

# HUNTING THE WHALE

## DECAY OF A ONCE PROFITABLE INDUSTRY.

**The Old Ships, Crews, and Implements Employed in the Industry that Formerly Enriched the New England Coast Towns—Perils of Whaling.**

**An Almost Forgotten Fish.** The city of New Bedford, Mass., recently celebrated its fiftieth anniversary as a municipality. It is a typical New England city, whose people, with Yankee adaptiveness, have replaced the whaling industry—once its principal reliance—with many more modern business enterprises. The whaler, like the Indian, the cowboy and the logger, is a vanishing type of America. A century finds him relegated from among the foremost features of New England seaboard to be in almost forgotten figure. The famous fortunes "down East" were built on a foundation of cetaceous blubber, and the wheels of prosperity were lubricated with sperm-oil, but when the rock farms of Pennsylvania began, geysers, to spout petroleum, the hollow roar sounded the death knell of the whaling industry. The keen Yankee, however, was equal to the emergency, and the millions that had accumulated through sperm oil were invested in manufacturing. The rusting harpoons were transformed to shining spindles, the tempest-tossed timbers of abandoned ships fed the glowing grates of new enterprises, romance of the sea fled away as the electric shadowed the astral lamp, but thrifty profit cheerily nestled in the embrasure of the old New England masts and trees, smiling at the ghastly memories and heroes of long ago.

**Rare Old New Bedford.** What of the fleet of 400 whaling ships once registered from New Bedford, Nantucket, Gloucester and Provincetown? One would find only a few remnants of this glory today. New Bedford, indeed, is one of the largest manufacturing centers of the East, but Nantucket is merely an exhibition stand for tourists after a "dip" or in search of colonial curios, while Provincetown is a sleepy point at land's end. Down at the moss-grown wharves of New Bedford there is an aggregation of queer old ships, floating monuments of the ancient fleet. There they lie, in their quiet reservations, hoary in age, linked in pairs, as though to keep up the old form of "gan" (whaler's gossip and look in mild rebuke at the wheezy, impudent little tugs that bustle about the harbor aggressively attached to large and lazy ships that are coming from or going to foreign shores. These old heroes, that were once the pride and glory of American seamen when our flag bouted in every port on the globe, are freighted with rare romance, and curious in contrast with the craft of today. The largest of them did not measure over 125 feet, or exceed 500 gross tonnage. Take the old Commodore Morris as a type. She was built in 1844; tonnage, 338.21; length, 107; beam, 27; depth, 17. The quaint old figurehead is battered almost beyond recognition, but may take pride in the fact that it cleared \$20,000 for owners in a brief commission.

**The Whaleship Structurally.** Their bows, broad, round, are heavily timbered, ornate with curious carving, and their sterns are straight and square, giving an ungainly look; yet these old ships have boldly battered Arctic ice and scoured under the "line." They have sailed in every sea, roving in unending commission, until their water casks were filled with oil. Notwithstanding the Standard Oil Co., venturesome whalers still sail into New Bedford, and unload their cargoes on the ancient wharves, where barrels and barrels are waiting a favorable market, protected from the weather by masses of dried seaweed packed about them. Sperm oil is now 35 cents per gallon; it used to command from \$1 to \$1.50. Two old whaleships came sailing into New Bedford recently—the Rising Sun, oiler, and the Dolphin, packed with whalebone, after a cruise of thirty-three months around Cape Horn. The Rising Sun will serve as a type. The distinctive architectural feature of her deck forward was the big brick furnaces enclosing the oil try pots. A fire inspector might call it a "target," but whalers, soaked as they are with oil, and, when trying out blubber, the roll of the ship seemed to send flames due to the masthead, seldom burn—a fact due only to the most extraordinary caution, the wooden water backing about the furnaces being kept constantly filled. The cook's galley was no larger than a doghouse, and did not admit of that functionary standing up while at his labors. He

which is sealed up in rough weather. Keep a score of men can live and work healthy and happy in this dark and fearful hole for months or years in a mystery. A whaler's crew usually enlists from twenty-four to thirty men, each man on his "lay," for they all share in a percentage of the profit—the first mate, 1 in 24; the second mate, 1 in 30; the others sharing down, according to rank, the figures varying with the market and the size of the ship. There are four mates, a steward, a cook, a cooper, ordinary seamen and green hands—the last getting the drudgery and the light "lay." The latter are out for "experience," and they generally get it in large, unvarnished quantities.

