

GIPPS LAND LAKES.

(From the Public Lands Circular, No. 6.)

The Inspector General of Public Works having visited Gipps Land Lakes, has made the following report on the subject of rendering them accessible from the sea.

Department of Public Works Melbourne,
August 30, 1862.

Sir,—I do myself the honour to report that in accordance with your instructions, I have examined the outlet to the sea from the Gipps Land lakes, for the purpose of ascertaining the practicability or otherwise of forming and maintaining a permanent entrance to these lakes; and, if practicable, the probable cost.

While at Port Albert, on my way to the lake entrance, I ascertained that both the harbour master and one of his boat's crew had some knowledge of it; the former as it existed some nineteen years ago, and the latter as it existed three or four years ago.

From the information they afforded me, it appears—

That the entrance has shifted at least one mile, in an easterly direction, within nineteen years:

That this seemed to be the final result of various shiftings, as it had been known to move also in a westerly direction, while at other times it was totally closed up:

That on two occasions only have vessels succeeded in entering from the seaward; one vessel drawing six feet, and the other three feet of water:

That this was an entrance now quite closed, and about half a mile to the westward of the present one:

That they then entered under the most favourable possible circumstances:

That they are now completely locked in each attempt to get them out to sea again having failed.

On the 14th inst, I reached the entrance by sea, at about two o'clock in the afternoon. Up to that time the day had been remarkable fine, with a light westerly breeze and a smooth sea, and Commander Norman expected their would be no difficulty in landing; but a strong south westerly gale sprang up suddenly, and within half an hour the sea had risen to such an extent, that landing was not only quite out of the question, but for the safety of the vessel—a powerful screw steamer—it was thought necessary to stand out to sea at once.

The gale lasted until the night of the 17th, and at daylight on the 18th Captain Norman sailed again for the lakes, calling at Gabo Island where I had other duty in connection with the new lighthouse.

On the morning of the 19th, the sea was perfectly quiet, and by the evening of that day we again reached the entrance, and anchored in a calm just outside the bar.

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The next morning, the 20th, the same weather continued; the sea was perfectly smooth, and it was evidently impossible to land under more favorable circumstances; notwithstanding which, it was found to be a difficult undertaking, for the surf was breaking on the beach with considerable force, and curling to the height of some five or six feet at the place where we landed, which was at about half a mile to the east of the outlet; and nearer to this the surf rose to ten or twelve feet high.

I have mentioned these otherwise irrelevant and unnecessary details only to enable you to realize the difficulties there are, even under the best circumstances, in approaching a low sandy beach, exposed without any shelter to all the force of the Southern Ocean, and open to every wind from any point southward of east or west.

I found, on landing, abundant proof, not only of the frequent and eccentric shifting of the outlets, but that there had been alternately formed and destroyed a succession of sand hummocks, beaches, and banks.

In one high bank, now being rapidly destroyed by wind and weather, a series of roots to the trees growing at its surface are exposed by the erosion, at all levels, from just below the present surface to a depth of twenty or twenty five feet below it. This bank is being eaten away from the western

end, and has now at this end a sharp and well defined scarp, at a more acute angle than I have before observed in this material. The debris of the bank falls on the beach and into the water below, and is in its turn washed up again, adding to the bar and the accumulations of the beach.

I found that Lake Bunga has recently forced a passage into the outlet, and is now discharging itself with a very strong current; and this will add materially to the effect of the other water in wearing the entrance to the eastward.

Captain Norman was good enough to furnish me with soundings outside the bar; but the force of the fresh and the surf on the bar, rendered it quite impracticable to obtain any other.

From as careful a consideration as I have been able to give, I can come to no other conclusion than that, unless at an enormous outlay, it is impossible to carry out permanent works, or to maintain the entrance to these lakes from the sea, so that it would be available at all times, and under all circumstances; and it will be borne in mind that, unless the entrance is always available, it would become a fatal snare to any other but a steam ship.

