

eternal snow, and the thunder of a hundred torrents, leaping from cliff and summit, communicate an air of awful sublimity to the whole scene. Here the canals become much more frequent, and, though extremely narrow, encouraged Vancouver, the navigator whose name is still retained by the neighbouring island, with the hope—incredible as it may seem to us now—that they would be found to penetrate across the whole continent, to Hudson's Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. It is curious to follow the persistence with which he tried inlet after inlet, in the expectation of discovering the long-sought passage which was to unite the two great oceans,—pushing his ship between overhanging rocks, and often advancing fifty and even eighty miles into the country, not without considerable danger to himself and his vessel. These inlets are generally found to terminate in open and not unfertile valleys, through which one or more streams of inconsiderable magnitude find their way.

As the traveller, however, crosses from Victoria to the mouth of the Fraser, on which New Westminster, the capital of British Columbia, stands, these scenes of northern desolation are altogether absent; and, on a clear day, as he threads his way through the intervening Haro Archipelago of islets—now smiling platforms of green sward gay with wild flowers, now mere pine-covered specks on the gulf—the whole landscape, though not without the grandeur inseparable from such vast masses of wood, rock and snow-capped range as the peculiar configuration of the mainland brings into view, is lit up with a far warmer colouring. From such a point of observation, too, Victoria certainly wears its most pleasant aspect. The town itself is seen from the most favourable point, and the gardens and fields now brought into cultivation around it very considerably enhance its attractions. Before, however, we set foot on the mainland, it becomes our duty to direct attention to a subject of the most pressing and urgent importance.

It will be in the recollection of our readers that General Harney, on being appointed commander of the forces in the neighbouring United States Territory of Oregon, took forcible possession of the Island of San Juan, one of the largest of the Haro group we have just mentioned. Through extreme moderation on the part of England, hostilities with the United States were averted, and the whole matter in dispute was referred to the more amicable discussion of the two Governments. In the midst of negotiations somewhat protracted, the present Civil War broke out, and all correspondence on the subject was temporarily suspended. The United States troops still maintained possession of the island, and an equal number of British