It is estimated that it requires \$30,000 to fit for a long voyage, as every emergency must be anticipated and provided for—say a period of three years. Into the hold are packed 150 barrels of salt beef, seventy-five barrels of salt pork, thirty barrels of ship biscuit, thirty or forty barrels of flour, 300 gallons of molasses, 200 pounds of coffee, 200 pounds of tea, 500 pounds of sugar, equal quantities of rice, meal, beans, dried apples, hams, butter, raisins, cheese, canned goods, vinegar, and food staples. The new oil casks are filled with fresh water, and there are quantities of oak and pine staves, headings and iron hoops, with a thousand and one things, from paint and tar to pills and gunpowder, in the spare supplies.

**The Whaleboat.** The conspicuous equipment of the whaler is the sharp, double-prowed boat that hang from awkward-looking wooden davits, one on the larboard and two or three on the starboard side. The Yankees that

A whaling captain recently told the writer that it took no less than seven modern lance bombs to finish a big whale on his last voyage. The modern German whalers (steam ships) attack the whales directly, without the aid of small boats, the harpoon and bomb lances being fired from a big swivel gun in the bow. This was the way Emperor William captured a whale two years ago, in the North Sea. It may appear uncanny that man should feed upon the creature that feeds his lamp; but others than the not-over-fastidious Eskimo have so feasted, without the odoriferous vintage of train-oil. It is recorded that three centuries ago the tongue of the right whale was esteemed a rare delicacy in France, and in the time of Henry VIII, a certain court chef won royal recognition for concocting a sauce to be served with harbooned porpoise, a species of whale. The monks of Irun-



LANCING A WHALE.

ous Eskimo have so feasted, without the odoriferous vintage of train-oil. It is recorded that three centuries ago the tongue of the right whale was esteemed a rare delicacy in France, and in the time of Henry VIII, a certain court chef won royal recognition for concocting a sauce to be served with harbooned porpoise, a species of whale. The monks of Irun-

from the upper part of the crown bone, from flexible Venetian blades. The edges of these are fringed with hairy fibers, through which he strains the water, and in whose intricacies he retains the small fish, when open-mouthed he goes through seas of bit in minute yellow substance upon which the right whale largely feeds in feeding time off the famous Brazil banks. The colonades of bone so methodically arranged resemble a pipe organ. For a carpet to this organ is a tongue that the bold voracious sharks occasionally snatch

with their entire crews into the air as a juggler tosses up a ball. When a whale has succeeded to lancing and dried the sea with spouting blood the huge body is towed to the ship and large chains are put about the head and flukes to hold the body fast. Enormous tackles are swung up to the main top, and finally lashed to the lower mast head, the strongest point above the ship's deck, to the end of a hawser-like rope. Winding through the intricacies is the itabber hook, weighing a hundred pounds. The blubber envelopes a whale like a rind does an orange, and as the ship careers to the strain of the tackle fixed to the heaving windlass, the hook takes hold and following the line scarf made by the keen cutting spades, the great body rolls over a strip after strip of the blood-dripping blubber is pulled aloft and lowered through the main hatch to the hulkier room. There it is cut up by double-handed knives, and passed up to the deck to be tried out in the smoking brick furnaces, with cooled water backs about their base.

**Edged Tools of the Whaler.** The whaling spade, like all the lancing and cutting equipment, is of the best steel, kept as sharp as possible and is honed like a razor. This spade is about as large as a man's spread hand, and has a socket in which is a pole handle twenty feet long. These edged tools are kept in canvas pockets, lined with wool.

