

tracted from the ocean by hard toil, exposure, and danger. The estimated quantity of oil imported into the United States is about four hundred thousand barrels, nearly one-half of which is sperm oil.

It might be said that the employment of so large a number of persons is not constant, because many of the vessels are always to be found in our harbours. But it is well known that the same number of hands are employed in port as at sea; and I believe, from my own observation, and the statements of others, that so far from falling below the estimate, the number of persons actually engaged in this business would greatly exceed the registry of the crews, as our ships are constantly in the practice of taking on board extra hands from the Azores, Cape de Verdes, and South Sea islands, which would probably amount to an eighth or a tenth more.

The number of those on shore to whom this branch of business gives employment, will readily be admitted to be twice as great as that of the crews. When we add to this profitable occupation of so many persons, the value of the domestic products consumed by them, and the benefit that is thus conferred upon both our agricultural and manufacturing interests, the importance of this branch of business will appear greatly enhanced.

By a large majority of persons, it is believed that the whale-fishery is a mere lottery, in which success is more owing to good luck than to good management. Those, however, who entertain such an opinion, are in error. There is, perhaps, no employment on the ocean wherein a sound judgment is more necessary, and no business where success depends more upon the experience, enterprise, and industry, of the commander, than in that of whaling.

Voyages may indeed be made by incompetent persons, and by fortuitous circumstances success may be obtained; but those who are well acquainted with the business, will almost certainly "fill up" in the time allotted to a voyage, and frequently in a much shorter period.

There are two kinds of whales that are principally the object of search by our whalers. These are the sperm whale (*Macrocephalus*) and the right whale (*Mysticetus*). These two animals differ exceedingly, both in their form and in their habits. The first is furnished with teeth, the last with a collection of laminæ; they are therefore adapted to different kinds of food: the former feeds on the large medusæ of the ocean, termed by the whalers squid; the other on small crustacea, and small fish. Their feeding-grounds are seldom in the same places; for, while the latter frequents the coasts and bays, the former is seldom found except in the deep sea, and generally far from the land.