

recommend it to the especial protection and fostering care of the government.

As it was among the first objects of the Exploring Expedition to render the dangerous path of these enterprising mariners more safe, I trust it will have been perceived, that throughout the operations of the squadron, this interest has never been lost sight of. In fact, it has always been my constant study to endeavour to accomplish whatever could tend to its benefit. In the course of the various and devious voyages we have made, the greatest attention has been paid to the winds and currents; and from my investigations, I hope to be able to point out the most feasible routes by which to gain the proper cruising-grounds, and to define their localities more clearly than has hitherto been done.

Among other duties, we were called upon to administer chastisement for the murder of portions of the crews of whale-ships, as well as of persons belonging to the squadron, which was done not as a vindictive retaliation, but to convince the natives that their attacks on vessels bearing our flag cannot pass with impunity.

In all places we have endeavoured to foster a good feeling, to establish a system of fair dealing, to win confidence, and to act justly. The knowledge of the native character which I have obtained, and have recorded in the preceding pages, will, I hope, be of use in preserving a good understanding between them and those who follow us; rules and regulations were agreed upon in many places with the chiefs, for the purpose of rendering the property and lives of our citizens more secure in their visits to the ports of the islands; and it is to be hoped that they will be strictly observed on the part of American vessels.

The Expedition has done much by its surveys and explorations to make the islands, their anchorages and harbours, better known; and very many doubtful shoals, reefs, and islands have been carefully searched for. Particular information respecting these dangers will be embraced in the Hydrographical Memoir.

Our whaling fleet now counts six hundred and seventy-five vessels, the greater part of which are ships of four hundred tons burden, amounting in all to two hundred thousand tons. The majority of these vessels cruise in the Pacific Ocean. Between fifteen and sixteen thousand of our countrymen are required to man these vessels, half of whom go to sea for the first time as "green hands," and return after a voyage of fatigue and hazard, transformed into sailors.

The value of the whale fleet is estimated at not less than twenty-five millions of dollars, yielding an annual return of five millions, ex-