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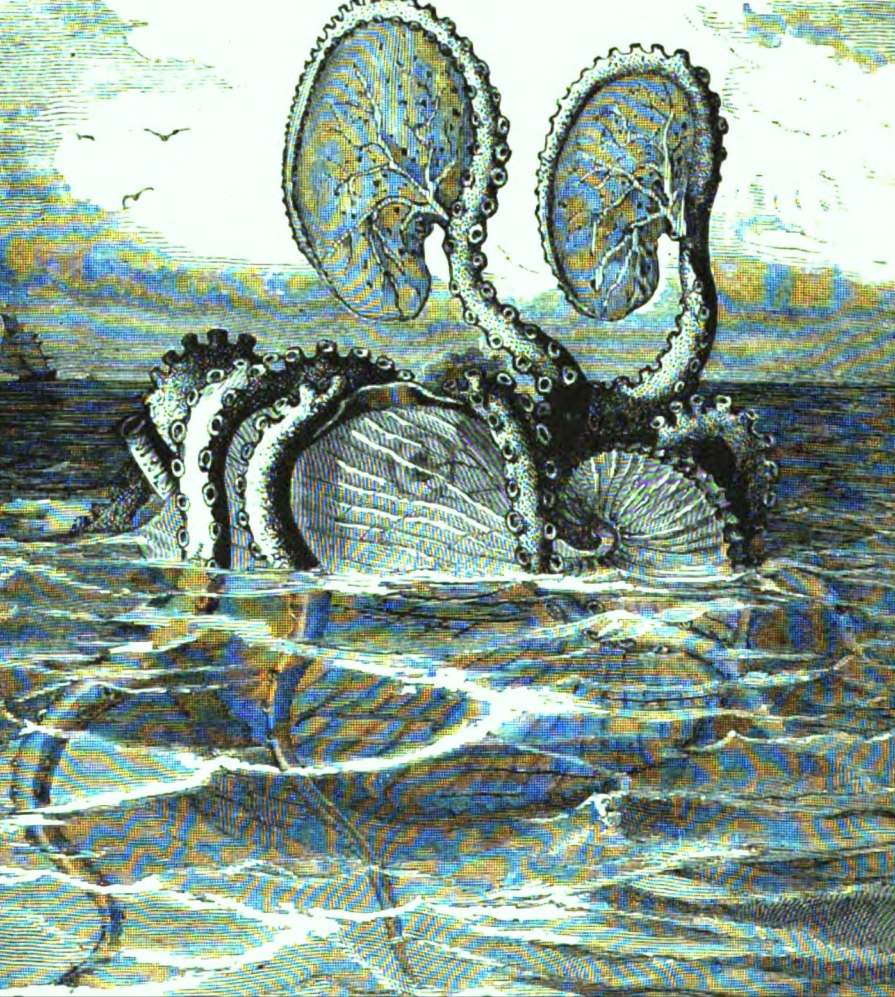
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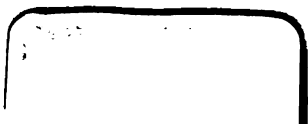
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*The broad, broad ocean  
and some of its inhabitants*

William Jones

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THE BROAD, BROAD OCEAN.











THE  
BROAD, BROAD OCEAN

AND  
SOME OF ITS INHABITANTS.

BY WILLIAM JONES, F.S.A.,  
AUTHOR OF THE "TREASURES OF THE EARTH," ETC.

"Thy universal works are full of Thine,  
The least, the greatest—each and all divine!  
While Nature, eloquent of Deity,  
Holds everywhere her mild triumphant sign,  
Through which Thine everlasting glories shine!  
The changing seasons and the march of time,  
The trees, the flowers, the fields, the rivers, Thine!  
Heaven, earth, and sea, in one harmonious chime,  
Hymn forth the Holy God—the Beautiful—Sublime!"

MÜLLER.

