

land Firth, and from thence across the passage to Stromness, which appeared to be the only way of proceeding by which he could rejoin the party.

*June 3.*—The wind continuing favourable after leaving Yarmouth, about nine this morning we passed the rugged and bold projecting rock termed Johnny Groat's house, and soon afterwards Duncansby Head, and then entered the Pentland Firth. A pilot came from the main shore of Scotland, and steered the ship in safety between the different islands, to the outer anchorage at Stromness, though the atmosphere was too dense for distinguishing any objects on the land. Almost immediately after the ship had anchored, the wind changed to N.W., the rain ceased, and a sight was then first obtained of the neighbouring islands, and of the town of Stromness, the latter of which, from this point of view, and at this distance, presented a pleasing appearance.

Mr. Geddes, the agent of the Hudson's Bay Company at this place, undertook to communicate my wish for volunteer boatmen to the different parishes, by a notice on the church-door, which he said was the surest and most direct channel for the conveyance of information to the lower classes in these islands, as they invariably attend divine service there every Sunday. He informed me that the kind of men we were in want of would be difficult to procure, on account of the very increased demand for boatmen for the herring fishery, which has recently been established on the shores of these islands: that last year, sixty boats and four hundred men only were employed in this service, whereas now there were three hundred boats and twelve hundred men engaged: and that owing to this unexpected addition to the fishery, he had been unable to provide the number of persons required for the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. This was unpleasant information, as it increased the apprehension of our being detained at York Factory the whole winter, if boatmen were not taken from hence. I could not therefore hesitate in requesting Mr. Geddes to engage eight or ten men well adapted for our service, on such terms as he could procure them, though the Secretary of State's permission had not yet reached me.