

In this island is found the only safe harbour between the 49° of north latitude and San Francisco; and there have lately been discovered most extensive fields of coal, not inferior in quality to the best Newcastle, and these are now partially worked by the Hudson's Bay Company by Indian labour, and sold at a large profit in California; and doubtless, if the enterprise be carried on vigorously from this source, the coast of the Pacific and all the steamers which trade on that ocean will ultimately be supplied, since the distance of transit is so much shorter, and the expense of carriage will be so much less than from England. Granite, limestone, and slate of the finest description, as well as lead and copper of the purest quality, are found. Not less bountifully has this beautiful island been endowed with agricultural wealth; it now produces, with a more grateful return, all the farm products of Great Britain, and as the climate is as genial as some parts of France in which the vine thrives, there is reason to expect that it would flourish here, and likewise many fruits and vegetables which have not yet been introduced. A great portion of the land in the southern part of the island consists of extensive prairie plains, covered with the most luxuriant grass and beautiful wild flowers, and dotted with oak, cedar, fir and maple trees of the finest sort, reminding one of our English parks; it is neither overgrown with brushwood, nor so thickly interspersed with large trees as to prevent the immediate upturning of the soil by the plough. This description of ground, I have been informed, pervades the island pretty generally, and great portions of the mainland. The view from Cedar Mount, at the back of Fort Victoria, is one of the most commanding and beautiful that can be found anywhere, not yielding, as I think, in these respects to the far-famed harbour of Rio Janeiro. The impression made on my mind and that of my companions, when, on a beautiful day in summer we for the first time ascended the summit of this mountain, can never be forgotten by us as long as memory lasts. To seaward we beheld the Cascade Mountains, with their summits covered with perpetual snow, and glistening in the sun, rising to an average height of 7,000 feet, and washed at their base by the peaceful waters of the straits of San Juan de Fuca; whilst to the right lay, in perfect calmness, the noble harbour of Esquimalt, embosomed in hills, and covered with timber to its water's edge, in which the *Thetis* lay at anchor, forming another beautiful feature in the scene; at our feet clusters of the most verdantly wooded islands (through whose tall trees the smoke of the Indian fires, as they roasted their salmon, gracefully ascended) were scattered, and over the surrounding waters light and exquisitely made canoes glided. Turning our backs on this view, we saw an extensive tract of the finest meadow land, varied with avenues of the largest trees, such as could not be surpassed in beauty or size by any in our own country, and with two or three inland lakes, covered with water-fowl. One thing only seemed to be wanting to render the scene perfect; namely, the presence of neat English-like cottages, and a church with its spire, standing forth amidst nature's loveliness, to testify that the eternal