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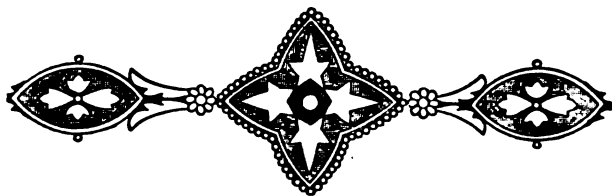
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TO MY YOUNGEST SON,  
CUTHBERT,  
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.





## P R E F A C E .



**H**AVE endeavoured, in the following pages, to impress upon the youthful mind some of the grand and wonderful objects of creative excellence in the "Broad, Broad Ocean." The subject is exhaustless. I have been able only to treat upon a few of its most salient and interesting features, such as the young—always ardent and impressionable—would be most likely to appreciate.

A portion of this volume was written at a very sequestered coast of North Devon—Croyde Bay, a few miles from Barnstaple, where I had ample opportunities of witnessing a glorious expanse of ocean in all its features: calm and serene as Wordsworth describes it—

“The gentleness of Heaven is on the sea.  
Listen! The Mighty Being is awake,  
And doth with His eternal motion make  
A sound like thunder, everlastingly;”

or in tempestuous gales, when we see

“The ambitious ocean swell, and rage, and foam,  
To be exalted with the threatening clouds.”

My youngsters were lively amateur fishers, captors of prawns and

shrimps, and occasional takers of small strange fish, the birth and parentage of which became a marine study to us in the evening. I find that occasional visits to the sea-side open the young inquiring mind, and prepare it for the reception of more serious and thoughtful studies of the ocean—

“The paragon of elemental powers,  
Mystery of waters, never-slumbering sea!  
Impassioned orator with lips sublime,  
Whose waves are arguments which prove a God.”

I trust that the present work will be received with the same favour as its “companion” volume, the “Treasures of the Earth,” which, although but recently published, has had the honour of a second edition.

BROADGATE,  
BARNSTAPLE.



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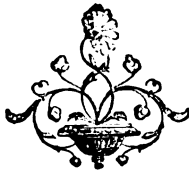
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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### MARINE PRODIGES.

“God quickened in the seas and in the rivers  
So many fishes of so many features,  
That in the waters we may all see creatures,  
Even all that on the earth are to be found,  
As if the world were in deep waters drown'd.  
For seas, as well as skies, have sun, moon, stars,  
As well as air, swallows, rooks, and stares,  
As well as earth, vines, roses, nettles, melons,  
Mushrooms, pinks, gillyflowers, and many millions  
Of other plants more rare, more strange than these,  
*As very fishes living in the seas:*  
As also rams, calves, horses, hares, and hogs,  
Wolves, urchins, lions, elephants, and dogs;  
Yea, *men and maids*, and which I most admire,  
*The mitred bishop and the couled friar;*  
Of which examples, but a few years since,  
Were shown the Norway and Polanian prince.”

DU BARTAS.



THE regions of fable are unbounded; and probably no department of Nature is so prolific in supplying food for the wildest fancies of the imagination than the great unfathomed ocean depths, which conceal so many mysteries.

The ancients had their sea-divinities and monsters in profusion. It is true that the powerful mind of Aristotle, the great father of early philosophy, rejected with disdain the credulous tales and fabulous

stories of his age in regard to natural history ; but the writings of Pliny, the natural historian, abound in prodigies and absurdities, as also those of Ælian, and other ancient authors. For many centuries a mist of doubt, error, and fanciful credulity prevailed with regard to the inhabitants of the ocean. Even in 1554 a work on fishes by Rondelet, a physician at Montpellier, although written with tolerable exactitude in some particulars, concludes with a chapter illustrated by grotesque figures of certain marine monsters; amongst others, a fish dressed as a monk, and a "bishop-fish" in full pontificals. Where the extraordinary originals, from which these cuts were taken, came from, is not known; but they were probably fabricated in the true Barnum style from the skins of some large species of sharks or rays, by the priests of that period, to excite the superstitious veneration of the people, and persuade them, as Du Bartas, in the quotation at the head of this chapter, wishes us to believe, that even the sea contains bishops and monks.