One of the most profitable and curious products derived from the sperm whale is ambergris (gray amber), a morbid secretion of the liver or intestines. It is a solid opaque inflammable substance, lighter than water, having the consistency of wax, and having when heated a fragrant odor. It is highly soluble in alcohol, and is used particularly as the holding base of perfume, and was once considered as having great medicinal properties as an aphrodisiac, and for spicing wines. It is sometimes obtained from post-mortem dissected whales, or found floating on the water in the neighborhood of the Bahamas in masses of from six to 225 pounds. Ambergris of the best grade is now quoted at \$27 per ounce.—Chas. E. Nixon, in the Chicago Inter Ocean.

**AN ABSENT-MINDED MAN.** Results of a Learned Professor Losing Himself in Realms of Thought. "When I was younger than I will ever be again," said the professor with a three-story head and eyeglasses of telescopic power, "I was the victim of such intense mental abstraction that I removed myself entirely from the world of practical affairs. I was in the boundless realms of thought and paid but fleeting attention to the active field of human action. It was necessary to notify me when I should attend my class, eat my meals, and even when I should retire.

"I was at one time requested to lecture in a Western village, and agreed to do so. The theme was one that had received my best thoughts, and the mere prospect of delivering it was a physical pleasure. When I arrived at the depot my thoughts were concentrated upon the proposed address. I realized that my train was an hour late and that I must hurry, but beyond the mere fact of hurrying I did not grasp a detail.

"Drive fast," I shouted to the driver of a dingy-looking vehicle as I sprang in and handed him a \$5 bill. "Spare neither horse nor whip." The carriage rolled like a ship in the trough of the sea. Street lights seemed a torchlight procession moving rapidly the other way. Constables shouted, dogs, barked, small boys chased us, and business ceased that people might stand on the sidewalk and gaze. Up one street and down another we dashed madly. We took corners on two wheels, grazed telegraph poles, and knocked over such movables as ash barrels and dry goods boxes.

"After half an hour of this bewildering experience I stuck my head from the window and shouted: 'Are we nearly there?' "Where did you want to go, sorry came the edifying answer."

**The Oldest Plow Maker.** Chicago has the oldest plow-maker in the United States. His name is David Bradley, and he is at the head of a big manufacturing company on the West Side. Mr. Bradley first worked at the business in Syracuse, N. Y., in 1832. In 1835 he came to Chicago, which then numbered about 2,500 inhabitants, and a camp of several thousand Indians, to help erect the first iron foundry established here. Mr. Bradley was the first man to bring pig-iron into Chicago. In connection with the foundry which he helped build was a machine-shop, and the establishment soon began along with its other business the manufacture of plows. Mr. Bradley, by the growth of his business, was finally forced to build a little town of his own, which is known as Bradley, Ill. Mr. Bradley has passed his 85th birthday, but is still hale and hearty, and thoroughly enjoys the prosperity which hard work has brought him. The active business has been surrendered to his sons.—Chicago Tribune.

**Where Duels Are Fought.** More duels are fought in Germany than in any other country. Most of them, however, are student duels, which culminate in nothing more serious than slashed cheeks or torn scalps. Of all German university towns, little Jena and Gottingen are most devoted to the code. In Gottingen the number of duels average one a day, year in and year out. On one day, several years ago, twelve duels were fought in Gottingen in twenty-four hours. In Jena the record for one day in recent times is twenty-one. Fully 4,000 student duels are fought every year in the German Empire. In addition to these there are the more serious duels between officers and civilians. Among Germans of mature years the annual number of duels is about 100.

**Female Desperado.** Cora Hubbard, the Pinville (Ark.) bank robber, is 25, and was born in Ohio. She inherits from her father a slight admixture of Indian blood. She is fairly well educated, and her favorite book in childhood was the "Life of the James Boys." Cora doesn't drink, but is an inveterate smoker, and swears like a trooper. Her chief complaint against her captors is that they didn't allow her to put on her best togs, but carried her off in a Mother Hubbard.

