

TASMANIA.

(FROM THE CORNWALL CHRONICLE.)

THE PORT CHARGES.—Mr. Balfe has given notice of a motion for an address to His Excellency, praying that £3,000 may be placed upon the estimates to pay the port charges—so that the heavy imposts upon shipping may be relieved. We trust that a sum may be appropriated for this purpose. It would be well laid out. At the present time it is well known that the shipping will not frequent this port because of the monstrous charges they are subjected to. This is a suicidal policy—preventing traffic, ruining trade, and destructive alike to the interests of the agricultural population, as to those of the commercial and trading. We shall await with some anxiety the result of Mr. Balfe's motion. The agents of the barque Westbury are disinclined to enter her manifest at the Customs in the existing undecided state of the tariff. Mr. Meredith's important motion with reference to the *ad valorem* duties has been postponed until Thursday week, and this obnoxious tax may be repealed immediately after importers have paid the *ad valorem* duty on the valuable cargo of the Westbury.

A MADMAN'S FREAK.—On Wednesday morning, between nine and ten o'clock, a man named Butterfield, in a state of intoxication, forcibly entered the premises of Mr. George Windcatt, at the corner of Brisbane and Tamar streets and got into the kitchen, where he took up a knife and refused to leave. Mrs. Windcatt was so frightened that she fainted and was insensible, when Captain Tregurtha, who was passing to his office, entered and had the man removed to the police-office. He was merely fined for drunkenness and liberated, and has since sailed for Queensland. The shock has nearly proved fatal to Mrs. Windcatt, as it brought on premature labour, and she was confined early yesterday morning. The child is in excellent health, but we regret to hear that Mrs. Windcatt is still in a very precarious, if not dangerous, state. Butterfield appeared to be perfectly insane, and left on the kitchen table money to the amount of £23, which Mr. Windcatt handed over to the police.

WANT OF FAT CATTLE.—The inability of Tasmanian graziers to keep up a sufficient supply of beef for this market was made very apparent at the sale at Carrick on Tuesday last, when about thirty store, not fat, cattle were submitted for competition amongst that number of butchers, and Mr. Bell, the auctioneer, admitted that he could not see from whence the next supply was to come. The cattle were so evidently unfit for the slaughterhouse, that some of the butchers proposed they should not make a single bid for them, but as that was the only source whence they could be supplied for the next fortnight, they were compelled to purchase the inferior lot of cattle and at very high rates. One beast, about six cwt., was knocked down at £13 15s.

(FROM THE LAUNCESTON EXAMINER.)

MR. JAMES PETERS.—Letters are in town from Mr. Peters intimating his intention to return to the colony, and complaining of the treatment his firm has received. He deprecates consideration of his domestic concerns, and insists that his business relations were sound and satisfactory. He had maintained his commercial credit by the payment of large sums in Europe, but was in the Fleet as a debtor, from which he would be freed by a declaration of bankruptcy in England. Of course each individual will form his own opinion on the subject, and act accordingly. The estate will realize a fair dividend, but creditors will suffer by the summary winding up of the firm.

TASMANIAN BLACK SAND.

The following correspondence appears in the *Launceston Examiner* :—

Launceston Examiner :—

Sir,—Early in 1861 I forwarded for analysis to England, under the care of Mr. J. A. Youl, a few pounds of black sand, obtained by Mr. Skelton B. Emmett, from the neighbourhood of the River Hellyer, Circular Head, and in due course received a letter from Mr. Youl, stating that he had handed the sand to the directors of the Van Diemen's Land Company, who had had it analysed, and the report they had received from the assayers was so favourable, to the effect that it contained valuable minerals and precious stones, that I was requested to procure and send home a further quantity, which Mr. Emmett having kindly obtained, at considerable personal trouble, I forwarded to London per Dunorian, and by the mail just arrived have received the following interesting note from Mr. Youl in return :—

“ Waratah House, Clapham, London,
July 19, 1862.

