

CHAPTER II.

Notices of Visits to Tchutski.—Cook and Billings, &c.—Wrangell's Laments. — Paucity of information. — First communication with Tchutski. — Ludicrous Mistake respecting Sex. — Attempts at Conversation. — Visit the Shore. — See real Women. — Delectable Repast. — First Theft. — Council of Officers. — Curious Hut. — Thermometer Jack. — Gale. — Detention of Natives. — Their Feast. — Tchutski Honour. — Move into Winter Quarters. — First Visit to Natives. — An interesting Infant. — Funny Fiddler. — The Sheep. — The House. — First Impressions. — The Masquerade. — The Missionary. — The Drama.

A COMBINATION of untoward circumstances had driven us on a coast and among a people rarely visited. Cook, ranking only second to Columbus among navigators, was the first who touched upon this shore, in 1778: his was but a flying visit, as he merely landed for about a couple of hours near the Tchutskoi Noss, and then re-embarked never to return, although doubtless his intention was to have made further acquaintance with so interesting a country. Behring, in 1728, communicated with the people of this coast, in latitude $64^{\circ} 30'$ north, near the Tchutskoi Noss. The eight natives who visited him in a baidar, stated that the coast trended to the