



CHAPTER II.

ARRIVAL AT NOVA ZEMBLA.



ON July 11th, Hemskerk's ship came into open and navigable waters, though not wholly free from icebergs, some of which rose to a height of about ninety fathoms. Much knocked about and damaged, the ship arrived on the sixteenth of the month at the north coast of Nova Zembla, the largest of the, as yet discovered, islands of the Polar Sea, between 70 and 78, north latitude. The island is from four to fifty-eight square miles in diameter. It consists, in fact, of two islands, divided by a narrow channel. On the north this strait is surrounded by icebergs, which render landing difficult. The west coast is but little known; to the east the Kara Sea lies between it and Asia, and to the south, beyond the bay and island of Waigatsch, is the Russian province of Archangel. Nova Zembla belongs also to Russia. The greater portion of it is always covered with ice and snow, it