

CHAP.
X.July,
1826.

Rock, as it is an excellent guide to the eastern channel, which is the widest and best; the centre one I named after the Russian Admiral Krusenstern; and to the north-western island I transferred the name of Ratmanoff, which had been bestowed upon the supposed discovery of Kotzebue. We remarked that the Asiatic shore was more buried in snow than the American. The mountains in the one were entirely covered; in the other, they were streaked and partly exposed. The low land of both on the coast was nearly bare.

Near the Asiatic shore we had a sandy bottom, but on crossing over the strait, it changed to mud, until well over on the American side, where we passed a tongue of sand and stones in twelve fathoms, which in all probability was the extremity of a shoal, on which the ship was nearly lost the succeeding year. After crossing it the water deepened, and the bottom again changed to mud, and we had ten and a half fathoms within two and a half miles of the coast.

We closed with the American shore, a few miles to the northward of Cape Prince of Wales, and found the coast low, with a ridge of sand extending along it, on which we noticed several Esquimaux habitations. Steering along this shore to the northward, in ten and eight fathoms water, a little before noon we were within four and a half miles of Schismareff Inlet. Here we were becalmed, and had leisure to observe the broad sheet of water that extends inland in an E. S. E. direction beyond the reach of the eye.* The width of the inlet between

* Mountains were seen at the back of it, but the coast was not visible—probably it is low.