

been sent in letters from an officer in Her Majesty's ship, *Constant*, dated July and September last, from which the following graphic extracts may be presented:—

“July 30th.—Esquimault Harbour, Vancouver's Island.—Moored in a beautiful little basin. Since the 18th we have had fine weather and smooth water. We made Cape Flattery on the 23rd. Lots of canoes came off with fish, which the natives bartered for iron, fish-hooks, tobacco, shirts, &c. Ran up the Straits next day at the rate of from ten to eleven knots. Nothing but forests of tall pine. At one part ten miles of them were on fire. On the south side there was a range of high hills, the tops covered with snow. We rounded the S.E. part of the island about 5 p.m. and came to anchor close in shore of Esquimault Bay, between 6 and 7. The captain and master went to sound the harbour, as the *Moderate* and *Herald* are the only two ships that have been in here. We ran in with a light air the next morning, and moored a little more than our own length from the shore on each side. The harbour, which is completely land-locked, extends a mile or two each way; the wood close down touching the water, which is as smooth as a mill pond, and, where we are, about nine fathoms deep. No such thing as rain seen or heard of during three months; the thermometer standing at 61. The sun seems as though you were looking at it through a dark red glass, for the forest is on fire, but whereabouts we do not know; the air full of smoke, and lots of wood ashes falling on the deck. The Hudson's Bay Company's factory, Fort Victoria, is about four miles off. The officer in charge of it seems a very sensible, proper person. The only people we see here are native fishermen, and, therefore, not good specimens of the race. They have muskets in every canoe. Some of the canoes contain whole families, about twelve in each. Cats in numbers, mats, skins, salmon, children, slaves, and dirt, and all well mixed up together. They paint their faces black, with red stripes, and abundance of ear-rings. In bartering they have no idea of our good faith, for they never let go their goods until they have hold of yours; and it is necessary to be just as careful with them, else they will shove off and pull away with whatever they can. The price of a canoe and paddles is between one and two blankets. For a shirt we ought to get eight salmon at this season, and about fifteen in a month's time. We also get bows and arrows, and bear, otter, and deer skins, &c. A little round looking-glass will buy a great