

therefore nearer the place of its growth; then again, there is no evidence that any drift-wood, or other terrestrial product, is found in the Sargasso Sea; and in the third place, the currents that have already been spoken of, appear rather to set from it, thus indicating that it has a higher level than other parts of the ocean. That such difference of level has a physical cause, there can be no reasonable question.

To connect the previous part of our subject with the currents of the Southern Atlantic, we return to the Equatorial Stream. This was met by us, as has been seen, in latitude 3° S. To avoid the difficulties that this stream may cause, vessels outward-bound ought so to shape their course as to avoid entering it too soon. Should they neglect this, they may be set behind or to the westward of Cape St. Roque. For the same reason, the further to the westward the equator is crossed on the return voyage, the better. These directions have sometimes been ascribed wholly to the winds, which are represented as scant and unfavourable in places other than those which the current would render favourable for crossing the line. This may be in some degree true, for the winds which in these parts of the ocean are always light, may be affected and drawn along with so rapid a stream. The polar origin of this Equatorial Stream will be rendered more probable from the relative temperatures of the parts of the ocean whence it flows, and of those where no current prevails.

On the south coast of Brazil a current is found setting at first to the southwest, and gradually changing its direction to south, until at the mouth of the La Plata it ceases to be experienced, but appears then to incline to the eastward, and spreads itself over the surface of the Southern Atlantic. This is a phenomenon whose analogy to our Gulf Stream cannot fail to be observed, and the resemblance becomes stronger when it is seen that off the mouth of the La Plata it is met by the Patagonian Current, a branch of the Great South Polar Stream, that comes round Cape Horn, and sets along the coast of the country whence it is named. This stream seems, like that of Labrador, to throw a branch (that has been mistaken for an eddy) between the southwest current and the coast. Such at least would appear to be the case from the extent to which low temperatures prevail northwards, as was particularly noted off Cape Frio, and is exhibited in the direction of the isothermal lines on the chart.

The main body of this, or perhaps another southern polar stream that enters the Atlantic, is often encountered on the surface to the northward and eastward of the Falkland Islands. At times, icebergs are borne along by it to the northeast, and in the neighbourhood of those islands the whole sea has been described as occasionally covered