

CHAP.
X.July,
1826.

hundred feet above the sea, were observed to be surmounted by large fragments of rock having the appearance of ruins. These hills terminate to the southward and south-westward in bold rocky cliffs, off which are situated three small islands; the hills have a gradual slope to the coast line to the northward and westward; but at the north-western extremity of the island they end in a remarkable wedge-shaped promontory—particulars which may be found useful to navigators in foggy weather. The upper parts of the island were buried in snow; but the lower, as at Beering's Island, were bare and overgrown with moss or grass. We stood close into a small bay at the S. W. angle of the island, where we perceived several tents, and where, from the many stakes driven into the ground, we concluded there was a fishing-station. The natives soon afterwards launched four baidars,* of which each contained eight persons, males and females. They paddled towards the ship with great quickness, until they were within speaking distance, when an old man who steered the foremost boat stood erect and held up in succession nets, walrus teeth, skin shirts, harpoons, bows and arrows, and small birds; he then extended his arms, rubbed and patted his breast,† and came fearlessly alongside. We instantly detected in these people the features of the Esquimaux, whom in appearance and manners also, and indeed in every particular, they so much resembled, that there cannot, I think, be the least doubt of

* This boat, called by the natives oomiatic, is the same in every respect as the oomiatic, or woman boat of the Esquimaux. It is here used by the men instead of by the women.

† This is the usual Esquimaux indication of friendship.