

those who have traversed the interior from the shore of the Portland canal to the upper branches of the Youkon. We have reason, therefore, to believe that beyond the coast range of mountains in Alaska we shall find an extension of the rich and habitable valley lands of Oregon, Washington Territory, and British Columbia.

After what I have already said, I may excuse myself from expatiating on the animal productions of the forest. The elk and the deer are so plenty as to be undervalued for food or skins, by natives as well as strangers. The bear of many families—black, grizzly, and cinnamon; the mountain sheep, inestimable for his fleeces; the wolf, the fox, the beaver, the otter, the mink, the raccoon, the marten, the ermine; the squirrel—gray, black, brown, and flying, are among the land fur-bearing animals. The furs thus found here have been the chief element, for more than a hundred years, of the profitable commerce of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose mere possessory privileges seem, even at this late day, too costly to find a ready purchaser. This fur-trade, together with the sea fur-trade within the Territory, were the sole basis alike of Russian commerce and empire on this continent. This commerce was so large and important as to induce the Governments of Russia and China to build and maintain a town for carrying on its exchanges in Tartary on the border of the two empires. It is well understood that the supply of furs in Alaska has not diminished, while the demand for them in China and elsewhere has immensely increased.

I fear that we must confess to a failure of ice as an element of territorial wealth, at least as far as this immediate region is concerned. I find that the Rus-