**Utility of Sheep.** In Eastern Australia, 100,000,000 sheep now find sustenance in a region which thirty years ago was a sandy desert. The sheep gradually trampled the soil into firmness, so that it now grows a dense mass of vegetation.



Sir Walter Besant has written a volume of "drawing-room plays" in collaboration with Mr. Walter Pollock. Kansas has a new monthly magazine called Western Homes. It is published at Topeka, is edited by J. S. C. Thompson, and claims to be the first distinctly home magazine published west of Chicago.

Mrs. Craigie has finished her novel, "The School for Saints," which will be published by T. Fisher Unwin. The story refers to political life in the middle of the century, and one of the characters is modeled, so it is said, on an eminent politician of the time.

The title of Sarah Grand's forthcoming novel is derived from the name of her heroine. "The Beth Book" is the story of Elizabeth, a child who develops into a woman of genius. This is the first novel which the author has written since "The Heavenly Twins."

Aubrey de Vere's recollections are about to be published in book form by Edward Arnold. They ought to be highly readable and worthy of preservation, for Aubrey de Vere combines the elasticity and humor of a rare teller of stories with peculiar dignity and loftiness of tone.

It is said that the highest price per word ever paid to an author was paid by Messrs. Scribner to Rudyard Kipling for his railroad story, "No. 007," published in Scribner's. The story numbers over seven thousand words, and the price paid was about \$1,500, covering all serial rights. This is 20 cents a word.

Marion Crawford's forthcoming novel, "Corleone," is unusually full of thrilling dramatic action. A good evidence of this author's popularity may be seen in the statement of his publishers that three weeks before the day set for the appearance of the book they were in receipt of orders amounting to twice the number printed for a first edition.

Of Mr. Crockett's new novel, "Loch-Invar," the hero is a young cavalier driven by adverse circumstances to serve as a common soldier in the regiments of the Prince of Orange. His sweetheart is kidnapped and carried to a lonely island whither he follows to her rescue. Their luck is again crossed, however, and the cavalier gets renewed fighting with "Bonnie Dundee."

