

A. A. 1900

## SESSIONAL PAPER No. 13

## SURVEY OF THE EASTERN SHORE OF TESLIN LAKE.

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Teslin lake lies in a north-westerly direction. From the mouth of Whiteswan river (which enters the lake at its southern extremity) the distance to the outlet of the lake or Teslin river is eighty miles. In this stretch there is at its southern end a narrow section, eight miles long, with occasional shallow places. This river-like extension is soon followed by an expanse two miles in length and width, and terminating in a neck called Moose narrows. Beyond the narrows the lake is shallow for some distance, but its depth soon increases. Moose narrows may be considered as the commencement of the lake proper. There is another shallow spot at the foot of the lake, just before entering Teslin river. Teslin lake is four miles in width at its widest part, which occurs sixteen miles north of Moose narrows. The shores of the lake differ in a marked degree; the western is very regular and for that reason is the one generally followed by travellers, whilst the eastern shore is indented with several deep bays, which invariably receive streams draining the adjoining country. The first bay is thirteen miles north of Moose narrows, and is nearly two miles deep. Near its southern entrance we sailed between several small islands. Twenty-one miles farther there is a second deep bay. Seven miles still farther is another bay known as Nisutlin bay, which receives the river of the same name. It is the largest bay in the lake, and will be described more fully later on.

Between Moose narrows and Nisutlin bay the country east of the lake is very much broken by hills extending a long way into the interior. They rise to an altitude of 1,700 feet above the level of the lake, and slope gently towards the shore. In a few places they end abruptly at the water's edge, forming cliffs in places, and at other points high and precipitous clay escarpments. The country is thickly wooded. Of the many streams draining it and running into Teslin lake, I will only mention, besides the Nisutlin, the Williams river, as it is the next in importance to the Nisutlin. The current is so swift at its mouth that it forces its way for a considerable distance through the placid waters of the lake without mixing its turbid stream with the dark waters of the lake.

The distance from the entrance of Nisutlin bay to the outlet of Teslin lake is 30 miles. Between these two points the shore of the lake trends north-west, and is very uniform. The shore line at the entrance of the bay is formed of precipitous cliffs, which, however, soon give place to a sandy beach. Back of the beach is a strip of low and swampy country of varying width, which extends close to the foot of the neighbouring range of mountains. Adjoining this strip of low land there is towards the north a series of terraces, low at first, but increasing gradually in altitude, and by the time the foot of the lake is almost reached their crest looms up several hundred feet above its level. The unceasing beat of the waves against their base has caused land slides which have left bare the slope of these elevations. These slopes are deeply furrowed by the action of the torrents which rush down from the high lands in the spring of the year, when the snow begins to melt under the fierce action of the sun.

Two large creeks, which rise in the high range of mountains east of the lower half of the lake, are the only streams which enter the lake between Nisutlin bay and its northern extremity.

On July 23, having completed my observations at the foot of the lake, I returned to the entrance of Nisutlin bay, where I had been preceded by the rest of my party, and began its survey. On entering the bay one cannot fail to notice the difference in the colour of the water, which is turbid in the bay, whilst that of the lake is brown. The bay opens in a north-easterly direction, and its length to the delta of the river is  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Up to the 5th mile its average width is not over half a mile. Its southern shore then takes a sharp turn to the south-east, and continues in that direction for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and forms, with the delta of the Nisutlin river, which is its opposite shore, another but smaller bay, three-quarters of a mile at its widest part. In the southern extremity of this small bay there are numerous islands; a small stream also enters it.

The quantity of sediment scoured, at high water, from the banks of such a stream as the Nisutlin river is necessarily great, and is the cause of the extensive delta forme at its mouth. This land is low, and subject each year to inundations, which occur in the month of June. A narrow fringe of willows grows along the edge of the banks of the