

previous to the completion of what was called the Oregon treaty, must be familiar with the localities as well as the importance of Vancouver's Island. Between Russia on the north, and the United States on the south, was this portion of Her Majesty's dominions, at this moment a place of great importance, and which might become of enormous importance hereafter. The climate of the island was fine; the soil fertile; its harbours were excellent; and the place was in all respects most favorable for emigration and colonisation; and it contained moreover extensive mines of coal, invaluable to us in the future improvement of steam navigation. From the possessions of Russia to Panama there was no other place near the coast with which he was acquainted capable of supplying coal. When a communication should be made, either by railroad or by a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, that would become the highway of maritime nations to China and other parts of the eastern world, and then the possession of Vancouver's Island would become a matter of vast importance. With respect to the value attached to this island by foreigners, he need only refer to the high authority of Malte Brun, who stated that, in the hands of an intelligent nation, it might become a place of the highest importance."—*Lord Montagu's speech in the House of Lords, August 24th, 1848.*

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“From the first discovery of the island—from the accounts of Vancouver himself, and all impartial observers since—it has been established that the island is extremely fertile; that it is rich in mines of coal and other minerals; that its timber is fine; that its ports are good; and that its climate is, in many respects, superior to that of England, and singularly suited to the constitution of those who go out from this country. These great facts, I think, have been made out; and, so far as the official reports now before us go, they corroborate all these statements. I have in my hand, also, a copy of a portion of a letter from a gentleman in Her Majesty's service, who visited that island, giving an account of its physical and political importance:—

“Vancouver, from its climate, soil, timber, harbours, fisheries, game, and, above all, its position, is one of the most valuable islands belonging to Britain; and it is only necessary to glance your eye over the map of the north-west coast of America to be convinced that it is so.