

## TIDE SIGNALS FOR THE UPPER HARBOUR.

Marryat's Numerals will be hoisted on the East yard-arm at the Flagstaff, Port Chalmers, to denote the height of the tide during flood in the cross-channel.

## LIGHT DUES.

THE following Light-house Rates, payable at the Port of Wellington, have been fixed by order of the Marine Board, under the Marine Board Act, 1863, and supersede all previous rates:—

For all vessels from Europe or any other port beyond the Australasian colonies, per register ton, 9d. (ninpence).

All vessels from the Australian colonies, or Tasmania, per register ton, 6d. (sixpence).

For every steam or sailing vessel, employed in the coasting trade, per register ton, 2d. (two pence).

The above dues shall be levied on entering inwards only, and payable on and after the date of the Marine Board Act, 1863, coming into force.

CHARLES SHARP,  
President and Master Warden.

## WRECKS.

THE following instructions for the guidance and information of Customs' Officers, Magistrates, and others, with respect to investigations into cases of wreck occurring on the New Zealand coast, have been issued by authority.

## 1. DUTIES OF CUSTOMS' OFFICERS, &amp;C.

1. Any Customs' Officer, or other person authorised by the Act, who shall apply (§ 7) to a Resident Magistrate, or two Justices, to hear any case in reference to the wreck of any vessel shall make such application in writing, stating therein the particulars of the case in respect of which such investigation is required.

2. The Customs' Officer, or other person authorised, shall, before the commencement of the investigation furnish a copy of such application to each of the Master, Mate and Engineer of the wrecked vessel.

3. The Customs' Officer, or other authorised person, shall superintend the management of the case: the investigation (§ 9).

4. Should the Court be of opinion that any person connected with the wreck should be prosecuted criminally, the Customs' Officer, or other authorised person, should lay an information and prosecute in the usual way.

## DUTIES OF MAGISTRATES.

1. Having taken evidence, the Magistrate or Justices, shall, in all cases, prepare a report to the Governor, containing a full statement (1) of the case, and (2) of their opinion thereon such report, (3) to be signed by the Magistrate or Justices, and (4) by the Nautical Assessor, if there be one and he concurs, (5) and to be forwarded to the Governor through the Postmaster-General, (6) together with the whole of or such extracts from the evidence as the Court shall think necessary (§ 9 and 10). Should the nautical assessor not concur in the report, he should forward his dissent and reasons therefore, to the Governor (§ 10).

2. The Court has power, provisional on the Governor's confirmation, to cancel or suspend the certificate of any Master, Mate or Engineer, and in any case in which it may be considered proper so to cancel or suspend a certificate, the Court should,—

1. Take care that a Nautical Assessor sits with the Court.

2. Call on such Master, Mate or Engineer, to deliver up his certificate, which, under § 14 of the "Merchant Shipping Act Amendment Act, 1862," he is bound to do.

3. State in open Court their decision, provisional on Governor's confirmation, in respect to cancelling or suspending the certificate. (Merchant Shipping Act, 1862, § 23, par. 3.)

4. State, in their report to the Governor, the fact of a copy of the statement of the case upon which the investigation was ordered having been furnished to the owner of the certificate before the commencement of the investigation. (Merchant Shipping Act, 1862, § 23, par. 6.)

5. See that the Assessor concurs in the report, and signs it as so concurring. (*Ibid.*)

6. Transmit the report, with the whole evidence taken, and the cancelled or suspended certificate, to the Governor through the Postmaster-General, for confirmation and transmission to the Board of Trade. (*Ibid.*, par. 3.)

## STEWART'S ISLAND.

THE following report, by the Chief Surveyor of Southland, contains the most recent account of this island:—

SIR,—I proceeded, on the 26th ult., to explore Stewart's Island, with a view to obtain some general knowledge of the character of the land on it, and to ascertain what steps it would be necessary to take for the survey of the whole or portions of it.

For these purposes I went round the Island in a boat, landing at a great many points and striking inland, and ascending the hills wherever the extremely difficult character of the country permitted. The broken and irregular outline of the shore, and the many islands which fringe it, afford boat harbours on almost every part of the coast, which greatly facilitate such an excursion, though the great strength of the tides, and the prevalence of westerly gales, cause such a heavy sea off the salient points, especially off the Southern Capes, as to make it hazardous, except in a very good boat, and with skilful management.

