

thence, in the summer season, northward through Behring's Strait, round Point Barrow to the Mackenzie River, with far less obstruction from ice, than on the east about Hudson or Baffin Bay. Indeed, light draught vessels may coast the whole line of territory, with rarely any great impediment, and, as the Mackenzie is navigable for 1000 miles, for even large ships, so may the Colville River yet be found capable of conveying craft on its waters near to the Yukon, or Kvihpak.

On the southern coast, the scenery is magnificent. Densely timbered mountains, with several fine rivers and noble inlets breaking through the gaps, meet the eye. The Steeken, or St. Francis River, in latitude,  $56\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  is the first stream we meet of any importance, and is navigable for nearly 200 miles. Gold has been found in its neighborhood, but whether sufficient to pay for working there, until better settled, is a question. Game and fish, however, are abundant, as indeed may be found throughout the whole territory.

Beyond the Steeken are met several other rivers coming from the interior, and some of them connecting by lakes. These streams and water-channels are important, and future exploration will no doubt discover them to be far more valuable than as known now. Indeed, the whole system of water communication in that region is better than ordinarily supposed.

The British Hudson Bay Company has long leased the strip of land on the sea-coast between Fort Simpson and Cross Sound. It runs inland for about 30 miles, and was originally rented at 2,000 otters a year, but has latterly been paid for at a sum of £1,500 sterling per annum.

New Archangel (Sitka), the principal Russian settlement, is on the Island of Baranor, and has a fine harbor, in latitude,  $57\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , longitude  $137^{\circ}$ . Here, the mean temperature in summer is  $57^{\circ}$ , and in winter  $34^{\circ}$ . Indeed, the whole coast of Northwest America is very much milder than on the Atlantic board in the same latitudes. An examination of the charts of Professor Dove will show that  $41^{\circ}$  Fah. is the equal annual mean tem-

perature about Sitka,  $36\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  for the mean annual temperature just north of St. Elias, which has its isochimal line of  $32^{\circ}$  running to New York;  $32^{\circ}$  the mean annual temperature in latitude  $64^{\circ}$ ; and  $23^{\circ}$  in latitude  $69^{\circ}$  N.

With reference to the southern portion of these territories, the following extract from official reports in the British House of Commons, shows its value: "At Fort Simpson, on Mackenzie River, five hundred miles from sea-coast, on a large island of deep alluvial soil, farming was unusually successful. There were regular crops of barley, regular cattle, and a very good garden. That is in about latitude  $62^{\circ}$ . Barley grew there very well indeed." — *Lefroy H. B. Report*, 18, 246.

Beyond the Peninsula of Alaska there are fine rivers running into the sea from the far interior, but the most noble of them all is the Kvihpak, which enters the ocean by several mouths south of Cape Romans, off Norton Sound. This splendid stream is navigable for steamers full a thousand miles, where it receives the Rat or Porcupine River, flowing from near the lower part of the Mackenzie, and the Yukon coming from the south-east. The Hudson Bay Company have a port called Fort Yukon, at the junction of the Rat and Yukon with the Kvihpak. About the region of Fort Yukon, travelers and official evidence prove that there is mineral wealth to be found greater in value than all the returns of the fur trade. Barley is grown there, and also at Fort Norman, in latitude  $64^{\circ} 31'$ , where oats and potatoes have likewise been raised. But independent of all this, the valuable whale-fishery to the north of Russian America, and about the mouth of the Mackenzie River, deserves particular notice. The Mackenzie, it is true, belongs to British dominion, but as it is a river of great importance, navigable, without obstruction, to the Great Slave Lake, one thousand miles from the sea, it commands especial attention. As for the whale-fishery, an official navy report from Washington a few years back, stated that "a trade had sprung up by the capture of whales to the north of Behring Strait, of more value to