

vateers, which seldom fail to take advantage of these localities, whenever the season may allow them to visit our shores.

The shallows may easily be distinguished at a considerable distance : being composed of light, shifting sand, and acted upon by a strong current, the water above them appears discolored ; assuming a dun, or yellow hue, sufficiently contrasted with the deeper parts, to enable the eye at once to trace their respective limits.

Madras Roads being exempt from shoals, for some miles on either side, are entered without a pilot ; ships in general anchoring off the fort, in from six to ten fathoms ; the bottom a firm sand. The surf is here, at all times, rather high ; but when a south-west, or westerly wind, prevails, becomes so tremendous as to debar all communication with the shipping. From the beginning of October to the middle of January, the flag-staff is struck, as a signal to vessels that no insurance is payable on account of such losses as may happen during that period, which is held to be replete with danger. So great is the apprehension entertained of the perils attendant upon a continuance on the Coromandel coast during that monsoon, that even our ships of war retire from the protection of such trade as may be carried on by adventurous individuals, and seek an asylum in some well-sheltered port, such as Trincomalee.