

It can, however, hardly be called navigable, as, during a short excursion I made upon it, we had to drag our canoe over banks of gravel that traverse the bed of the stream at every 100 yards. An extensive mud-flat also lies off its mouth, which is nearly dry and impassable in the smallest craft at low water. It has also the reputation of being a good fishing-stream; and, as far as I could learn from the natives of the place, a considerable quantity of salmon is caught there annually, a consideration which would make it exceedingly valuable to an establishment. These are the only good points of this harbour, which the character of the country in its vicinity render of no avail, as the place is totally unfit for our purpose, the shores being high, steep, rocky, and everywhere covered with woods. In ranging through the forest, we found one small plain, containing 300 or 400 acres of land, at the distance of one mile from the harbour; but the rest of the country in its neighbourhood appeared to consist either of wood-land or rocky hills.

Eight miles east of Sy-yousing is the port of Whyring, divided from the former by a ridge of woody hills extending from the coast to the central high land of the island. This is a pretty good harbour, but has nothing further to recommend it, as a single glance at the high broken hills of naked granite, which form the east side of the basin, and the equally sterile character of the west shore, satisfied me that this place would not answer our purpose.

In one of our excursions we found a narrow plain, nearly a mile long, at the same distance from the harbour, which is the only clear land in its vicinity.

9. Metchesun is an open roadstead, one and a half mile east of the former port. It is a very pretty place, and has a small fresh-water run near it. There is, however, no harbour, and the anchorage is exposed, and must be insecure in rough weather; in addition to that disadvantage, the extent of clear ground is much too small for the demands of a large establishment, and a great part of what is clear, is poor, stony land, with a rolling surface, so that on the whole it would not do for us.

10. Is-why-math is the next harbour to the eastward, and appears on the ground plan accompanying this letter. It is one of the best harbours on the coast, being perfectly safe and of easy access, but in other respects it possesses no attraction. Its appearance is strikingly unimpressive, the outline of the country exhibiting a confused assemblage of rock and wood. More distant appear isolated ridges, thinly covered with scattered trees and masses of bare rock; and the view is closed by a range of low mountains, which traverse the island at the distance of about 12 miles. The shores of the harbour are rugged and precipitous, and I did not see one level spot clear of trees of sufficient extent to build a large fort upon. There is, in fact, no clear land within a quarter of a mile of the harbour, and there are small patches here and there, on the inclivities and bottoms of the rising ground. At a greater distance are two elevated plains, on different sides of the harbour, containing several bottoms of rich land, the largest of which does not exceed 60 acres of clear space, much broken by masses of limestone and granite.

Against serious objection to this place is the scarcity of fresh water. There are several good runs in winter, but we found them all dried up, and we could not manage to fill a single cask in the harbour.

11. The next harbour, about one mile and a half east of the former, is the port and canal of Camosack, which, as I have said, I think the most advantageous place for the new establishment. From the general description here given, I fear you will not discover many traces of the fertile and verdant country so richly described by other travellers who preceded me in the field, and yet will also observe, that there is one important objection which applies to all the places except "Camosack," mentioned in this sketch, namely, the absence of any tract of clear land sufficiently extensive for the tillage and pasture of a large agricultural establishment. Two of the hills do afford a convenient situation for an establishment on the rugged high shores of any of the other harbours, and, moreover, these latter places, with the exception of "Sy-yousing" and "Metchesun" are all scantily supplied with fresh water.

12. On the contrary, at Camosack, there is a pleasant and convenient site for the establishment, within 50 yards of the anchorage, on the border of a large tract of clear land which extends eastward to Point Conz about the south-east extremity of the island, and about six miles easterly, being the most picturesque and decidedly the most valuable part of the island that we had the good fortune to discover.

The accompanying ground-plan shows pretty correctly the distribution of wood, water and prairie upon the surface, and to it I beg to refer you for information upon such points.

13. More than two-thirds of this section consists of prairie land, and may be converted either to purposes of tillage or pasture, for which I have seen no part of the Indian country better adapted; the rest of it, with the exception of the ponds of water, is covered with valuable oak and pine timber. I observed, generally speaking, but two marked varieties of soil on these prairies, that of the best land is a dark vegetable mould, varying from 9 to 14 inches in depth, overlying a substrate of greyish clayey loam, which produces the rankest growth of native plants that I have seen in America. The other variety is of inferior value, and to judge from the less vigorous appearance of the vegetation upon it, naturally more unproductive.

Both kinds, however, produce abundance of grass, and several varieties of red clover grow on the rich moist bottoms.

In two places particularly we saw several acres of clover growing with a luxuriance and compactness more resembling the close sward of a well-managed lea than the produce of an uncultivated waste.

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