

ed by this memoir, to survey and examine as much of the coast as possible before Captain Franklin arrived, no time was lost in preparing the ship for sea, which it required only a little time to effect.

CHAP.
X.

July,
1826.

On the 28th Mr. Elson returned from the examination of the opening we discovered on the north side of Kotzebue Sound, and reported the water at the entrance to be so shallow that the barge could not enter. The inlet was of considerable width, and extended thirty or forty miles in a broad sheet of water, which at some distance up was fresh. This was ascertained by landing in the sound to the eastward of the opening, at which place it was found that the inlet approached the sea within a mile and a half. The time to which it was necessary to limit Mr. Elson prevented his doing more than ascertaining that this opening was navigable only by small boats; and by the water being quite fresh, that it could not lead to any sea beyond.

The Esquimaux in the inlet were more numerous than we supposed, but were very orderly and well behaved. When the barge anchored off a low sandy point, on which they had erected their summer habitations and fishing stakes, she was surrounded by fourteen baidars, containing 150 men; which, considering the crew of the barge only amounted to eight men and two officers, was a superiority of strength that might well have entitled them to take liberties, had they been so disposed, armed as they usually are with bows and arrows, spears, and a large knife strapped to their thigh: but so far from this being the case, they readily consented to an arrangement, that only one baidar at a time should come alongside to dispose of her goods, and then make way for another: