OBITUARY.

MR. S. GRIFFITHS.

The death notice of Mr. Sydney Griffiths appears to-day, he having passed away in Sydney on the 7th March, aged 60 years. He was well known in Tasmania as a shipbuilder, and was resident at Devonport for many years until last November, when he went to Sydney to take up the management of a boatbuilding establishment in that city. The following sketch of Mr. Griffiths’s career is taken from the “North-West Post” of November 20 last:—“Mr. Griffiths settled at Port Sorell, with his father, in 1863, the latter opening a shipbuilding yard in that then flourishing township. The schooners Leslie (200 tons), Bitter Beer (60 tons),
Bertha (60 tons), the topsail schooner Rubicon (110 tons), and the cutters Ripple (15 tons), and Lenton were among the vessels built by Mr. Griffiths, sen. Ten years later they opened a shipbuilding yard on the banks of the Mersey, Mr. S. Griffiths taking over the management. The first vessel built at the new yards was the schooner Eveline, which was wrecked at the Hunters about two years back, the sensational occurrences in connection with which are no doubt fresh in the minds of our readers. The barque J. L. Griffiths, a vessel of 500 tons, was then built, and during her short career she earned the distinction of being the fastest sailer in Tasmanian waters. Her fate is a mystery. In 1881 she left Adelaide for the Mersey, in command of Captain Brown. She picked up the barque Swordfish off Kangaroo Island, and the
vessels “clapped on” all sail for a trial of speed. The J. L. Griffiths got clear, and as she passed away on the horizon that was the last seen of her, not a piece of wreckage or a timber being afterwards discovered to throw light on the mystery of her fate. The ketches Ruby and Swift were also built by Mr. S. Griffiths. The former vessel is still engaged in the North-West Coast trade, but the latter, which was for some years under the command of Captain A. Christensen, was wrecked a short time back on the West Australian coast. Mr. Griffiths gained considerable distinction as a builder of yachts, and among the “small fry” may be mentioned the Restless, Ripple, Star, Comet, Ada May, Vivid, and Ripple II., and the steam-launch Sailor. The most successful of these boats was perhaps the Ripple (eight tons), which was
a formidable rival of the Tasma (now owned by the Hon. John Henry, and used as a pleasure boat), and many yachtsmen will still have remembrances of the exciting struggle some 17 years ago between the Ripple and the Syren for a stake of £100. The course was from Low Head to a black buoy off the Mersey and back, the Ripple winning by about 9min. Numerous other craft were built by Mr. Griffiths during his residence at Devonport.”