

The Sea - Serpent.

BY ALFRED T. STORY.



HERE is a general disposition to regard the sea-serpent and all the tales of him as an everlasting joke. He only turns up, say the jokers, when Parliament is out of Session and the silly season arrives with its prize gooseberries and showers of frogs; and he usually turns up in America, in a local paper. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that the sea-serpent is a living fact; or, perhaps, it is safer to say that there is evidence that great living creatures of a kind or kinds as yet unclassified by science inhabit the sea; probably in small numbers, and quite possibly not serpents in the usual sense of the word.

Every circumstance tends to deny a fair hearing to evidence as to the sea-serpent. A man reporting having seen it is laughed at, and a sailor doesn't like being laughed at by a landsman. Of course, a long trail of seaweed rocking upon the sea surface may, at one time and another, have been mistaken for a living thing, or a

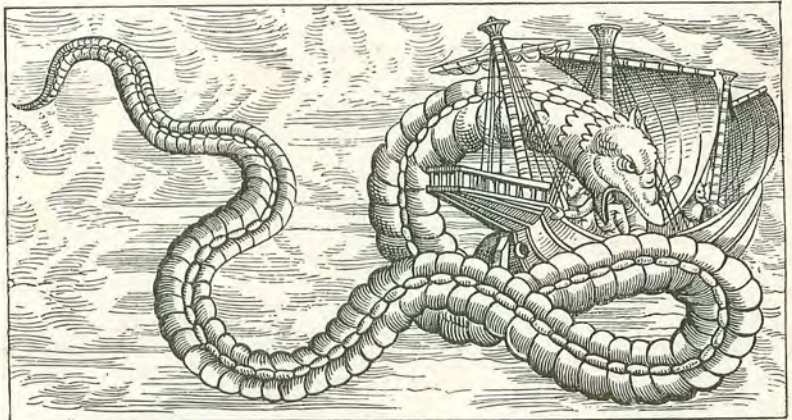
procession of porpoises may have been thought to be one great organism. But a sailor, as a rule, knows seaweed or a porpoise when he sees it, and is more likely to know actually what he does see on the water than a landsman who wasn't there; and it is unlikely that every sailor who reports a sea-serpent must be drunk, blind, or a fool. It has, however, become customary to assume that he is, and, as a result, a sailor is disposed to keep quiet about anything out of the ordinary which he may see, since he has nothing to gain by making announcement of it.

It may be remembered that tales of gigantic cuttle-fishes were regarded, until comparatively recently, with as much incredulity as those of the sea-serpent, yet the existence of such cuttle-fish is now as much a recognised scientific fact as that of the whale. Let us, then, examine such small

part as we may of the large body of evidence on the subject.

The Norwegian fishermen regard the existence of the sea-serpent as a thing beyond all dispute, and can tell any number of stories of his appearance in their fiords; and a Norwegian book of travel published in the sixteenth century describes its appearance in the year 1522.

Olaus Magnus, who is careful to say that his description is from hearsay and not from personal observation, describes the sea-serpent as being 200ft. long and 20ft. in circumference, having fiery eyes and a short mane. He also gives a very surprising picture where-in the sea-serpent is represented curling about



SEA-SERPENT ATTACKING A VESSEL. FROM OLAUS MAGNUS.

entirely out of the water, and reaching over to snap a man from the deck of a ship.

Hans Egede, who afterwards became a bishop, travelled to Greenland in the year 1734 as a missionary. In his account of the voyage, he describes a sea-monster which appeared near the ship on the 6th of July. "Its head," he says, "when raised, was on a level with our main-top. Its snout was long and sharp, and it blew water almost like a whale; it had large, broad paws or paddles; its body was covered with scales; its skin was rough and uneven; in other respects it was as a serpent; and when it dived, the end of its tail, which was raised in the air, seemed to be a full ship's length from its body." A companion of Egede's, also a missionary, made a sketch of the monster, which is here reproduced.

Erik Pontoppidan (Bishop of Bergen), the



SEA-SERPENT SEEN BY HANS EGEDE IN 1734.

famous Norwegian naturalist, at first disbelieved in the sea-serpent, but confesses his conversion in his book (published in 1755) since he had received "full and sufficient evidence from creditable and experienced fishermen and sailors in Norway, of whom hundreds testify that they have seen them annually." Pontoppidan tells us that it is the habit of the sea-serpent (which he identifies with the Leviathan of Scripture) to keep at the bottom of the sea except in their spawning time, in July and August, when they rise to the surface occasionally, if the weather be calm, but make their way below immediately should the least disturbance take place. He discriminates between the Greenland and the Norwegian sea-snakes, the former being scaly as to the outer skin, but the latter perfectly smooth, and with a mane about the neck, hanging like a bunch of seaweed. From the various accounts he estimates the length of the serpent at about 600ft., this length lying on the surface in many folds in calm weather. The forehead in all varieties is high and broad, though some have a sharp snout. The eyes are large and bluish, looking like bright pewter plates. The colour is dark brown, variegated in places. Thus Erik Pontoppidan.

The *Zoologist* for the year 1847, too, contained many accounts of the appearance, during that year, of sea-serpents in the Norwegian fiords.