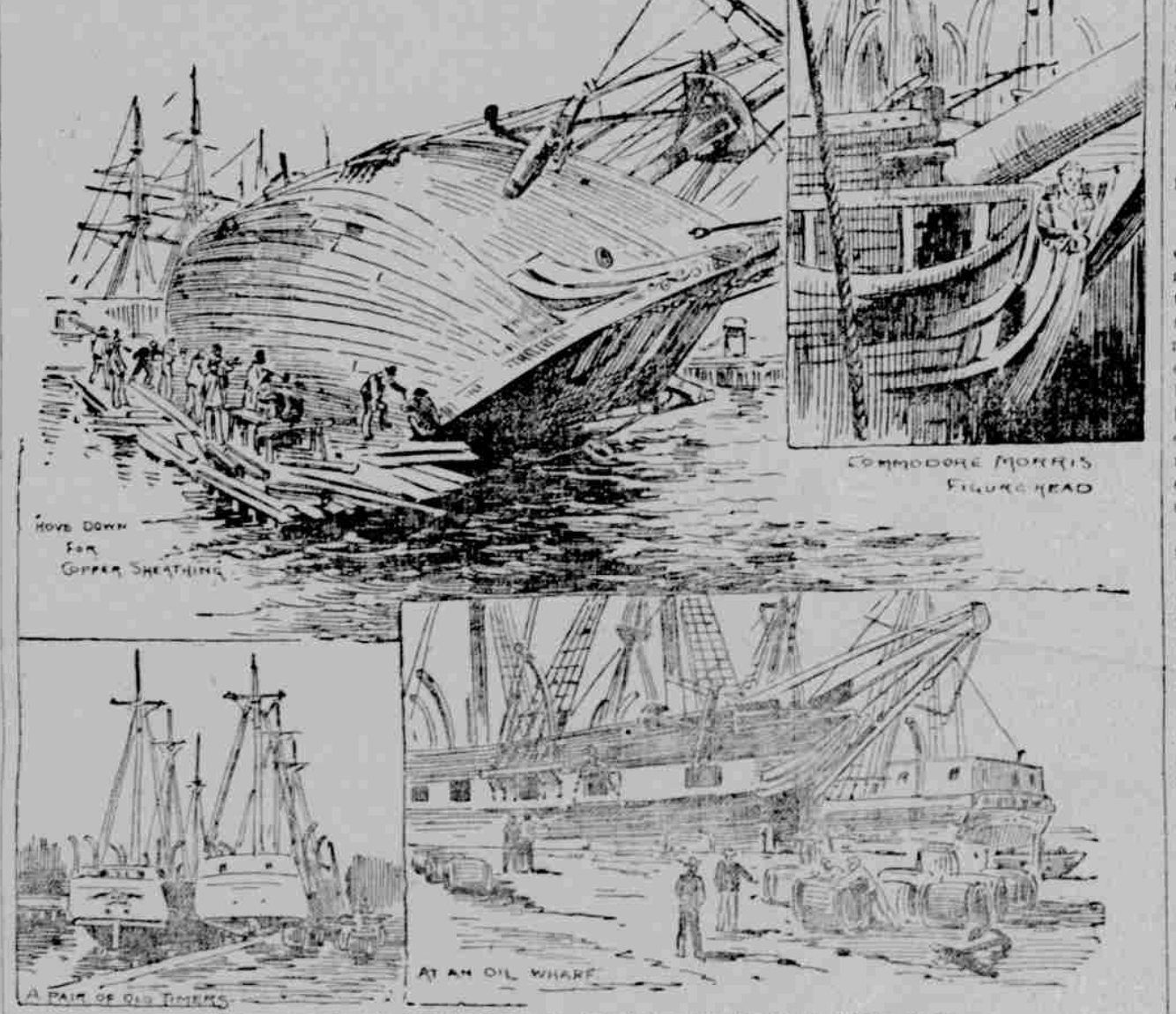
The juvenile books announced by the Messrs. Appleton are as follows: "True to His Home," a story of the boyhood of Franklin, by Hezekiah Butterworth, illustrated by H. Winthrop Pierce; "The Red Patriot," by W. O. Stoddard, illustrated by B. West Cline; "The Exploits of Myles Standish," by Henry Johnson, illustrated; and "Commodore Blandford," by James Barnes, illustrated by George Gibbs and others.

**About Perfumes.** The perfumes which are the most agreeable to the senses are not always the most helpful to the nerves, says the Philadelphia Times. Ambergris, for instance, is positively offensive to many, yet it is said to possess a wonderful power of clearing the brain and driving away those evil spirits known as the "blues." On the other hand, attar of roses, with the suggestion of glowing sins and gorgeous eastern bazaars, predisposes one to tears. A faint odor of musk acts as a tonic, while civet brings drowsiness of soul, for which the best antidote is the pungent odor of sandalwood. The fragrance of citron is as soothing to nervous people as far-off music.

Many perfumes delightful in the open air become particularly disagreeable in a close room. A whole evening can be spoiled by the presence of tuberoses or lilies in a reception room. Their strong fragrance has a very bad effect. Magnolia blossoms, too, have a delightful perfume in their native grove, but woe to her who sleeps through the night with a single blossom on her pillow. There are many fragrant flowers, such as carnations, clove plinks, sweet-brier and apple blossoms, that are as beneficial as they are sweet scented.

A vivid perfume is nearly always bracing, while a subtle one is generally enervating. One may become positively intoxicated by the odor of the peach, almond, wild cherry and other blossoms of the same class, because they contain a suggestion of prussic acid.

**No More Whistling.** An old gentleman recently remarked as to how much less whistling is now heard on the streets than when he was a boy. "Why," said he, "when I was an apprentice lad we all whistled. There was whistling, whistling by every bright young lad you met." Being asked how he accounted for the change in this respect, he replied: "Well, I will tell you one reason. Our young lads can't whistle now because they have 'cigarettes in their mouths.' And there is too much truth in that remark."



