

CHAP.
XII.Oct.
1826.

plenish the provisions and stores, and, what was equally important, to recruit the health of the people, who were much debilitated from their privations; having been a considerable time on short allowance of salt provision, and in the enjoyment of only seven weeks' fresh meat in the last ten months.

From the favourable account I had heard of Saint Francisco in California, it appeared to be the most desirable place to which a ship under our circumstances could resort; and as the coast between that port and Cape St. Lucas was very imperfectly known, that the time could not be more usefully employed than in completing the survey of it. I therefore directed our course to that place, and determined to enter the Pacific by the Strait of Oonemak; which, if not the safest of those formed by the Aleutian Islands, is certainly the best known.

After passing King's Island on the 16th, we saw some very large flocks of ducks migrating to the southward, and fell in with the lummes, which had deserted us more than a month before at Chamisso Island. As we approached St. Lawrence Island, the little crested auks flew around us, and some land birds took refuge in our rigging. We passed to the eastward of this island in very thick weather, and had only a transient view of its eastern extremity, and thence pursued a course to the southward, passing between Gore's Island and Nunevack, an island recently discovered by the Russians, but not known to us at that time. The soundings increased, though not always regularly; and we had thick misty weather which prevented any thing