

hundred and twenty miles long, conducts by a gradual and regular ascent to the summit about 7000 feet above the sea; and the traveller, without being reminded of any change by toilsome ascents, suddenly finds himself on the waters which flow to the Pacific Ocean. The pass is 950 miles from the mouth of the Kansas.

With the survey of this pass ended the prescribed labours of the expedition, but one of the highest peaks of the Rocky Mountains rose to view at no great distance, and Lieut. Fremont, resolved on ascending it. This was achieved with three or four days' toil. He climbed the snowy ridge, and ascertained its height, by barometer, to be 13,750 feet above the sea. At this elevation he caught a common bee in its flight across the ridge. The narrative of this excursion in the Rocky Mountains is very agreeably written, but, like our author's account of his subsequent adventures and mishaps, when attempting to descend the rapids and gullies of the Platte in his India-rubber boat, it interests more from its details than its results, and would be spoiled by abridgment.

It is said that Lieut. Fremont has been appointed to the survey of the Oregon territory. We are heartily glad of it. He will be sure to do his work well, and if our topographical engineers labour in the same style and spirit, we may reckon on obtaining, through their joint efforts, an accurate knowledge of that country, so that we may be able to calculate, on safe grounds, the exact amount of blood and treasure which may be prudently expended in the conquest of it.

#### THE OREGON COUNTRY AND THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

Elsewhere the same report speaks of this Company as being a great power in America—with military posts occupying the most important parts of the country, with boats upon every stream, conveying British manufactures to the interior, and furs to the great depositors upon the seaboard. The Indians, it is said, are the complete slaves of the association, and are ever ready to strike at its adversaries. The Company, in 1834, numbered less than one thousand, and it is thought they are not more than that number at present.

The Company are governed by a Governor, Deputy and Board of Directors, established in London, and which has the direction of all the business concerns, and to whom all reports of transactions are submitted. There is a resident Governor in the United States, and the inferior officers generally have an interest in the Company.

The military posts on the north west coast, are Fort Vancouver, on the north bank of the Columbia river, in latitude  $45\frac{1}{2}$ , and distant seventy miles from the ocean. This Fort was established by Governor Simpson in 1824. Fort George, formerly Astoria, is at the mouth of the Columbia river, and upon the south side. There is a post at Nasqually, in Puget's Sound, and Fort Langly, at the outlet of Frazer's river, the first in the 47th degree of latitude, and the second in latitude 49 degrees, 25 minutes. There is also a Fort (McLaughlin) in latitude 52. Fort Simpson, in 52 degrees, 30 minutes. The defences are all upon the coast. In the interior, the Company have fifteen trading posts, besides two migratory and trapping expeditions—the one hunting between the Bay of San Francisco and the Columbia river, towards the coast—and the other in the interior, between the Columbia and the head waters of rivers falling into the Bay of San Francisco. The peltries exported annually by this Company for six years, have amounted to one million of dollars. In 1836, the value sent to London, was only 120,000 dollars, and the profit, it was said, but 10,000 dollars.

Both Mr. Greenhow and Captain Wilkes, in com-

mon with most travellers, speak of agricultural establishments connected with the Hudson's Bay Company. Mr. Greenhow says there are two of those—one on the Red River, and one on the Willamette valley. The charter of the Company precludes them from engaging in any but their legitimate business; and, in consequence, a Company has been organized under the name of the "Puget's Sound Company," the shares of which, it is said, are held by the officers and employees of the Hudson's Bay Company. The capital of this Company is five hundred thousand pounds, divided into shares of one hundred pounds each. The officers are generally chosen from the Hudson's Bay Company, and their operations are extensive. The best stock has been imported from England and California. The forts of both the Russian and British establishments, are furnished with all their agricultural supplies by this Company. Supplies of wheat had become so abundant in 1842, that the horses of the Company were fed upon it. All who have visited the country, agree in the fact of its growing strength, and all give a concurrent testimony as to the jealousy manifested towards foreigners engaged in the trade. The principal trading post is at Vancouver. And Astoria, so famous in war and peace, for trade and settlement, has no distinguishing mark beyond a few log houses. The beauty of the place is unrivalled, affording fine views of the ocean, ranges of hills, capes, the forest, and almost every variety of scenery. The climate, too, is represented as agreeable, and the whole country round about inviting. Vancouver, 70 or 80 miles up the river, is represented as a charming spot. Captain Wilkes saw there the richest meadow lands, and the best Spanish and English sheep, and all this surrounded by tall pines and beautiful shrubs and flowers. Large granaries and dairies are in the neighborhood.

Fort Vancouver is at the head of navigation for sea-going vessels, and the river here makes an angle, and is divided by two islands, extending upward until joined by a branch of the Willamette. Of the fort at this place, Capt. Wilkes says its defences were but "two old cannons on sea carriages, with a few shot to speak defiance to the natives." \* \* \* "I mention these"—he adds—"as they are the only warlike instruments, to my knowledge, that are within the pickets of Vancouver, which differs from all other forts, in having no bastions, galleries or loop holes."

Vancouver, itself, is the great commercial, agricultural and manufacturing depot of the country. It is the great business place of the Hudson's Bay Company, and will become a great place for trade and commerce when the country is settled. The great farms here were nine miles square, when visited by the officers of the exploring expedition. There are grist and saw mills in the neighborhood—dairies supplied with milk from 100 cows.

The waters of the rivers are without fertilizing qualities, and they are believed to exhaust the soil.

The waters have risen 18 inches in half as many hours, and they fall as quickly. The inundations are periodical, and thus the banks of the river can never be safely relied upon for agricultural purposes.

In this hasty sketch of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Oregon Country, I have not sought to present any new facts, and have endeavored to condense those scattered over some of the cumbersome documents laid before Congress, or appearing in the volumes of those who have recently visited the country. As the Oregon question is to be the great subject of the session, and as peace or war may hang upon the legislation of Congress, I feel called upon to send you everything appertaining to it, whether appertaining to the past, the present, or the probable future.—*Cor. N. Y. Express.*