Until the commencement of the seventeenth century, nothing like a dawn of true light with regard to natural history seemed to strike upon the popular mind. A laborious but very credulous professor at Bologna, Aldrovandus, wrote no less than fourteen folio volumes on the subject, published in 1640; but the true and the false, fable and nonsense, are strangely intermixed. Some of the engravings in these books are very curious, and give an idea of the exaggerative style of their contents. These we have, magnified in every extent, by succeeding writers.

The *Kraken*, described by Pontoppidan in his "Natural History of Norway," is one of the most extraordinary of these wonderful sea-monsters, and claims the peculiar privilege of the wide domain of the Norwegian waters.

"Our fishermen usually affirm," says this writer, "that, when they row out several miles to sea, particularly in hot summer days, they are informed by various circumstances that the kraken is at the bottom of the sea. Sometimes twenty boats get together over him, and when, from well-known indications, they perceive it is rising, they get away as fast as they can. When they find themselves out of danger, they lie upon their oars, and in a few minutes they see the

monster come to the surface. He there shows himself sufficiently, though only a small part of his body appears. Its back, *which appears to be a mile and a half in circumference*, looks at first like a number of small islands, surrounded with something which floats like seaweeds; here and there a large rising is observed like sand-banks; at last, several bright points or horns appear, which grow thicker the higher they rise, and sometimes they stand up as high and as large as the masts of middle-sized vessels. It seems these are the creature's arms, and it is said, if they were to lay hold of the largest man-of-war, they would pull it down to the bottom. After the monster has been a short time on the water, he begins slowly to sink again; and then the danger is as great as before, because the motion of the sinking causes such a swell and such an eddy or whirlpool that he carries everything before it."

Such is the description of the fabulous kraken. Divested of its supernatural powers and dimensions, there may be some foundations for these exaggerations in the occasional appearances of huge cephalopods (molluscous animals having the head covered with tentacula or feelers, serving as feet), to the general characters of which the description given of its form and monstrous arms sufficiently agrees. Many such animals are known to exist in some seas, and there are reasons for believing that much larger creatures of the same species exist.

It is a favourite notion of Pontoppidan that from the appearance of the kraken originate those dim traditions of floating islands being observed in the North seas. It has been sought to identify the cuttle-fish of enormous size with the kraken, and stories are told of men having been drawn over the sides of vessels by their enormous arms. In 1834, Captain Neill, of the ship "Robertson," of Greenock, saw the head and snout of a great sea-monster, of which a sketch was taken at the time. It appeared like a vessel lying on her beam-ends. The "Robertson" was hauled up so as to near it, and it was discovered to be the head and snout of a great fish swimming to windward: immediately above the water, its eye was seen like a large deep hole. The part of the head which was above the water measured about twelve feet, and its width

twenty-five feet. The snout was about fifty feet long, and the sea occasionally rippled over one part, leaving other parts dry and uncovered. Several records exist in Scotland of the appearance of similar animals to that which have been noticed, but the result appears to infer the existence of some enormous cuttle-fish, possessed of characters which distinguish it essentially from every other creature with which we are familiar. Pliny's vast animal, with prodigious arms, which impeded the navigation of the Straits of Gibraltar, would seem to have had a family likeness to the kraken.

The great *Sea-Serpent* appears to have some analogy to the same monster as I have described, and here again the sapient Pontopidan raises our eyes in astonishment at his description of this marine prodigy, which he describes as six hundred feet in length, lying in the water in many folds, and appearing like many hog-heads floating in a line at a considerable distance from each other. Such a creature is said to have been seen on the coast of Norway, in 1819, for a whole month, seeming to doze in the sunbeams. In 1822 and 1837, it is said to have reappeared in the same waters. The Americans, not to be outdone by the Norwegians, relate several cases in which prodigious sea-serpents have been seen in the Atlantic, opinions varying as to the length of the animals, averaging from eighty feet to two hundred and fifty yards, making curves "perpendicular to the water, and with eyes brilliant and glistening."

