

become or continue superficial at the southern promontories of the continents. A similar cause, operating to a less extent, raises them, if submarine, when they are interrupted or impeded by islands, and spreads water of low temperature over the surface. Here then, at the proper season, the food of the whale will be not only more accessible, but more abundant within a given space, in consequence of the check the velocity of the stream must experience.

So also in the zones of calms we have seen that the matter borne by the polar currents in all probability finds a resting-place; and here also, at fit seasons, the food of the whale must be abundant. Points possessing either of these characteristics I have distinguished, as before stated, by the name of nuclei.

However satisfactory this theory may be in explaining the causes of the migratory habits of the sperm whale, it is obvious that we do not know enough of the natural history of his favourite food, nor of the rate and course of all the submarine polar currents, to enable us to predict with certainty the seasons at which he will be found in particular parts of the ocean. This can be learned by observation alone, and long experience has taught those who are skilful in the whale-fishery the position of the favourite haunts of their prey, and the times at which they are most likely to be met with there. Comparing these points and the nuclei of the currents, as observed and explained in the preceding pages, the coincidence will strike every one who will examine the subject; and when all the facts necessary to illustrate this subject shall be ascertained, theory may serve in some degree to shorten the apprenticeship which is now necessary in order to acquire the requisite knowledge of the places and seasons wherein to meet the game in this adventurous employment; the object therefore of the residue of this chapter will be devoted to whaling, and to point out the results which our own observations, with the information derived from others, has afforded.

The whaling interest, taking into consideration the extent to which it has been carried by our countrymen, may be almost claimed as peculiarly American. There are few employments in which the enterprise and industry of our countrymen are so well developed as in this, or in which so much hardihood or so many resources are required to insure success.

Our whaling fleet may be said at this very day to whiten the Pacific Ocean with its canvass, and the proceeds of this fishery give comfort and happiness to many thousands of our citizens. The ramifications of the business extend to all branches of trade, are spread through the whole Union, and its direct or secondary influence would seem to