

surrounded on the beach by from thirty to forty desperate-looking wretches, more or less armed. Of these, Harrison became the spokesman, declaring that they had taken the boat and meant to keep it, at the risk of his and all the party's lives, to which speech they all signified their assent. Captain Brown repeatedly cautioned them against such acts of piracy; but his caution was received with curses and all kinds of abuse, and finally a pistol was presented, with the declaration that he, Harrison, would blow out the brains of Captain Brown if he attempted to rescue the boat."

Such has been the indiscriminate manner in which the whales have been slaughtered, both old and young, that these haunts have of late years been less frequented by them.

The right whale is found of much larger size in high latitudes than in low, and not unfrequently yields, when taken in these latitudes, as much as one hundred and eighty barrels of oil. Besides the oil, the whale-bone produces some profit. A large number of these whales were seen by us in the bays about Cape Horn, in the months of March and April; but the weather there is seldom favourable to the use of boats, and would of course preclude success in carrying on such a business.

On soundings, and in shoal water, attempts have been made to capture a different species of whale, called the humpback (*Gibbosa*); but there is a great impediment to the securing of the spoils of this game, for when killed they immediately sink for thirty or forty hours. It therefore becomes necessary, either to anchor a boat near by to watch them, or leave a buoy, and then not unfrequently they may be swept off by the under-current, or lost by bad weather.

Although the high latitudes offer great inducements on account of the number and size of the whales, yet there are many difficulties existing, that render it preferable to pursue the game in the low latitudes. The weather, even in the summer season, is often tempestuous, which makes it dangerous to lower boats; and there are, even in the fine season, fogs, which not only tantalize, but prevent the chase from being extended to any distance from the ship, without the risk of losing both boats and crew. I have been told that it has frequently happened that boats have been separated from the ship for several days; thus not only producing great anxiety, but often much distress from want of provisions and water. Our whalers feel that there is quite enough of adventure and peril in following their employment in the lower and less boisterous latitudes.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the favourite and most successful ground for the right whale, is between the fiftieth and fifty-fifth parallel of north latitude, where vast numbers have been recently taken in June