Our own sailors have also their account in the prodigy witnessed in 1848, in the South Atlantic Ocean, not far from the coast of Africa, by the officers and crew of H.M.S. "Dædalus." In the "Illustrated London News" of 28th October, 1848, may be seen engravings of this strange monster, from sketches by Captain McQuhae, the commander of the vessel. According to the account forwarded to the Admiralty, the animal was seen not in bright and fine weather, but with a murky atmosphere, and with a long ocean swell. It was swimming rapidly, and with its head and neck above water, and appeared an enormous serpent, with head and shoulders kept about four feet constantly above the surface of the sea. It passed so close under the lee-quarter of the vessel, that its features were easily recognized. The diameter of

the serpent was about fifteen or sixteen inches behind the head, and the animal was never, during the twenty minutes that it continued in sight, once below the surface of the water. The colour was a dark brown, with yellowish-white about the throat. It had no fins, but something like the mane of a horse, or rather a bunch of sea-weed, washed about its back.

Our great anatomist, Dr. Owen, has expressed much doubt as to the existence of a great sea-serpent, on the ground that no bones or other remains of such recent animal have been found. Notwithstanding this high authority, it may be, however, that many animals in the ocean depths, of this character, are still unknown to us. As some proof of this, I may mention, that nine years after this occurrence, in 1857, a similar creature was seen by the officers and crew of the ship "Castilian," bound from Bombay to Liverpool. This event occurred at six in the evening, about ten miles distant from St. Helena. A monster suddenly appeared in the water. The chief facts are in the captain's (Harrington) own words :

"While myself and officers were standing on the lee-side of the poop, looking towards the island, we were startled by the sight of a huge marine animal, which reared its head out of the water within twenty yards of the ship, when it suddenly disappeared for about half a minute, and then made its appearance in the same manner again, showing us distinctly its neck and head, about ten or twelve feet out of the water. The diameter of the head was about seven or eight feet in the largest part, with a tuft of loose skin circling it about two feet from the top. The water was discoloured for several hundred feet from its head, so much so, that on its first appearance my impression was that the ship was in broken water, produced, as I supposed, by some volcanic agency since the last time I passed the island ; but the second appearance completely dispelled these fears, and assured us it was a monster of extraordinary length, which appeared to be moving slowly towards the land. The ship was going too fast to enable us to reach the mast-head in time to form a correct estimate of its extreme length ; but from what we saw from the deck, we conclude that it must have been over two hundred feet long. The boatswain and several of the crew who observed

it from the top-gallant fore-castle, state that it was more than double the length of the ship, in which case it must have been five hundred feet long. Be that as it may, I am convinced that it must have belonged to the serpent tribe : it was of a dark colour about the head, and was covered with several white spots."

Captain Harrington, some time afterwards, strengthened his testimony by that of other persons. The conclusion, however, seems to be that the animal actually seen by the captains of the "Dædalus" and the "Castilian" was, most probably, a species of seal known to inhabit the South Seas.

It has been supposed that large fishes of the *Ribbon* family may have given rise to some of the stories about the great sea-serpent. One was lately captured at the Bermudas, apparently an immature fish, but more than sixteen feet in length, and with a row of long flexible filaments, or slender threads, on the back of the head and anterior parts of the back, which might well represent the *mane* alluded to as an appendage of the serpent prodigy. The fishes of this kind are inhabitants of great depths in the ocean, and this may account for the rarity of their appearance. One species belongs to the Northern Seas, where the appearance of the sea-serpent has been particularly recorded ; others belong to the warmer regions. It may be that these fishes attain to a length that would corroborate the assertions of those who have seen the sea-serpent, making a due allowance for exaggeration under such novel circumstances.

