

tight; and they also used breeches of deer's hide and seal skin boots, to the upper end of which were fixed strings of sea horse hide. It was the fashion to tie one of these strings round the waist, and attach to it a long tuft of hair, the wing of a bird or sometimes a fox's tail, which, dangling behind as they walked, gave them a ridiculous appearance, and may probably have occasioned the report of the Tschuktchi, recorded in Muller, that the people of this country have tails like dogs.

On the 22d of July, the ship anchored in Kotzebue's Sound, and after exploring a deep inlet on its northern shore, which they named Hothain Inlet, proceeded to Chamisso Island, where the Blossom was to await Captain Franklin. A discretionary power had, however, been permitted to Captain Beechey, of employing the period of his stay in surveying the coast, provided this could be done without the risk of missing Captain Franklin. Having accordingly directed the barge to keep in shore on the look out for the land party, he sailed to the northward, and doubling Cape Krusenstern, completed an examination of the coast by Cape Thomson, Point Hope, Cape Lisburn, Cape Beaufort, and Icy Cape, the farthest point reached by Captain Cook. As there were here strong indications of the ice closing in, and his instructions were positive to keep in open water if possible, he determined to return to Kotzebue's Sound, while he despatched the barge under Mr. Elson and Mr. Smyth to trace the coast to the north-eastward, as far as they could navigate.

On this interesting service the barge set out on the 17th of August, while Beechey returned towards Kotzebue's Sound. On the night of the 23th they beheld for the first time in these northern latitudes, a brilliant display of the Aurora Borealis. "It appeared first," says Captain Beechey, "in an arch extending from west-by-north to north-east; but the arch, shortly after its first appearance, broke up and entirely disappeared. Soon after this, however, a new display began in the direction of the western foot of the first arch, preceded by a bright flame, from which emanated coruscations of a pale straw colour. An almost simultaneous movement occurred at both extremities of the arch, until a complete segment was formed of wavering perpendicular radii. As soon as the arch was complete, the light became greatly increased, and the prismatic colours, which had before been faint, now shone forth in a very brilliant manner. The strongest colours, which were also the outside ones, were pink and green, on the green side purple and pink, all of which were as imperceptibly blended as in the rainbow. The green was the colour nearest the zenith. This magnificent display lasted a few minutes; and the light had nearly vanished, when the north-east quarter sent forth a vigorous display, and nearly at the same time a corresponding coruscation emanated from the opposite extremity. The western foot of the arch then disengaged itself from the horizon, crooked to the northward, and the whole retired to the north-east quarter, where a bright spot blazed for a moment and all was darkness. There was no noise audible during any part of our observations, nor were the compasses perceptibly affected.

During the voyage back to Chamisso Island, where they arrived on the 27th of August, they had repeated interviews with the Esquimaux, whose habits and disposition were in no respect different from those of the natives already described. They found them uniformly friendly, sociable, devotedly fond of tobacco, eager to engage in traffic, and upon the whole honest, though disposed to drive a hard bargain. On some occasions they attempted to impose upon their customers by skins artfully put together so as to represent an entire fish; but it was difficult to determine whether they intended a serious fraud or only a piece of humour, for they laughed heartily when detected, and appeared to consider it a good joke. Their persons, houses, and cookery were all exceedingly dirty, and their mode of salutation was by a mutual contact of noses; sometimes licking their hands and stroking first their own faces, and afterward those of the strangers. The rapidity with which these people migrated from place to place was remarkable. On one occasion the motions of two baidars under sail were watched by the crew of the Blossom. The people landed at a spot near Choris Peninsula, drew up their boats on the beach, turning them bottom upwards, pitched tents, and in an incredible short time transferred to them the whole con-