The Columbia bottom below Vancouver is of a fine sandy loam. Much of that on the immediate banks of the river is subject to overflow, during the freshet; a double misfortune, as the deposits of the Columbia are not fertilizing; and the temperature of the water destroys growing crops. Wheat does not fill after being submerged. Behind this river bed, the upland is well watered and fertile. The gravelly country back of Vancouver is speedily exhausted, two crops of wheat being as much as it will produce to advantage. The Indians raise excellent potatoes in the Yakótt and Chalacha prairies, and wheat would undoubtedly thrive there, but they are subject to summer frosts.

The timber upon the lower lands of the Columbia is chiefly cottonwood; on the smaller streams vine maple and alder, while the upland is covered with the usual growth of the coast region of Oregon, fir, spruce, and towards the mountains, cedar or cypress. This forest is almost entirely of secondary growth, and is deadened over a vast tract by the fires which run through the country. These fires would seem to add but little to the fertility of the soil, as the trees when consumed leave hardly any ashes, and the roots burning out beneath the surface destroy all vegetable decomposition. The succession of forest which so universally takes place in the Atlantic States does not

0466