Mr. Adams, naturalist of H.M.S. "Samarang," writing of Sooloo and the Molucca Archipelagoes, remarks : " I have often witnessed the phenomenon which first gave origin to the marvellous stories of the great sea-serpent, namely, lines of rolling porpoises, resembling a long string of buoys often extending a hundred yards. These account for the so-named protuberances of the serpent's back. They keep in close single file, progressing rapidly along the surface of the water by a succession of leaps, part only of their uncouth forms appearing to the eye."

The serpent in the sea was, at one time, a very general superstition among the heathens, for we find in Isaiah xxvii. 1 : " In that day the Lord with His sore and great strong sword shall punish

leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and He shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

In the prose "Edda," a collection of Scandinavian mythology dating from the thirteenth century, there is a story how Thor, the second in rank of the Northern deities, went to fish for the Midgard sea-serpent. It is curious as showing the origin of the popular delusions of the Northern people revived, as we have seen, by Pontoppidan and others, with regard to the kraken and the monstrous serpent. Thor went out of Midgard under the disguise of a young man, and came at dusk to the dwelling of a giant called Hymir. Here he passed the night, but at break of day, when he perceived that the giant was preparing his boat for fishing, he arose and dressed himself, and begged Hymir to let him row out to sea with him. The giant answered that a puny stripling like he was could be of no use to him, and would not venture so far, or remain out so long at sea as he was accustomed to. Thor declared that he would, and felt so enraged at the surly manners of the giant, that he was inclined to let his mallet ring on the head of the savage, but he stifled his wrath, and asked Hymir what he meant to bait with. Hymir told him to manage that for himself, and Thor went up to a herd of oxen belonging to the giant, wrung off the head of one of them, and returning with it to the boat, put out to sea with Hymir. Thor rowed aft with two oars, and with such force that his companion, who rowed at the prow, saw with surprise how swiftly the vessel was driven forwards. He then said that they were come to the place where he usually angled for flat-fish, but Thor would not stop, but rowed on until Hymir cried out that there would be danger from the great Midgard serpent. In spite of these remonstrances, however, it was some time before Thor would lay down his oars. He then took out a fishing-line, exceedingly strong, furnished with a powerful hook, on which he fixed the bull's head, and cast the line into the sea. The bait soon reached the bottom; the huge serpent greedily caught at it, and the hook stuck fast in his palate. Stung with the pain, the monster tugged so violently that Thor was obliged to hold fast with both hands by the oar-pegs; but his wrath now waxed high, and assuming all his

divine power and colossal dimensions, he pulled so hard at the line that his feet forced their way through the boat and went down to the bottom of the sea, whilst with his two hands he drew up the serpent. A dreadful scene now took place, Thor darting looks of fierce anger at the monster as it reared its head, spouting out floods of venom upon him. When Hymir saw the serpent he turned pale and trembled with affright, as we may reasonably suppose; and finding himself sinking with the boat, drew out his knife and cut the line, on which the serpent sank again under water. Thor, however, launched his mallet at the monster, and some say struck off its head at the bottom of the sea, while others affirm that the monster still lives in the depths of the ocean. Thor then struck Hymir such a blow with his fist that the giant fell dead headlong into the water; and the god, wading through the ocean with rapid strides, came to land again.

The old Northern writers, like many others of a credulous character, were endowed with very elastic imaginations, and saw most matters through powerful magnifiers. One of this class was Olaus Magnus, Archbishop of Upsal, about the middle of the sixteenth century, who wrote an account of various sea-prodigies. One chapter in his book is "On many kinds of Whales." "Some," he says, "are hairy, and of four acres in bigness: the acre is two hundred and forty feet long and one hundred and twenty broad." Another kind "hath eyes so large that fifteen men may sit in the room of each of them, and sometimes twenty or more; his horns are six or seven feet long, and he hath two hundred and fifty on each eye, as hard as a horn, that he can stir stiff or gentle, either before or behind." The worthy prelate has another chapter, of "Anchors fastened on Whales' Backs," in which it is stated, "the whale hath upon his skin a superficies like the gravel that is by the sea-side, so that oftentimes, when he raiseth his back above the water, sailors take it to be nothing else than an island, and land upon it, and they strike piles into it, and fasten them to their ships; they kindle fires upon it to boil their meat, until at length the whale, feeling the fire, dives down suddenly into the depth, and draws forth man and ship after him unless the anchor breaks."

