

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 $44^{\circ} 23' S.$; longitude $171^{\circ} 17' 20'' E.$ The breakwater, which is now 1,700ft. long, and is rapidly being pushed seawards, 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 steered 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 rocks 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 further 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), approach within a few miles of the coast, between Timaru and Waitaki River.

The Timaru lighthouse is 30ft. high; it is 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 LIGHT is intended as a guide to vessels approaching Timaru during the night. Masters of vessels are particularly cautioned that on nearing the port, and while laying at anchor, they must not lose sight of the green light; also, that while under way, the lead-line should always be kept going.

Two red lights, 10ft. apart, are exhibited from the outer end of the breakwater, when weather permits, and show all round to seawards.

The accommodation for shipping under the shelter of the breakwater is now very considerable, and is being rapidly increased as the work extends. Moorings are laid down, to which several vessels can be well secured, moored head and stern. There are besides about 1000ft. available wharfage for berthing vessels. The depth of water is from 10ft. to 20ft. at low water, spring tides, and vessels drawing up to 16ft. are discharged and loaded with great facility, as the railway runs the whole length of the wharf, and steam cranes are always available.

A contract has been let for the construction of the Moody Wharf, as shown on the plan, and the work is now in progress.

In order to better secure the safety of the shipping of the port, and to give additional despatch, the Harbour Board has purchased a powerful tug, of 56 h.p. nominal, which is at all times available to facilitate the berthing and loading of vessels.

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.

Signals.—The New Zealand General Signals are used.

Vessels requiring a pilot may always rely upon being boarded.

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, F. and C., at 3h. 30min.; spring tides, rise and fall, 6ft. 6in.

WM. WEBSTER, Harbourmaster.

Timaru, 31st March, 1885.