NEW BEDFORD RELICS OF A GREAT AND HEROIC INDUSTRY.

devised this craft built for speed, stability and buoyancy. These twenty-four-foot boats, sterned for a mast, and arranged for six galleys, with platforms at each end for lances and sternmen, have brought more wealth from the netter world of the deep than can be computed. Aside from their complete equipment their distinctive furnishing is a tub, where spirally coiled in concentric layers, of 300 fathoms, is the whale line. This line is a main rope, two-thirds of an inch in thickness, and measures something over 200 fathoms. This line is attached to the harpoon, and the other end is unattached, first, as a matter of safety; second, for fastening to a second line should the whale "wound" so deep as to take up the entire length of line. (Specially records an instance where the quantity of line withdrawn from the different boats engaged in the capture of one whale amounted to 10,400 yards, or nearly six English miles.) The upper end

terminal had a great porpoise grant from the crown, setting and seasoning the meat like veal balls. Zogorand, an old-time doctor, recommended strips of blubber for infants as very juicy and nutritious. In the case of a small sperm whale the brains are assumed a fine dish by epicures. The strips of blubber are called "fritters" and taste like pork cracklings; on the whalers, however, they are used for feeding the flames that try out the oil. Whalers wrecked in Greenland have been known to subsist upon moist scraps of blubber that had been left ashore, which is a tribute to their nourishing quality, in a pinch.

In the order of levitians, the sperm whale and the right whale are the most important, as the only ones regularly hunted for by man. The external difference between them is mainly marked in their heads, the sperm species having a symmetry that is lacking in the right, whose chief treasure is whalebone. Cant over the sperm whale's head that it may lie bottom up, and have a peep down the mouth. What a really beautiful mouth! From floor to ceiling, papered with a glistening, white membrane, glossy as bridal satins. Pry up the lower jaw and expose its rows of great ivory teeth, it seems a terrific portulak, and such, alas! it proves to many a poor wight in the fishery, upon whom its spikes fall with impaling force. But far more terrible is it to behold, when fathoms down in the sea you see some sulky, harpooned whale, floating there suspended by his prodigious jaw, some fifteen feet long, hanging straight down at right angles with his body, for all the world like a ship's jibboom.

**The Powerful Lower Jaw.** The lower jaw can be unripped by a practical artist and hoisted on deck for the purpose of extracting the ivory teeth that the sailors decorate with India ink designs, and the hard, white whalebone that they fashion into canes and whip handles during their long days of inactivity. There are forty-two teeth, those in old whales much worn down, but never decayed.

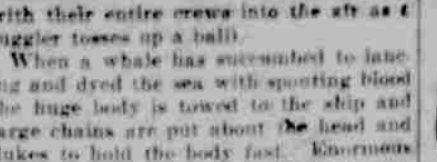
One of the darest tragedies of the ocean resulted from a whale sinking the whaleship Essex, Nov. 16, 1819. The infuriated monster first struck the ship just forward the forechairs, with a tremendous shock that started her butts. The fast ship was settling when the whale returned and struck her under the cat-head, and completely stove in her bows. Some of the survivors of the crew drifted in open boats for three months, their lives being sustained by cannibalism. As for the head of the right whale look at that hanging lip; what a mammoth sulky and point! By measuring it is twenty feet long and five feet deep, and will yield you some 500 gallons of oil or more. The roof of the mouth is about twelve feet high, and runs up to a sharp angle, like a ridge pole; while these ribbed, red, hairy sides present as with those wretched vertical scimiter-shaped sets of whalebone, say 300 on a side, which, depending

sperm whale in its pure limpid and odoriferous state; but in this previous substance freed unalloyed in any other part of the creature. A large whale's "case" yields 500 gallons of sperm. In a whale eighty feet long the head is about twenty-six feet long. One may assume that the blubber is the epididymis, it has something of the consistency of close-grained beef, but tougher, more elastic, and compact, and ranges from eight to ten, or even fifteen inches in thickness. In the case of a large sperm whale there will be a blubber yield of 100 barrels of oil. When one considers that this only represents three-fourths of the entire coat, and that ten barrels to the ton is a fair allotment, one may guess that a whale weighs as much as a small locomotive.