Olaus tells of fish on the coast of Norway of most horrible form, having very black square heads of ten or twelve cubits, with huge eyes eight or ten cubits in circumference, the apple of the eye being red and fiery-coloured, which in the dark nights and the deep waters appears to fishermen like a burning lamp; and on the head there being hair, like long goose-feathers, hanging down in manner of a beard. One of these sea-monsters will easily drown many great ships with their mariners.

In another chapter of "The Whirlpool and his Cruelty against the Mariners," Olaus treats it as a stupendous fish. "The whirlpool or prister is of the kind of whales, two hundred cubits long, and very cruel. This beast hath a large and round mouth like a lamprey, whereby he sucks in his meat or water, and will cast such floods above his head that he will often sink the strongest ships. He will sometimes raise himself above the sail-yards, and cruelly overthrow the ship like any small vessel, striking it with his back or tail, which is forked, wherewith he forcibly binds any part of a ship when he twists it about." Olaus affirms that a war-trumpet is the fit remedy against him, by reason of the sharp noise, which he cannot endure, or the sound of cannon, with which he is more frightened than by a cannon-ball, "because this ball loseth its force by the water, or wounds but a little his vast body, being hindered by a mighty rampart of fat."

The archbishop concludes his strange histories with an observation that no one would be rash enough to controvert, that in the great deeps "there are many kinds of fishes that seldom or never are seen by man."

The belief in *Mermaids* and *Mermen*, prevalent through the remotest ages, was also especially strong in the Scandinavian countries, and some traces of the delusions still linger on some of the out-of-way coasts of the Northern seas. A very high antiquity is claimed for these mythic creatures. Ancient history abounds with notices of them. One was called by the Babylonians *Odakon*, and is regarded by Selden as identical with Dagon (from the Hebrew *dag*, "a fish"), the national god of the Philistines, so frequently mentioned in the Scriptures. It is always represented

on medals as half fish and half woman, but the Hebrew writers speak of it as a masculine being. In the excavations of Khorsabad, M. Botta found a figure of Odunes, a creature half man and half fish. At the excavations at Nimroud, Mr. Layard discovered a gigantic figure with a fish's head as a cap, and the body of the fish depending over the shoulders. On the coins of Ascalon is figured a goddess, above whose head is a half-moon, and at her feet a woman with her lower extremities like a fish. It is singular (observes Mr. Gould) how the prevalence of the tales of mermaids exists among Celtic nations, indicating these water-nymphs as having been originally deities of the people. The Peruvians had also their semi-fish gods. These form the types of those imaginary creatures, the subjects of ancient poetry, the Tritons, who were represented as half men and half fish, having power to calm tempests; and probably, too, of the Syrens, whose songs were said to lure the unhappy seamen to destruction.

Innumerable are the stories that are told of mermaids and mermen: they have been made the subject of numberless songs by ancient and modern bards. Shakespere alludes to the vocal powers of these mythic creatures:

“ I heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back  
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath  
That the rude sea grew civil at her song.”

Our own Laureate inquires

“ Who would be  
A mermaid fair?  
Singing alone,  
Combing her hair  
Under the sea,  
In a golden curl,  
With a comb of pearl,  
On a throne?”

