and over, must not anchor in less than seven fathoms of water, the flagstaff bearing W.S.W. Vessels of less tonnage may anchor closer in on the same bearing, but not within a mile and a half of the breakwater, and in no case must approach the breakwater or moorings without permission, in consequence of the rapid extension of the harbour works.

On the plan are marked the best anchorages for all classes of vessels, also the bearings from the lighthouse. High water, full and change, at 8h. 30min.; spring tides, rise and fall, 6ft. 6in.

Shipping inwards at the Port of Timaru—

Year	1884	...	...	...	282 vessels	...	...	63,133 tons register.
"	1885	...	...	...	332	"	...	90,109 "
"	1886	...	...	...	363	"	...	98,756 "
"	1897	...	...	...	332	"	...	97,905 "

Principal Exports, year 1887—

Wool	...	...	...	...	...	23,813 bales.
Wheat	...	...	...	...	...	38,344 sacks.
Oats	...	...	...	...	...	96,423 "
Flour	...	...	...	...	...	99,678 "
Bran and sharps	...	...	...	...	...	66,860 "
Potatoes	...	...	...	...	...	32,076 "
Frozen mutton	...	...	...	...	...	11,509 carcasses.
Tallow	...	...	...	...	...	629 tons.

Revenue from Wharfrage and Harbour Charges—

Year.	1879	...	...	...	...	£	s.	d.
1879	...	...	...	...	...	241	0	6
1880	...	...	...	...	...	1,791	6	3
1881	...	...	...	...	...	3,926	11	9
1882	...	...	...	...	...	4,963	16	1
1883	...	...	...	...	...	6,356	7	2
1884	...	...	...	...	...	6,323	1	8
1885	...	...	...	...	...	8,626	0	6
1886	...	...	...	...	...	9,972	18	8
1887	...	...	...	...	...	9,523	13	9

The harbour district includes the Counties of Geraldine and Mackenzie, and the following ridings of the Waimate County, namely, Pareora, Otaio, Makikihi, Deep Creek, and part of Waihao, the Borough of Timaru, and the Town Districts of Geraldine, Temuka, and Arorhenua. The area of the district is 2,718,800 acres. Its rateable value under Government assessment is £6,664,000. Population, 24,000.

The Harbour Board has a right of rating over the property in the harbour district in the event of its revenue being insufficient to meet the interest on money borrowed for harbour works. There has up to the present time been no need to levy any rates, the revenue being sufficient for all purposes.

Timaru, 1st April, 1888.

W. J. TENNANT,
Secretary.