If cost were not a consideration, the difficulties of construction would be almost insuperable; as, from the exposed position, the

works of construction would be almost insuperable; as, from the exposed position, the works at every stage of their progress, would be open to destruction in any one of the severe gales to which this coast is constantly subject during nine months of the year, as well as from the very serious difficulties that would attend the supply of such materials as would have to be conveyed there by sea.

I had in my visit the advantage of the co-operation of Captain Cox, R.N., the Admiralty Surveyor, and of Captain Norman, of H.M.C.S. Victoria, both of whom lunched with me, and assisted me in the examination; and they have permitted me to say that they concur in the conclusions at which I have arrived.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

W. W. WARDELL,

Inspector-General of Public Works.

The Hon. the Minister of Public Works,
&c., &c., Melbourne.

The report was accompanied by a very beautifully lithographed sketch of the entrance to the Lakes and a portion of the Ninety-mile beach.

LATER AMERICAN NEWS VIA SYDNEY.

20th September.

The Statelie arrived from California, bringing later intelligence. Her dates from New York are July 16th.

As was expected, the President has opposed the Confiscation Bill, but a special resolution has been passed removing objections.

The Confederates and Indians had been defeated at Evansville.

Emerson had been reinforced.

General Jackson was threatening Winchester.

The bombardment of Vicksburg has been discontinued, and the canal which has been dug under the orders of Commodore Farragut, with an enormous amount of labor, has proved of no avail, the Mississippi being so low that until a freshet occurs its channel cannot be turned.

Theseventeenth, Coffey's command, has been defeated at Fayetteville, by the Federals, with heavy loss.

Intelligence has been received through a Confederate source contradicting the capture of Baton Rouge.

The gun-boats have shelled Hamilton, North Carolina.

General Price had crossed the Mississippi into Arkansas.

General M'Lellan had been reinforced. He still remains at Harrison's Landing.

The Confederates have retired to Chickahominy Valley, some fifteen miles off.

General Pope is reported to be threatening their flank, and if he succeeds in effecting a junction with M'Lellan, he will cut off the communication between the Southern and

communication between the Southern and Richmond.

The Federals expect to make an immediate advance on Richmond.

Seven members from the Border States having formed themselves into a committee, have drawn up an address to the President, stating that as the Confederate leaders offered to abolish slavery, on condition of foreign intervention, they would ask their constituents to consider the question of emancipation.

Intelligence received from Richmond states that the Confederates are well furnished with artillery, and every requisite to sustain a protracted siege, General M'Lellan intending approaching the city by another route.

Generals M'Call and Reynolds are prisoners.

Richmond, 14th July.—The President has sent down a bill to provide compensation for the abolition of slavery.

There has been an immense Union demonstration at New York.

The British steamer Ann was captured at Mobile, in the act of landing arms for the use of the Confederates.

Lexington has been proclaimed under martial law.

A gun-boat is building in the dockyard at Richmond similar to the renowned Merrimac that was lately blown up.

Telegraphic communication was interrupted on the 18th of July, or the dates would have been later from the Eastern States.

At San Francisco there are no vessels loading for the Australian colonies. The approaching harvest is likely to prove a most bountiful one.

THE Gothenburg steamer arrived in Melbourne on the 24th September from Otago, and brought news to the 18th of last month, but there is very little additional from the Clutha or Dunstan diggings. There had assembled on various parts of the river about 3000 men, a portion of whom were getting a little gold by washing in tin pans, but large numbers were doing nothing, and many were leaving for Dunedin and other places. No extraordinary amount of gold had been obtained by any parties, but it was said by some if they had cradles they would be able to get an ounce a day, more or less. Timber was not to be had however, and they were shifting as well as they could with whatever appliances were at hand. Large numbers were returning from Coromandel. There had been no further reliable information respecting a new discovery referred to in last news from New Zealand. On the whole, we do not consider the news now to hand very encouraging, but, for the sake of those who were foolish enough to rush away, we hope that gold will be procurable in larger quantities than it has been since the rush commenced. Three men are reported to have perished in the snow. Pro-

reported to have perished in the snow. Provisions continued at famine prices up to latest dates.