In the “*Speculum Regale*,” an Icelandic work of the twelfth century, is the following description of a mermaid: “A monster is seen also near Greenland, like a woman as far down as the waist; long hands and soft hair, the neck and head in all respects

like that of a human being. The hands seem to people to be long, and the fingers not to be parted, but united by a web like that on the feet of water-birds. From the waist downwards this monster resembles a fish, with scales, tail, and fin. This prodigy is supposed to show itself more especially before heavy storms. The habit of this creature is to dive frequently, and rise again to the surface with fishes in its hands. When sailors see it playing with the fish, or throwing them towards the ship, they fear they are doomed to lose several of the crew ; but when it casts the fish, or, turning from the vessel, flings them away from her, the sailors take it as a good omen that they will not suffer loss in an impending storm. The monster has a very horrible face, with broad brow and piercing eyes, a wide mouth, and double chin."

Pontoppidan, from whose "History of Norway" I have already largely quoted, records the appearance of a merman, which was deposed to on oath by several observers. "About a mile from the coast of Denmark, near Landscrona, three sailors, observing something like a dead body floating on the water, rowed towards it. When they came within seven or eight fathoms, it still appeared as at first, for it had not stirred ; but at that instant it sank, and arose almost immediately in the same place. Upon this, out of fear, they lay still and let the boat float, that they might the better examine the monster, which by the help of the current came nearer to them. He turned his face and stared at them, which gave them an opportunity of examining him narrowly. He stood in the same place seven or eight minutes, and was seen on the water above breast-high. At last they grew apprehensive of some danger, and began to retire, upon which the monster blew up his cheeks and made a kind of lowing noise, diving away from view. In regard to his form, they declare that he appeared like an old man, strong limbed, with broad shoulders, but his arms they could not see. His head was small in proportion to his body, and had short black curled hair, which did not reach below his ears. His eyes lay deep in his head, and he had a meagre face with a black beard. About the body downwards this merman was quite pointed like a fish."

Many of the so-called mermaids exhibited in a stuffed condition from time to time have proved sometimes clever, but more frequently bungling "shams." Among the latter may be classed the exhibition of the famous American, Barnum, a few years since, which proved to be the combination of the head of a monkey with the tail of a fish! The probability is that all the stories about these prodigies have originated in the appearance of seals, walruses, to which I have already alluded, and to what are called the herbivorous cetacea, from their living on sea-plants, and which consists amongst others of the manatee of the West Indies, the dugong of the Eastern seas, and the stellerus, an inhabitant of the Polar regions.

I will briefly describe these animals. The best-known species of the *Manatee*, or Lamantin, or Sea-Cow, is found in the West Indies and on the western coasts of tropical America. These sometimes attain a length of twenty feet, and a weight of three or four tons, and they live chiefly in shallow bays and creeks, and in the estuaries of rivers. The skin is very thick and strong, and is almost destitute of hair. The fingers can be readily felt in the swimming paws, and, connected together as they are, possess considerable power of motion, whence the name manatee (from the Latin *manus*, "a hand"). This animal is usually found in herds, which combine for mutual protection when attacked, placing the young in the centre. When one is struck with a harpoon, the others try to tear it out. The females show great affection for their young.

The *Dugong*—numbers of which frequent the coasts of Ceylon, allured by the still waters and the abundance of sea-weeds—is, perhaps, one of the most likely representatives of what is considered a "mermaid" that could be found. There is a rude approach to the human outline in the shape and attitude of the mother dugong while suckling her young, holding it to her breast by one flipper while swimming with the other, the heads of both being above water; and when suddenly disturbed, diving and displaying her fish-like tail. These, together with her habitual demonstrations of strong natural affection, might readily give rise to the fable of the mermaid.

Megasthenes records the existence of a creature in the ocean near Taprobane (Ceylon), with the aspect of a woman; and Ælian, adopting and enlarging on his information, peoples the seas of Ceylon with fishes having the heads of lions, panthers, and rams; and, stranger still, in the form of satyrs! Statements such as these must have had their origin in the hairs which are set round the mouth of the dugong, somewhat resembling a beard. The Portuguese cherished for a long time their belief in the mermaid; and the historian of the proceedings of the Jesuits in India gravely records that seven of these monsters, male and female, were captured at Ceylon in 1560, and carried to Goa, where they were dissected by the physician to the Viceroy, and "their internal structure found to be in all respects similar to the human!" A dugong, killed at Ceylon in 1847, measured upwards of seven feet in length, but specimens considerably larger have been taken.

