

## CHAPTER IX.

### SOOLOO.

1842.

ON the evening of the 21st of January, the Vincennes, with the tender in company, left the bay of Manilla. I then sent for Mr. Knox, who commanded the latter, and gave him directions to keep closely in company with the Vincennes, and at the same time pointed out to him places of rendezvous where the vessels might again meet in case any unavoidable circumstance caused their separation. I was more particular in giving him instructions to avoid losing sight of the Vincennes, as I was aware that my proposed surveys might be impeded or frustrated altogether, were I deprived of the assistance of the vessel under his command.

On the 22d, we passed the entrance of the Straits of San Bernadino. It would have been my most direct route to follow these straits until I had passed Mindoro, and it is I am satisfied the safest course, unless the winds are fair, for the direct passage. My object, however, was to examine the ground for the benefit of others, and the Apo Shoal, which lies about mid-channel between Palawan and Mindoro, claimed my first attention. The tender was despatched to survey it, while I proceeded in the Vincennes to examine the more immediate entrance to the Sooloo Sea, off the southwest end of Mindoro.

Calavite Peak is the north point of Mindoro, and our observations made it two thousand feet high. This peak is of the shape of a dome, and appears remarkably regular when seen from its western side. On approaching Mindoro, we, as is usual, under high islands, lost the steady breeze, and the wind became light for the rest of the day. Mindoro is a beautiful island, and is evidently volcanic; it appears as