The whole island consists of primary rocks, felspar being by far the predominant material. Some of the hills of the interior I found to consist of granite (in one case, a singularly beautiful red syenitic granite), and the hills generally have the conical form and boldly rounded outlines common to the granite hills of Europe; but near the coast large dykes occur, of almost pure felspar, intersected by veins of quartz, and with a few small crystals only of mica and hornblende thinly scattered through it. In some parts, especially in the south, mica and talc abound so much that it might be called talcose rock.

Rocks of this character are by no means unlikely to yield gold. Everywhere I found embedded in the felspar minute crystals of zircon, and the sands contained titanate of iron and a number of small green gems, which from their form, and from their having a specific gravity much greater than that of quartz, I take to be euclase.

As might be expected, the decomposition of these rocks gives rise to a very fertile soil, and everywhere the surface is covered with a dense and luxuriant scrub, which, having never been burnt off, or broken down by cattle, and being composed of quick-growing shrubs of no great strength, subject to be blown down and replaced by new growths, the dead and the living forming an impenetrable jungle, so as to make the walking to any distance altogether impossible. On the west coast, the land is so much exposed to the prevalent winds, and the hills are so steep and broken that, for the present, at all events, it may be set down as absolutely unavailable, except a few hundred acres at Mason's Bay; but on the east side, and north of Port Pegassus, and especially in the vicinity of Lord's River, and Port Adventure, the ridges become longer and rather lower; the size of the timber increases; the rimu, totara, and kihikatea appear, and the whole country becomes rather more practicable, though still steep and broken, and everywhere covered with dense scrub to the water's edge.

At Port Adventure there is a small settlement, now chiefly peopled by half-castes. Portions of the hills have been more or less cleared, and the extreme luxuriance of the grass which has spontaneously grown up, attests the productiveness of the soil and climate. Proceeding on towards Patterson's Inlet, the land again becomes rather higher and steeper, but still carrying forest trees, though of no great size. A little land in the south arm of Patterson's Inlet seems capable of cultivation, and a few small spots, all along the extensive shores of the harbour, might hereafter invite settlement,—aided as these spots will be, by the convenience of communication by water—but the area of available land is very small.

The principal arm of Patterson's Inlet receives a considerable river, the Ohokia, which flows through the only plain in the island. This valley is full ten miles long, with an average breadth of about three miles, and contains 12,000 or 15,000 acres of flat land and about half as much more of the easy slopes of the hills on each side; a great portion, perhaps one half of the flat, is void of scrub, apparently having been burnt off at no very remote period; the remainder of the scrub would no doubt be easily destroyed by fire, and by feeding cattle, but the character of the land in the flat is very inferior—it is, in fact, a mere sand-drift, covered with a thin peaty soil. The summits of the long low parallel ridges are dry but poor, and every bottom is occupied by swamp. The slopes at the side, however, have a good soil, and will make some desirable farms, and no doubt by frequent burning and close feeding, with perhaps a little labour here and there in clearing the water-courses, the flat will so far improve as to afford good feed for stock.

On the North side of Patterson's Inlet three saw mills have been erected, and one of them has been worked pretty extensively. The timber sawn is exclusively rimu of very small size. The trees are thinly scattered among the rata and scrub, but as the land rises steeply from sheltered and easily navigable waters for many miles, the timber is easily got down and floated to the mills.

The two peninsulas which narrow the mouth of the harbour seem to have been the favourite haunt of the hardy adventurers who, attracted by the whales and seals which formerly greatly abounded on these coasts, took up their lonely abode nearly thirty years ago on this spot. Many of these still remain, though the original object of their advent has long since disappeared, and the growth of the colony in their vicinity has increased their disabilities without adding anything to their wealth and comfort. The original settlers are now aged men, but they are generally surrounded by half-caste families, who constitute a little community which has grown up entirely without aid or care from the Government, and which is remarkable for the general good conduct of its members. I find that very few of these old residents have prosecuted claims to the land on which they reside, which they originally occupied by the consent of its native owners