

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Bijuga Islands and Inhabitants.

IT has been observed in the preceding chapter that to the southward of the Continental Islands, forming the coast line between Cape Roxo and Bissao, there was a cluster of other islands, making an immense harbour to the island of Bulama.

Their situa-
tion,

This groupe of islands is called in our charts the Bissagos islands, and are placed on shoals, called the shoals of the Rio Grande; these are the Bijuga Islands.

S. S. W. of Cape Roxo, at the distance of about twelve leagues, and in the latitude of 11. 40. north, is the N. W. edge of what are called, by seamen, the shoals of the Rio Grande. These shoals, or sand banks, extend thence in a S. E. direction full forty leagues, and are interspersed with many marshy and half-drowned, and many inhabited, islands. The north and the eastern edges of this bank are terminated by them, but the south and the western limits of it are not exactly known; at least we are so ignorant of them, that, to my knowledge, several ships have lately struck upon them, out of sight of land; and more vessels have been lost upon these shoals, I verily believe, than on all the rest of Africa. We can scarcely be said to be better acquainted with them than with the Yellow Sea.

The northern edge of these islands and shoals forms the southern limit of the great channel leading to the island of Bulama, and the mouth of the Rio Grande: although there are some shoals