

has probably been very much overrated: indeed, if Vancouver may be credited—and his opinion should be sufficient authority—it would seem that the united harbours of Port Discovery and Hudson have some considerable advantages over it; its very size, some thirty miles long by ten in its widest and four in its narrowest part, renders it inconvenient, especially as its enormous area of some two hundred square miles is two-thirds of it unavailable, being choked with sand and mud, reducing it to about seventy miles, extended over its whole length; while from the same cause, no less than the marshy character of its shores, they are in many places unapproachable, and the deep-water channel consequently much exposed; and for all these reasons it must prove difficult of defence,—a difficulty much enhanced by the necessarily isolated position of the settlements around it: it moreover is connected with nothing except the Oregon, and the valleys watered by the rivers flowing into it, of which the Sacramento has a course of not more than three hundred miles, and the others of much less; the anticipated produce of gold-mines and pearl-fisheries are not now to be considered, because, according to the old proverb, a mine of gold has never equalled in value one of copper, and the latter are, from their very nature, most uncertain; but the harbours at the angle of the Strait of De Fuca not only form the key of that extensive inland navigation, but connect it with the Columbia and Frazer's River, the latter of which has a longer course than the Sacramento, if it does not water so valuable a country; while with respect to the Columbia, its comparative importance cannot be