

for finding the cask of flour, and also a piece of drift-wood which was deposited in a hole in the cliff. This billet had been purposely bored and charged with a letter containing all the useful information I could impart to the party, and then plugged up in such a manner that no traces of its being opened were visible. In fact, nothing was left undone that appeared to me likely to prove useful.

CHAP.
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Having thus far performed our duty, we prepared the ship for sea in order that she might start at an hour's notice. On the 13th, the temperature fell to 27°, the lakes on shore had borne two or three days, and the sea had cooled down 8°; in short, there was every appearance of a settled frost. The next day the edges of the sound began to freeze, and it was evident that it needed only calm weather to skin it entirely over. I therefore desired the anchor to be weighed, and having taken on board a large supply of drift-wood, the last thing we procured from the shore, we steered out of the sound.

We passed Cape Krusenstern about midnight, and then shaped a course for the strait. The night, though cold, was fine, and furnished me with eighteen sets of lunar distances, east and west of the moon, which I was very anxious to obtain, in order to fix more accurately the position of Chamisso Island, never having been able to succeed in getting fine weather with the moon to the east of the sun, until his declination was too far south for the lunars to be of any value.

We had no observation at noon the next day, and the land was so refracted that we scarcely recognised it; we, however, continued to run for the strait, anxious to reach it before sunset. The breeze