

PUGET SOUND.

DEPTH OF WATER—HARBORS.

- I BROUGHT to this archipelago of harbors an extraordinary measure of the depth of the water and the security of the anchorage. A Sag Harbor whaler had said to me: "A seventy-four gun ship can lie pretty much all over the sound, with her jib-boom among the trees on shore, six fathoms under her bows, and twenty fathoms under her stern." And I had read in Lennard of the depth of the channel separating the island of Vancouver from the main land, which channel in all its external characteristics and features strictly resembles the entire body of water called Puget Sound in the charter of the Northern Pacific Railroad. He says: "As might be supposed in a sea of this description, the results obtained by sounding are very various; but the reader will probably hardly be prepared to hear that the extraordinary depth of seventy or eighty fathoms is frequently met with, and this, in many cases, under the very shadow of the rocky coast of the island itself. I remember, on one occasion, a sounding, taken at our bow, gave a depth of eight fathoms, while one at our stern gave fifteen;" [the measurements were taken off the deck of a little yacht of twenty tons;] "and on another occasion we obtained eight fathoms and sixty fathoms as the result of two successive throws of our line."

Commodore Wilkes, on his exploring expedition, went into the sound with his two ships, and was piloted by the first officer of the Hudson Bay Company's steamer nearly down to the southern end of it, opposite Fort Nisqually, where he cast anchor. He says of the sound in his History: "Nothing can exceed the beauty of these waters and their safety. Not a shoal exists within the Straits of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet, Puget Sound, or Hood's Canal, that can in any way interrupt their navigation by a seventy-four gun ship. I venture nothing in saying that there is no country in the world possessing waters equal to these. The anchorage off Nisqually is very contracted, in consequence of the rapid shelving of the bank that soon drops off into deep water. The shore rises abruptly to a height of about two hundred feet, and on the