

passes, at an elevation, in one place for 40 miles, of 3600 feet above the sea—The only road to the Cariboo mines and the North of the Colony, and a lasting monument of Sir James Douglas' energetic and provident administration. Unfortunately, the difficulties [as may be seen in "Milton & Cheadle's North-west Passage, p. 356," where there is a good sketch of one of them] were alpine. Many places are most dangerous, the endless ascents and descents fatiguing and laborious in the extreme, and as the sharp turnings, besides many other portions, have had to be built up to a great height on cribs or cross timbers which must soon rot, the repairs will form a heavy charge on the Colony.

So that, supposing the difficulties through the Rocky Mountains to be got over, the Cascade range still intercepts all direct communication by railroad between the Eastern part of the Colony and New Westminster. To say nothing of the utter worthlessness of the greater part of the country to be traversed, amounting to over 520 miles out of the 600 from its Eastern limit. Add to this, that the navigation across the Gulf of Georgia and at the entrance to the Fraser, *by a narrow, intricate channel, through shifting sands, full five miles long*, is both difficult and dangerous, and that the river itself is frequently frozen up in winter for long periods; and it will be evident to every impartial mind, that New Westminster with its 700 or 800 inhabitants, can never become the terminus of an Overland Railway to connect with Victoria and the ocean.

Further north along the Coast, there are numerous inlets, which penetrate into the Cascade range, but the greater part either terminate abruptly, like the fiords in Norway, or are too distant; or like Gardener's Channel, Dean's Canal, and the Skeena, are too far off to the north-west to be available for any present communication with the mines or the interior. There are, however, two exceptions: The North Bentinck Arm, by Milbank Sound, in Lat. 52°:13, and Bute Inlet, opposite Vancouver Island, with a safe and easy inland communication by steam to Victoria, distant 185 nautical miles. Both these inlets terminate in a valley of some extent; and as attempts have been made to open both of them, it becomes necessary to explain why the writer gave a decided preference to Bute Inlet, for a wagon road and *a fortiori* for a railroad, over Bentinck Arm or any other line.

### SUPERIORITY OF THE BUTE INLET ROUTE.

The advantages of the Bute Inlet Route consist: In its central position; fine townsite and harbor; or rather two harbors, accessible at all seasons of the year; its easy and safe connexion with Victoria and the ocean, and the proximity of the coal mines at Nanaimo. The Port of New Westminster, on the contrary, is difficult of access, in consequence of its constantly shifting sand-banks; and closed, as aforesaid,