

of them I have to acknowledge my obligation to the missionaries, and the officers of the Hudson Bay Company.

Previous to the departure of the brigade, Mr. Drayton had made many collections in natural history. After I left him, the weather continued very rainy for several days, and the Columbia in consequence began to rise again rapidly: the low prairies were overflowed, and the wheat in many places was injured. To show the porous nature of the soil, I will mention that the well at Vancouver rises and falls with the river, although it is a quarter of a mile from the bank. This is not the case in any other place in the territory where wells are sunk; but I have little doubt the same thing would occur on any of the low prairies of the Columbia, for the soil of all of them seems very similar. At Vancouver they use the river in preference to the well-water, though they do not consider the latter as unwholesome.

Mr. Drayton obtained in the mill-pond, specimens of a beautiful spotted trout, which is abundant there. They take the bait readily, and were caught with pieces of dried salmon: they feed upon insects, and small white moths are their favourite bait, at which they are seen to spring most greedily.

Until the 26th, repairs were making to the boats, and preparations were going on for embarking the goods. The shape of these boats has been before described: they have great strength and buoyancy, carry three tons weight, and have a crew of eight men, besides a padroon: they are thirty feet long and five and a half feet beam, sharp at both ends, clinker-built, and have no knees. In building them, flat timbers of oak are bent to the requisite shape by steaming; they are bolted to a flat keel, at distances of a foot from each other: the planks are of cedar, and generally extend the whole length of the boat. The gunwale is of the same kind of wood, but the rowlocks are of birch. The peculiarity in the construction of these boats is, that they are only riveted at each end with a strong rivet, and being well gummed, they have no occasion for nailing. They answer, and indeed are admirably adapted to, all the purposes for which they are intended; are so light as to be easily transported over the portages by their crews, and in case of accident are easily repaired.

The goods embarked for the supply of the northern posts are all done up carefully in bales of ninety pounds each, and consist of groceries, clothing, flour, powder, bullets, &c. It may readily be imagined that the different packages vary very materially in size, from a few inches square to two feet. This equal division of the weight is necessary, in consequence of the numerous portages they have to make, as well as convenient in forming packs for horses, which they take at