

CHAP.
X.July,
1826.

fancied he saw a fourth, and conjectured that it must have been either overlooked by Cook and Clerke, or that it had been since raised by an earthquake.*

As we proceeded, the land on the south side of St. Lawrence Bay made its appearance first, and next the lofty mountains at the back of Cape Prince of Wales, then hill after hill rose alternately on either bow, curiously refracted, and assuming all the varied forms which that phenomenon of the atmosphere is known to occasion. At last, at the distance of fifty miles, the Diomed Islands, and the eastern Cape of Asia, rose above the horizon of our mast-head. But, as if to teach us the necessity of patience in the sea we were about to navigate, before we had determined the question, a thick fog enveloped every thing in obscurity. We continued to run on, assisted by a strong northerly current, until seven o'clock the next morning, when the western Diomed was seen through the fog close to us.

In our passage from St. Lawrence Island to this situation, the depth of the sea increased a little, until to the northward of King's Island, after which it began to decrease; but in the vicinity of the Diomed Islands, where the strait became narrowed, it again deepened, and continued between twenty-five and twenty-seven fathoms. The bottom, until close to the Diomedes, was composed of fine sand, but near them it changed to coarse stones and gravel, as at St. Lawrence Island; transitions which, by being attended to, may be of service to navigators in foggy weather.

* Some doubt, it appears, was created in the minds of the Russians themselves as to this supposed discovery, as we understood at Petropaulski, that a large wager was depending upon it.

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