

by ice during 2, and even occasionally 3 and 3½ months in the winter. The following certificate of a licensed pilot will give some idea of the extent and importance of the first objection :

"I piloted H.M.S. Tribune safely into Fraser River, and was on board when she struck going out; her draught of water, 19 feet 7 inches. . . In the actual channel, by which I took H.M.S. Tribune into the river, there are not now more than five feet of water at low water."

Given under my hand this fourteenth day of September, 1866.

(Signed)

JOHN S. TITCOMB.

The harbor at Bella Coola, on the Bentinck Arm trail [the only other feasible route to the mines], is situated 435 miles further to the north, and has been pronounced by Captain Richards, Hydrographer of the Royal Navy, to be totally unworthy; presenting no shelter, no good anchorage, no good landing place; but a vast mud flat, with a mile of swamp, intersected by a shallow river barely navigable for canoes. Or to quote the words of Lieut. Palmer, of the Royal Engineers, in his official report on the Bentinck Arm Trail: "A large flat shoal, extending across the Head of the Arm, composed of black fetid mud, supporting a rank vegetation; bare at low spring tides for about 700 yards from high water mark, and covered at high tide with from 1 to 8 feet of water, and at a distance of 800 yards from shore, terminating abruptly in a steep shelving bank, on which soundings rapidly increase to 40, and soon 70 fathoms." The whole is, moreover, subject to violent winds and powerful tides.

On the Bute Inlet Route the snow, owing to the more moderate elevation, and its more southern latitude and aspect, melts fully three weeks sooner than on the Bentinck Arm Trail; and the road is dry, entirely exempt from snow-slides, and level the whole way through. Unlike the endless mountains on the Fraser route, or the steep, unavoidable ascent from the sea, and numerous swamps by that of Bentinck Arm; so well described by the few packers who have been over both routes, and who have declared in their picturesque language, that the Bentinck Arm Trail could not show a candle to that by Bute Inlet. The Bute Inlet Trail *cuts through* the Cascade Mountains by a deep valley studded with rich bottoms affording plentiful pasture, and rising imperceptibly for 80 miles, when it nearly attains its greatest height [2,500 feet]; from which point forward in the plain, it was free from snow for 25 miles in February, 1862. The Bentinck Arm Trail, on the contrary, is obliged to *climb over* the range, owing to the valley, when 35 miles from the Inlet, turning abruptly to the SSE and running longitudinally with the range, instead of cutting through it; so that the trail attains, in the course of a very few miles from that point, a height of 3,840 feet, as will be better shown by the following table compiled from Lieut. Palmer's report :

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