

We formed a favourable opinion of our visitors from the strict integrity which they evinced in all their dealings, even when opportunities offered of evading detection, which I notice the more readily, as we afterwards experienced very different behaviour from the same tribe.

Light winds kept us at anchor for twenty-four hours, during which time the current ran almost constantly to the south-westward, at the rate of from two fathoms to two miles per hour; and the water was nearly fresh (1.0089 to 1.0096 sp. gr.): this stratum, however, was confined to a short distance from the surface, as a patent log, which was sunk for three hours at the depth of three fathoms, showed only a fifth of a mile in that time. These facts left no doubt of our being near the estuary of a considerable river, flowing, in all probability, through the large opening abreast of us, which the boat had been sent to explore.

We weighed in the afternoon of the 23d, but in consequence of light winds and counter currents made very little progress; indeed, a great part of the time the ship would not steer, even with a moderate breeze and two boats a-head, and it was necessary to keep carrying out the kedge anchors on the bow to maintain the ship's head in the right direction. This was occasioned by some large rivers emptying themselves into the sound, the fresh water of which remained at the surface, and flowed in a contrary direction to the tide of the ocean. Had this occurred in an intricate channel it might have been dangerous; but in Kotzebue Sound the bottom is quite even, and there is plenty of room to drift about.

CHAP.  
X.July,  
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