“ My dear Sir,—You will be glad to hear, after all the trouble you have taken, that the ‘sand’ you sent me by Captain Davison, collected by Mr. S. B. Emmett from the River Hellyer, turns out most valuable, as the following ‘document’ will show :—

“ The sample of sand has been carefully assayed, and is found to produce 6oz. and 37⁵/₁₆ths of fine gold, and 3oz. and 125⁵/₁₆ths of fine silver, to the ton of 20cwt. of sand.

“(Signed): JOHNSON AND MATTHAY.”

“ The sand is therefore worth about £26 a ton, and if it can be found in large quantities, as Mr. Emmett's letter would infer, Tasmania has at least discovered a valuable and paying gold-field. I have kept part of the sand for further observations, and to get the opinion of several eminent geologists as to whether the ‘silver,’ which is found not amalgamated with the gold, but in separate pieces and pure, does not indicate that there are silver or lead mines in the neighbourhood. There are also plenty of small sapphires and other precious stones in the sand, and if small ones, why not large ones? I do not know if this sand was procured from the same locality as that brought home by me in 1861, which that assayers were so anxious to obtain more of for further researches. I have not yet heard what steps the directors of the Van Diemen's Land Company will take to develop by further ex-

ploration the value of this discovery, which must tend to advance the value of their property.

“ Yours very truly,

“ JAMES A. YOUL.

“ Wm. Johnstone, Esq., Launceston.”

Mr. Emmett, when sending me the sand, informed me, under date 2nd February, 1862, that it would be impossible at present to state how much of the black sand could be obtained in one day with a labourer, having only tried the tin dlab, but that he conceived there could be hardly any limit to the quantity to be obtained by proper methods of working, as the drift heaps or accumulation of gravel in the river contain immense quantities to be operated upon.

I observe in the list of exports from Melbourne some black sand valued as high as £70 per ton, containing a large percentage of tin. Having been assured that black sand has been found in numerous localities and in considerable quantities in Northern Tasmania, I have deemed it right to send you the above information, in hopes that it may attract attention and induce other parties to forward samples either to England or Melbourne for assay, and thus eventually, perhaps, be the means of developing the rich mineral resources of our island, of which we have heard so much, but to which so few practical well-directed efforts have yet been devoted.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

WILLIAM JOHNSTONE.

St. John-street, Launceston, Sept. 12, 1862.

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FIRE AT CHEWTON.—Last night, a little after seven o'clock, the back part of the Kyneton produce store, Forest Creek-road, was found to be on fire. When the discovery was first made, the fire must have been burning for some time. A quantity of hay, oats, and chaff, stored at the back of the premises, were in a blaze, and the roof was also burning. Mr. Cheetham, the proprietor, was gone from home at the time, and Mrs. Cheetham was visiting a neighbour close by. Of course, the alarm spread very rapidly, and a number of persons were immediately on the spot, Dr. Hardy amongst the others. This gentleman broke open one of the front doors, and, following the instruction of Mrs. Cheetham, succeeded in saving a box in which were some valuable deeds and papers. Other assistance was brought to bear, and several articles of furniture were got out. During this time, the flames were gaining head, and the front part of the building was getting heated. This was intimated pretty significantly by the explosion of the barrels of a revolver. Fortunately, the muzzle being pointed towards the wall, the discharged bullets did no damage. The whole stock of goods, consisting of some two or three tons of hay and a number of bags of chaff and oats, now formed one dense mass of fire, and the sides and roof of the back, the former composed of timber and the latter of zinc, fell in, of course adding to the intensity of the flames. The front, being of brick, continued to stand, and indeed does so still. The origin of the fire is not known. There is cause, however, to fear it may have been the work of an incendiary. For some time past Mr. Cheetham has been aware of threats having been used by some Chinamen towards himself, and these of so serious a nature that he has deemed it unwise for Mrs. Cheetham to reside in the store. She has consequently been living with a neighbour close by, Mr. Cheetham and a man sleeping in the store. A rumour was circulated to the effect that a little before the fire a Chinaman had been seen striking a match upon the end of the building where the fire first broke out. This report was, however, not substantiated. Mr. Cheetham is insured to an amount that will fully cover the loss.—*Daily News*, Sept. 15.