**Sperm Whale's Characteristics.** The sperm whale, like other levitians, but unlike other fish, breathes indifferently at all seasons. Again it is warm-blooded and requires air to fill the lungs. The breathing is done through the spiracle or hole in the top of his head; not through his mouth, which is eight feet below the surface when the big fish comes up to "blow" and inhale; something like an hourly process.

Aside from the wide expanding and massive jaw of the sperm whale his tail is his powerful arm of defense. To begin with, at that point where it tapers to the girth of a man, it compresses on its upper surface an area of fifty square feet; the compact body of its root expanding into two broad flukes, shoaling away to less than an inch in thickness. The entire member is a webbed bed of wedged sinews, with subtle elasticity and amazing strength, that sends the owner through the sea like a flash, flourishes gloriously graceful in the sunshine as he dives, or deals out death in a stroke when viciously aiming at a whaleboat (during boats

face when the big fish comes up to "blow" and inhale; something like an hourly process.



FAST TO A FISH.

face when the big fish comes up to "blow" and inhale; something like an hourly process.

Aside from the wide expanding and massive jaw of the sperm whale his tail is his powerful arm of defense.

To begin with, at that point where it tapers to the girth of a man, it compresses on its upper surface an area of fifty square feet; the compact body of its root expanding into two broad flukes, shoaling away to less than an inch in thickness.

The entire member is a webbed bed of wedged sinews, with subtle elasticity and amazing strength, that sends the owner through the sea like a flash, flourishes gloriously graceful in the sunshine as he dives, or deals out death in a stroke when viciously aiming at a whaleboat (during boats

face when the big fish comes up to "blow" and inhale; something like an hourly process.

Aside from the wide expanding and massive jaw of the sperm whale his tail is his powerful arm of defense.

To begin with, at that point where it tapers to the girth of a man, it compresses on its upper surface an area of fifty square feet; the compact body of its root expanding into two broad flukes, shoaling away to less than an inch in thickness.

The entire member is a webbed bed of wedged sinews, with subtle elasticity and amazing strength, that sends the owner through the sea like a flash, flourishes gloriously graceful in the sunshine as he dives, or deals out death in a stroke when viciously aiming at a whaleboat (during boats

face when the big fish comes up to "blow" and inhale; something like an hourly process.

Aside from the wide expanding and massive jaw of the sperm whale his tail is his powerful arm of defense.

To begin with, at that point where it tapers to the girth of a man, it compresses on its upper surface an area of fifty square feet; the compact body of its root expanding into two broad flukes, shoaling away to less than an inch in thickness.

The entire member is a webbed bed of wedged sinews, with subtle elasticity and amazing strength, that sends the owner through the sea like a flash, flourishes gloriously graceful in the sunshine as he dives, or deals out death in a stroke when viciously aiming at a whaleboat (during boats

face when the big fish comes up to "blow" and inhale; something like an hourly process.

Aside from the wide expanding and massive jaw of the sperm whale his tail is his powerful arm of defense.



PERILS OF THE CHASE.

The master, Captain Taylor, extended an invitation to go into the cabin. The steps inclined at 90 degrees and were very slippery; so we descended on the air line, so to speak. The little room was about seven by eight feet, with three open berths on a side and a small folding table in the center. Things were neat enough, and lockers all about the sides and under the berths showed where things not in use were preserved. A trap door in the floor opened into the lazarette, where the table delicacies were stored.

In the Captain's Cabin. The captain's wife, a delicate and refined little woman, had made a number of voyages with him, and found this cabin quite comfortable. The apartment was cozy and distinctly "swell" compared to the forecabin, up in the bow, where the sailors smoked and slept and "span out" every day. They were packed in like sardines. Only a limited supply of light and air can get through the little hatch,