The female dugong, or sea-cow of Sumatra, will follow her young to the death, and is usually taken with them. The sea-calves have a short, sharp, pitiable cry, which they frequently repeat, and, like the stricken deer, are also said to shed tears, which, according to Sir Stamford Raffles, were carefully bottled by the common people, and preserved as charms to secure affection.

Only one species of the *Stellerus*—of the same genus as the two I have mentioned—has been known, about twenty-five feet in length, a native of the Polar seas, and never observed since the middle of last century, so that it is supposed to be extinct. The characteristic features of this animal would lead one to suppose, also, that it may have contributed to the misconceptions about the mermaid.

Mr. Rimbault, in "Notes and Queries," remarks that the exhibition of strange fishes appears to have been at its height in the reign of Elizabeth. Shakespere twice alludes to it: once in the "Winter's Tale" (Act IV., Scene 3), where Autolycus says: "Here's another ballad of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday, the fourscore of April, forty thousand fathoms above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids. It was thought she was a woman, and was turned into a cold fish, for she would no exchange flesh with one that loved her. The ballad is very pitifu

and as true ;” and again in the “*Tempest*” (Act II., Scene 2). A printed notice, dated 1566, has for its title “*The Description of a Rare or rather Most Monstrous Fishe, taken on the East Coast of Holland, the 17th November, Anno 1566,*” with a woodcut of the fish, and underneath the following lines :

“ The workes of God, how great and strange they be !  
A picture plaine, behold, heare you may see.”

Two years later there is another printed notice of “*a moste true and marvellous straunge wonder, the lyke hath seldom been seene, of xvii monstrous fishes, taken in Suffulke, at Downam Brydge, within a myle of Ipswicke, the xi daye of October, in the yeare of our Lorde God 1568.*” Stow, in his “*Annales,*” gives a particular description of this “*wondrous draught of fishes,*” some of them being “*eight and twentie foote in length at least.*”

Wolfe, in 1586, printed a broadside containing an account of a monster fish found in the stomach of a horse ! The registers of the Stationers’ Company contain an entry in 1604 of “*a strange reporte of a monstrous fish that appeared in the form of a woman from the waist upwards, seene in the sea.*”

Even in 1822, a so-called mermaid was publicly exhibited in London, which continued to be shown to the curious in these matters for many months, but the monster was found to have been constructed of the members of various animals, dexterously put together. Some amusing lines appeared at the period, which I will transcribe :

“ Come, mistress mermaid, tell us, for you’ve seen  
The deeps and things proud Science pines to see ;  
Be kind, and say if you have ever been  
In worlds the poets deck with imagery.  
Say, as you floated on the green sea’s billow,  
Didst e’er see Neptune’s car, or Amphitrite’s pillow ?

“ Now, are there really coral caves below,  
Or beds of amber, or of precious stone,  
To which the blushing Nereids languid go  
In idle hours to recline upon ?  
And are there fays to fan them while they’re dreaming,  
Whose wings seem like two diamonds’ purest gleaming ?

- "Come, tell the truth, for none, dear mermaid,'s by,  
To stop you short, or tweak you by the nose,  
Or contradict you should you tell a lie,  
As you the secrets of the deep disclose.  
Therefore be candid, and declare this minute  
The wonders of the sea, and all that's in it.
- "Alas! you're dumb, and cannot even say,  
As quick you speed from giant sea to sea,  
How many sharks you've numbered in a day,  
Or, if you fought them, or thought it best to flee.  
Quite mute you are, and quite absurd the notion,  
For thee to pump for secrets of the ocean.
- "Farewell, dumb thing! perhaps the next we find  
So long a time may not require to woo,  
'T will speak, perchance, and haply prove most kind,  
And tell us all we've useless sought of you—  
Rare information yielding on the morning  
She's clapped within the glass case you're adorning."

