

— No. 5. —

EXTRACT from a REPORT by Lieutenants *Warre* and *Vavasour*,
dated* 26 October 1845.

FROM Port Discovery we crossed the Straits to Vancouver's Island, commencing in the 48th parallel of latitude, and extending 260 miles north, and about 50 miles in breadth.

This island is somewhat intersected by high mountain ranges, but the soil is said to be fertile, and well adapted for cultivation.

We visited the Hudson's Bay Company's post, Fort Victoria, in 48° 26' north latitude, and 123° 9' west longitude, on the south shore of the island, near the head of the narrow inlet (of which we forward a sketch), where they have established a fort similar to those already described, a farm of several hundred acres, on which they raise wheat and potatoes, and a depot of provisions, supplies, &c. for the different trading posts further to the north.

The position has been chosen solely for its agricultural advantages, and is ill adapted either as a place of refuge for shipping, or as a position of defence.

The country to the south of the Straits of De Fuca, between Puget's Sound and the coast, is overrun by high rugged mountains, presenting great difficulty in traversing, and but few inducements to the farmer.

Between the above-mentioned points there are some fine harbours, among which we may mention Port Discovery and Dungeness, on the south shore, and a bay within three miles of Fort Victoria, called the "Squimal" by the Indians, which, from superficial observation, appear to afford anchorage and protection for ships of any tonnage.

The above-mentioned harbours contain an abundant supply of fresh water, in which the rest of the coast is very deficient. Large rivers are formed in the winter season which become perfectly dry during the summer.

There is coal in the neighbourhood of Puget's Sound, and on the Cowlitz River; the specimens used by the Hudson's Bay Company were obtained from the surface, and were probably on that account not found good.

The specimens of lead found in the mountains on the coast are apparently very fine.

The fisheries (salmon and sturgeon) are inexhaustible, and game of all descriptions is said to abound.

The timber is extremely luxuriant, and increases in value as you reach a more northern latitude; that in 50° to 54° being considered the best: pine, spruce, red and white, oak, ash, cedar, arbutus, poplar, maple, willow and yew grow in this section of country, north of the Columbia River. The cedar and pine become of an immense size.

At Nas-qually, near the head of Puget's Sound, is the farm of the Puget's Sound Company, commenced in 1839, and supported chiefly by the gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company. They here cultivate wheat and potatoes, &c., but the magnificent ranges of rich prairie country between the shores of Puget's Sound and the Cascade Mountains to the east, are chiefly used as pasturage for the immense herds of cattle and sheep; the greater number of which were brought from California in 1840-41.

From Nas-qually we crossed the head waters of several large streams, among others the Nas-qually and Cheheels Rivers, arising in the Cascade Mountains, extending along the coast to latitude 49°.

These rivers have their channels sunk in some places upwards of 100 feet below the level of the country, rendering them extremely dangerous and difficult to traverse at the seasons of high water.

The Cheheels flows into Grey's Bay on the Pacific, is navigable for small boats and canoes, and forms a barred harbour for vessels of small tonnage.

The country is easy of access from Nas-qually to the Cheheels River, when the soil changes from a gravelly loam to a stiff clay, and numerous little rivers which overflow

* The Report is dated 26th October 1845, not 1st November 1844, as stated in the Address for the Papers.