

Steamers can keep close in shore, where the sea is smooth and little current, but sailing vessels should keep a good offing, particularly from April to October, when the wind blows from the northward and westward, and causes a strong current.

The harbour of Esquimalt is a circular bay, or rather a basin, hollowed by nature out of the solid rock. We slid in through the narrow entrance between two low, rocky promontories, and found ourselves suddenly transported from the open sea and its heavy roll and sweli into a Highland lake, placid as the face of a mirror, in the recesses of a pine forest. The transition was startling. From the peculiar shape of the bay, and the deep indentations its various coves make into the shore, one sees but a small portion of the harbour at a glance from the point we brought up at. We therefore thought it ridiculously small after our expectations had been so highly wrought in San Francisco.

The whole scenery is of the Highland character—the rocky shores, the pine trees running down to the edge of the lake, their dark foliage trembling over the glittering surface which reflected them, the surrounding hills, and the death-like silence. I was both delighted and disappointed—delighted with the richness of the scenery, but disappointed at the smallness of the harbour. Can this little loch, imprisoned within natural ramparts of rocks, buried in the solitude of a forest, be the place which I hoped would become so famous; the great destiny of which has been prognosticated by statesmen and publicists, and the possession of which is bitterly envied us by neighbouring nations; this the place where England is to centre a naval force hitherto unknown in the Pacific, whence her fleets are to issue for the protection of her increasing interests in the western world; this the seaport of the Singapore of the Pacific; the modern Tyre into which the riches of the East are to flow and be distributed to the western nations; the terminus of railway communication which is to connect the Atlantic with the Pacific?