

Montes. After breakfast the next morning, a party ascended one of these mountains, which was 2,400 feet high. The scenery was remarkable. The chief part of the range was composed of grand, solid, abrupt masses of granite, which appeared as if they had been coeval with the beginning of the world. The granite was capped with mica-slate, and this in the lapse of ages had been worn into strange finger-shaped points. These two formations, thus differing in their outlines, agree in being almost destitute of vegetation. This barrenness had to our eyes a strange appearance, from having been so long accustomed to the sight of an almost universal forest of dark-green trees. I took much delight in examining the structure of these mountains. The complicated and lofty ranges bore a noble aspect of durability—equally profitless, however, to man and to all other animals. Granite to the geologist is classic ground: from its widespread limits, and its beautiful and compact texture, few rocks have been more anciently recognized. Granite has given rise, perhaps, to more discussion concerning its origin than any other formation. We generally see it constituting the fundamental rock, and, however formed, we know it is the deepest layer in the crust of this globe to which man has penetrated. The limit of man's knowledge in any subject possesses a high interest, which is perhaps increased by its close neighborhood to the realms of imagination.

January 1, 1835.—The new year is ushered in with the ceremonies proper to it in these regions. She lays out no false hopes: a heavy northwestern gale, with steady rain, bespeaks the rising year. Thank God, we are not destined here to see the end of it, but hope then to be in the Pacific Ocean, where a blue sky tells one there is a heaven—a something beyond the clouds above our heads.

The northwest winds prevailing for the next four days, we only managed to cross a great bay, and then anchored in another secure harbor. I accompanied the Captain in a boat to the head of a deep creek. On the way the number of seals which we saw was quite astonishing: every bit of