

APPENDIX.

REPORT ON EXPLORATION, SOUTH FIORD (LAKE TE ANAU) TO GAER ARM,
DOUBTFUL SOUND.

THE following is a report by Mr. District Surveyor Macpherson upon an interesting exploration made from Lake Te Anau towards the west coast, and is accompanied by a map. (For earlier explorations see report of the Department for the year 1898-99, page 136.)

"Acting on instructions I met Messrs. Fowler brothers at Centre Bush on the 6th January, and motored with them to Te Anau the same day. The party comprised Mr. Henry Fowler, his son Alan, Mr. James Fowler, Mr. Martin of the Railway Department (all of whom had been over part of the route on previous occasions), and myself.

"The Tourist Department's steamer 'Tawera' put us up to head of South Fiord and provided us with a boat, and I was fortunate in being able to arrange with Captain Roberts to take barometric readings morning and night of each day on Lake Te Anau, which enabled me to adjust barometric heights with tolerable accuracy.

"We left a tent and flag at mouth of Gorge Burn with some of our clothes and provisions, and in the afternoon, with fairly heavy swags, made our way up south side of Gorge Burn to No. 2 lake (1,700 ft.) where we camped. Next morning we continued on to Boomerang Lake, where we pitched camp, and in the afternoon went via Martin Burn—which for first quarter of a mile is a stiff pull—by south-eastern shoulder, from which a fine view can be obtained, up to the summit of Mount Baird (4,960 ft.), an easy and safe climb. The highest point of Mount Baird is 6 or 8 chains farther west, and is about 20 ft. higher, but, as it was separated by a deep gulch, which appeared unclimbable or at least unsafe, we did not attempt it. This part appeared easily accessible from near Fowler's Pass. The view from Mount Baird amply repaid us; the ranges west to the ocean were spread at our feet. What I took to be Gaer Arm was visible about nine miles distant and at a magnetic bearing of 262°. Immediately below us to the north, and appearing flat, lay what I will call, at your suggestion, Macpherson's Pass, with its three lakes, and the streams leading westward and north-west to Camelot River. After I had taken a few bearings bad weather came up from the north, and we had to beat a retreat, arriving very wet at camp.

"Next morning we continued round the western shore of Boomerang Lake, which was steep and slow climbing, until held up by a bluff close to entrance of Gorge Burn. This bluff seems unclimbable, and some of the party were for going back round by the other side of the lake. As the morning was far spent we decided to try fording near mouth of stream. The chief obstacle was deep slime, apparently bottomless; but Mr. Martin was the hero of the occasion, and we soon had our swags across, the depth being to the shoulders. The eastern side of this lake appears practicable.

"Boomerang Lake, like Lake Ada, is a comparatively recent formation, as the trees are still standing below surface of water. Above this the walking is slow—steep rises with huge rocks—until open ground along stream is reached. Lakes Eva and Ione are of considerable depth, and of an emerald-green colour. Turning to the west a small lake is passed, which drains underground into Lake Eva, then a short easy rise to the pass (3,120 ft.).

"On the western face the ground falls away rapidly, and the bush-line comes right up to the pass. The stream-bed is fair going until falls and a deep gorge are encountered. We first tried the northern face, but were cut off by high bluffs and had to return, and were successful in negotiating the southern face, where there is a rapid drop of about 1,000 ft. The stream then runs more evenly, and we camped about half a mile above junction.

"Next day we continued down to junction where we left a cache, then on down this, the main stream, past open toetoe flats, until the Marble Gorge is reached. Here the stream rushes into a series of rapids and falls, and finally down a gorge about half a chain in width and about 100 ft. to 150 ft. in depth. We cut a track along the left side of this, but think now that the right side would probably be better going, as it appears unbroken by bluffs. After emerging the main Camelot River is soon reached, with Mount Wera immediately in front—a high mountain of dark-green colouring. Only the shoulder is visible from this vicinity, the higher peak being seen from higher up the valley.

"The Camelot River was spelt 'Camlet' on map, but I find Webster allows 'Camlet' as an abbreviation of 'Camelot,' while in Tennyson the spelling is 'Camelot.' This river is a fine stream; the travelling is good both along river-bed and in the bush. Rapids, and a fine fall of 140 ft., which I have named Bevedere Fall, led into a huge pool at its base, with an immense gravel-bank thrown up, and evidence of very high flood-marks on either side.

"A short distance below this we camped, and in the morning, leaving camp and sleeping-bags, set off for the sound, which we hoped would not be far distant. However, it was half past 1 before we reached it. From a scenic point of view Gaer Arm is disappointing, as a quick turn to the right cuts out the main sound, and, the tide being out, there was a great expanse of gravel-flat with wiwi and toetoe edging. We came down the northern side of the river, which was a mistake, as a huge bluff falls into the river. Returning, we attempted a short-cut on south side with dire results, as we