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GENERAL REPORT

ON THE

COUNTRY ROUND NANAIMO.

Col. Sec. Office,
Victoria, 30th March 1860.

The accompanying Report upon the Country round the District of Nanaimo is herewith published for general information.

By Command of His Excellency the Governor,
WILLIAM A. G. YOUNG.
Acting Colonial Secretary.

GENERAL REPORT ON THE COUNTRY ROUND NANAIMO.

July 11th, 1859.

To Joseph Despard Pemberton, Esq., Colonial Surveyor, &c.

SIR,—I have the honor to report for your information some observations made whilst engaged in the survey round Nanaimo, comprising the Mountain, Cedar, and Cranberry Districts

These Districts are situated immediately around and abutting upon the Nanaimo District, which is bounded on the East by Nanaimo Harbor, and has a large mining town containing about 200 inhabitants, chiefly laborers at work in the Coal mines, who afford a ready market for all kinds of farm produce. The Harbor is of large size and well sheltered at all points from wind, with good anchorage and every natural advantage. The distance from Victoria is about 70 miles, and the average passage for 18 months of a Schooner of 20 tons, trading between the two places, was two days, which included her discharge and loading at either place. Fish, chiefly salmon, are very abundant in the harbor and up the Nanaimo, or Quam-quam-qua River. In the fall of the year the salmon ascend the river in large shoals, where they may be readily speared, or shot, or caught in nets, in any quantity; they are very rich and fat, and equal in all respects to the finest salmon of England. Halibut and cod are caught on the sandbanks not far from Nanaimo.

MOUNTAIN DISTRICT.

The general character of this District is broken, and undulating, but often perfectly flat, especially up the

river Millstone, and about Diver Lake, where the timber is for the most part open, and the fern, which is of three distinct kinds, grows to an unusual height.

The timber is chiefly pine, of the species known as Douglas white, with some spruce, and is generally of large size; occasional patches of Sallal, (which bears an exceedingly nice berry) and poor ground occur, but they are the exception. The mean height would probably be 60 or 70 feet above the sea. The richest land, however, lies along the banks of the Millstone river, which winds for the greater part through pretty plains covered with rich fern and grass, and at an average distance of a quarter mile to the north is a continuous bluff from 70 feet to 120 feet in height, and sloping gradually from the top to the N. East. The greater part of this District is occupied by Wake-siah, or, according to the Indians, Tai-took-tan mountain, which is only remarkable for the fine quality, and large growth of the timber at the base of it.

This District is well watered by fine streams, some of them being tributaries of the Millstone, and everywhere are indications of water obtainable by sinking wells.

It was not thought advisable to survey the South-eastern part of this District, as the soil is poor and stony, and little fitted for agricultural purposes, but the grazing is excellent, and the timber, both large and small, of the best possible quality; trees adapted either for spars or fence poles, being abundant even a considerable distance up the spur of the above mentioned mountain, which is probably 1,100 feet above the level of the Sea.

There is every probability that the South-east part of this District, though unfitted for any purpose but grazing, is rich in coal, as the coal crops out in a seam 72 inches thick on Chase river, a distance of only a quarter of a mile from the eastern boundary of the District, and this assumption is strengthened by the broken and "faulty" appearance of the surrounding country.

The whole District contains 16,000 acres, and is bounded on the East by the Nanaimo District, and on the South-east by the Cranberry District. It is distant from Colviletown, in the Nanaimo District, one and a half miles, to which there is an excellent wagon road.