

The climate, as usual on the coast of the Pacific, is divided into two seasons of dry and rainy, or, as Père Accolti, the Jesuit priest of Oregon, expressed it, "Huit mois d'hiver, et quatre d'enfer;" he added two months, however, to the winter for the benefit of Oregon. On Vancouver Island it generally rains and snows from October to March, and during the rest of the year a parching heat prevails, which dries up all the small streams. In the commencement of autumn dense fogs prevail, enveloping everything in obscurity, and preventing, as I think, the rays of the sun from having a due vivifying effect on the crops. These fogs also tend to absorb the dews which would otherwise fall; the consequence is, that all the crops which are not taken in early are apt to be parched up, and run to straw for want of moisture.

Although the thermometer sometimes reaches a height of 90° and 92° , that is, only during the few hottest days in August, the usual thermometrical range during the dry season is from 60° to 80° . The natives all along the coast have a custom of setting fire to the woods in summer, which doubtless adds to the density of the fogs, and increases the temperature of the atmosphere. I have never seen a drop of rain fall from March till October; the seasons, however, are uncertain. Last year there was a very severe winter; a great deal of snow fell, and the Hudson Bay and Puget Sound Companies lost a considerable quantity of sheep and cattle, whereas during the winter of 1853-4 there have not been above 20 days of rain and snow altogether.

The prevailing winds along the coast in winter are from the south-east, varying from that to the south-west, and with occasional heavy northerly gales; the prevailing winds in the summer are from the north and north-west. Generally speaking, the climate is both agreeable and healthy; and not a single death that I am aware of has occurred among adults from disease during the six years that I have been acquainted with the island.

4. Trip round the Island, comprising description of Coal Mines, and all other Establishments.

The most northern station occupied by white men is Fort Rupert. This post, situated on Beaver harbour, on the north-east corner of the island, was established by the Hudson Bay Company in 1849 for the purpose of working the coal which they were led to suppose existed in large quantities in its vicinity, as a quantity of superficial coal had been worked there by the Indians, which, however, was of loose and open structure, interspersed with slate, and of so inferior a quality that they have not yet been able to find a market for the whole of it. All efforts to find workable coal under the surface at Beaver Harbour have hitherto proved