

and governor of Fort Vancouver, on the part of the Hudson Bay Company, is also a director of the Puget Sound Company, and has the entire management of its concerns: his salary is five hundred pounds.

The capital of the Puget Sound Company is five hundred thousand pounds, divided into shares of one hundred pounds each: only two hundred thousand pounds of this have been paid in. The operations of this Company are in consequence large: they began by making large importations of stock from California, and some of the best breeds of cattle from England; they have also entered into farming on an extensive scale, using as labourers the servants of the Hudson Bay Company, who are bound by their contracts to do all manner of service that may be required of them, even to the bearing of arms.

This Company have the supplying of all the forts and stations of the Hudson Bay Company on the west side of the American continent, and also furnish the Russian ports with grain, butter, and cheese: of the former article the Russians take about fifteen thousand bushels. It is also their intention, when they shall have succeeded in breeding a sufficient stock of cattle and sheep, to export hides, horns, tallow, and wool, to England, in the return ships, which now go home comparatively empty, as the furs occupy only a small portion of the capacity of the ship. In this way it may readily be perceived that they will be enabled to drive a profitable trade, particularly when it is considered how little care the cattle require in this territory, in consequence of the grass and natural hay which the soil affords at all seasons. It is the prospect of the advantageous results to be derived from these operations, that has induced the Hudson Bay Company to change their trading establishments into large agricultural ones. For some years previous to our arrival, they had not been able to meet their own wants, and at the same time fulfil their contracts with the Russians. They were therefore obliged to purchase from the settlers in the territory, as well as send to California, to procure the requisite quantity of agricultural products. A demand was consequently created for wheat, and all that could be raised in the Willamette settlements was bought for six shillings (seventy-five cents) a bushel, and paid for in drafts on their stores in goods, at fifty per cent. advance on the first London cost. This gave an encouragement to the small farmers, that was fated to meet with grievous disappointment the next season; for the Company was able not only to meet their engagements, and their own wants, but had, besides, a surplus. The prices consequently would be merely nominal, unless raised by the influx of new settlers. Whether the latter cause had any effect in creating a market, I know not; but I