

The river we traversed is navigable by boat for nearly ten miles. Of course the boat requires to be carried past the first three cataracts. We found no difficulty in doing so with ours. The river can then be followed, with occasional trackings, until within a short distance of the lake, when it will again require to be carried past the 60ft. cataract. There is a difficulty in launching the boat in the lake, but a party of strong men could manage that. Afterwards, four miles of good boating can be had, the only part requiring tracking being the ford. I was greatly indebted to Mr. Henry for his numerous acts of kindness and personal assistance; also to the Union Company for the use of boat, to Captain Fairchild, and to the Survey Department. I enclose a report on geology of the country furnished to me by Mr. A. Clunie Bishop.

DEAR SIR,—

Boulcott Street, Wellington, 13th May, 1896.

Having been asked by you for a brief description of the geological features of the country explored by us at the beginning of the year, I now beg to hand you same, and at the same time would humbly request that the readers will not be too critical of my humble observations as jotted down.

From the formation of the country immediately surrounding Supper Cove, at the head of Dusky Sound, it was evident that the country was highly metamorphic, and therefore much disturbed and jumbled up; and, after careful observation, I came to the conclusion that the country belonged to the Upper Silurian period, and the formation consisting of hornblende. I put down a hole some distance up the river, just above the first rapid. The wash consisted of water-worn hornblende and granite boulders lying on top of a false-bottom of oxydised granite conglomerate. I panned-off a dish or two of wash, and a few small garnets and some mica was all I could raise.

About two miles and a-half up the river the formation suddenly changed, and the gneiss showed out distinctly on the precipitous faces, and where slips have recently come down. After crossing the big creek, I noticed that felspar came in, and the formation thus changed to mica schist. I again tried the bottom for the precious metal, but could not get a colour—only mica and garnets. Further up the river the mica-schist changes somewhat to an intermediate formation, between mica-schist and slate, containing mica, felspar, quartz, &c., almost a bastard quartzite, but I could not find any trace of minerals whatever. Most of the country seems to be capped with an oxydized granite conglomerate, which makes prospecting very difficult indeed, especially when you take into consideration the roughness of the country and the density of the bush.

About seven miles from Supper Cove we came to a lake, halfway along which a micaceous sandstone crops out. I did some fossicking about here, and found several large blocks of a white, highly-crystallised quartz, carrying a fair quantity of mundic, but I could not find any trace of gold.

Farther on again, the country seems to get more solid, and the intermediate formation between slate and mica-schist comes in again; the wash in the river changes too, and I cannot help but think that ahead of where we got there is a slate formation, judging by the wash brought down into the main valley. I noticed that, where the large river above the lake has its junction with the main river, the wash is a mixture of granite and slate with small blocks of quartz interspersed. I cannot recommend anybody to go prospecting in this locality, as the formation is so fearfully jumbled up that nothing of a permanent nature is likely to live (if found): that is, judging by the country gone over by us.

T. Mackenzie, Esq., M.H.R., Balclutha.

Yours faithfully,
A. CLUNIE BISHOP.

APPENDIX No. 9.—WANGANUI AND TANGARAKAU RIVERS.

REPORT ON THE WORKS CONNECTED WITH IMPROVEMENT OF THE WANGANUI RIVER FOR STEAMER TRAFFIC, UNDERTAKEN BY THE WANGANUI RIVER TRUST AND SUBSIDISED BY GOVERNMENT.

For the year ending 31st March, 1896, there has been expended £1,148 18s. 10d. This included the cost of a new working punt 60ft. long and 15ft. wide, built of kauri and totara timber, and fitted with derrick and winch for snagging and lifting stones and boulders, and for carrying stone to training-walls in course of construction; also the wages of the workings gangs, and the necessary plant for general work. It also includes the wages for labour with the party engaged on the survey of the river.

The amount received for river dues during the year ending 31st March, 1896, was £74 17s. 1d. A grant was made by the Government this year of £1,000, of which amount £600 has been received by the Trust up to 31st March. It may here be stated that the amount expended by the Wanganui River Trust since its inauguration in 1891 has been £2,233 0s. 7d.

In April and May, 1895, work was continued at the guiding-wall at Aokura Rapid, and snags cleared out of the channel there. Stone guiding-walls were put in at Huarere Rapid, below Parikino. In the latter part of May the punts were taken up to Haumoana Rapid, between Ranana and Hiruharama.

The Natives here refused to allow stone to be taken for the works, or to be placed in the proposed training-wall. On the 31st May, 1895, two of the Police Force arrived there, and next day work was started in their presence, and this continued for two days more. The Natives ceased obstructing, and gave a promise not to do so, and the work proceeded until the 10th June, when work ceased for the season, as the river had risen and continued too high for work. Early in October work was resumed, but after a few days the river rose and continued up during the rest of October and all November. Work was begun again on the 2nd December at Haumoana Rapid.