One of the most famous and best authenticated appearances of the monster is that recorded to have been observed by the

officers and crew of H.M.S. *Dædalus* in 1848. We reproduce, entire, the official report of Captain M'Quhae to Admiral Sir W. H. Gage on the subject:—

"H.M.S.
Dædalus,
"Hamoaze,
Oct. 11th.
"SIR,—In reply to your letter of this day's date, requiring information as to the truth of a statement, published in the *Times* newspaper, of a sea-serpent of extraordinary dimensions having been seen from Her Majesty's ship *Dædalus*, under my command, in her passage from the East Indies, I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that at 5 o'clock p.m., on the 6th of August last, in latitude $24^{\circ} 44'$ S and longitude $9^{\circ} 22'$ E., the weather dark and cloudy, wind fresh from the N.W., with a long ocean swell from the S.W., the ship on the port tack, heading N.E. by N., something very unusual was seen by Mr. Sartoris, midshipman, rapidly approaching the ship from before the beam. The circumstance was immediately reported by him to the officer of the watch, Lieutenant Edgar Drummond, with whom, and Mr. William Barrett, the master, I was at the time walking the quarter-deck. The ship's company were at supper.

"On our attention being called to the object, it was discovered to be an enormous serpent, with head and shoulders kept about 4ft.



THE SEA-SERPENT ACCORDING TO PONTOPPIDAN.

constantly above the surface of the sea; and, as nearly as we could approximate by comparing it with the length of what our main-topsail yard would show in the water, there was at the very least 60ft. of the animal *à fleur d'eau*, no portion of which was, in our perception, used in propelling it



THE SEA-SERPENT SEEN FROM H.M.S. "DÆDALUS."

servation of several educated men used to the sea, and set down in a sober, official report. A letter was printed shortly after in the *Globe* newspaper, giving an account of the appearance of a similar (very possibly the same) monster to the American brig *Daphne*, 20deg. further south, soon after it was seen from the *Dædalus*. The publication of the *Dædalus*

through the water, either by vertical or horizontal undulation. It passed rapidly, but so close under our lee quarter that, had it been a man of my acquaintance, I should have easily recognised his features with the naked eye; and it did not, either in approaching the ship or after it had passed our wake, deviate in the slightest degree from its course to the S.W., which it held on at the pace of from twelve to fifteen miles per hour, apparently on some determined purpose. The diameter of the serpent was about fifteen or sixteen inches behind the head, which was, without any doubt, that of a snake; and it was never, during the twenty minutes that it continued in sight of our glasses, once below the surface of the water; its colour, 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 seaweed, washed about its back. It was seen by the quartermaster, the boatswain's mate, and the man at the wheel in addition to myself and officers above mentioned.

"I am having a drawing of the serpent made from a sketch taken immediately after it was seen, which I hope to have ready for transmission to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by to-morrow's post.

"I have the honour to be, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

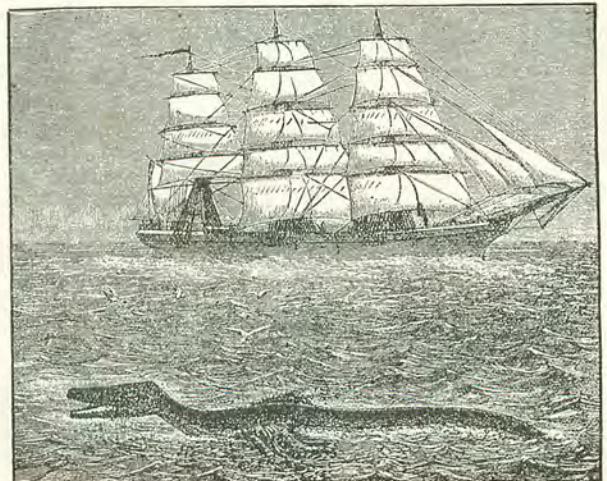
"PETER M'QUHAE, Capt.

"To Admiral Sir W. H. Gage,
G.C.B., Devonport."

This is unassailable evidence from the best source possible—the ob-

adventure led to many stories of similar encounters being brought forward in the Press of the time.

Captain W. H. Nelson, of the American ship *Sacramento*, reported catching a glimpse of a strange sea-monster on July 30th, 1877, in latitude $31^{\circ} 59' N.$, and longitude $37^{\circ} W.$ The man at the wheel (his name was John Hart) had a better view than Captain Nelson, since he first caught sight of it, and the captain did not arrive upon deck until it had proceeded some distance on its way. Some 40ft. of the creature, the helmsman estimated, was seen above the surface, and its girth appeared to be about that of a flour barrel. He afterwards made a pencil sketch, from which it would appear to be a different animal altogether from those usually reported, and somewhat resembling the ancient ichthyosaurus.



SEA-SERPENT SEEN FROM THE SHIP "SACRAMENTO."

The next account I shall quote is that of an officer of H.M.S. *Plumper*, whose description is as follows:—

“On the morning of the 31st of December, 1848, lat. $41^{\circ} 13' N.$, and long. $12^{\circ} 31' W.$, being nearly due west of Oporto, I saw a

it moved through the water, kept washing about; but before I could examine it closely it was too far astern.” The illustration is from a sketch by the officer.

The following account of a sea-serpent was communicated to the *Illustrated London News*:—

“Colonial Agency,
“4, Cullum St.,

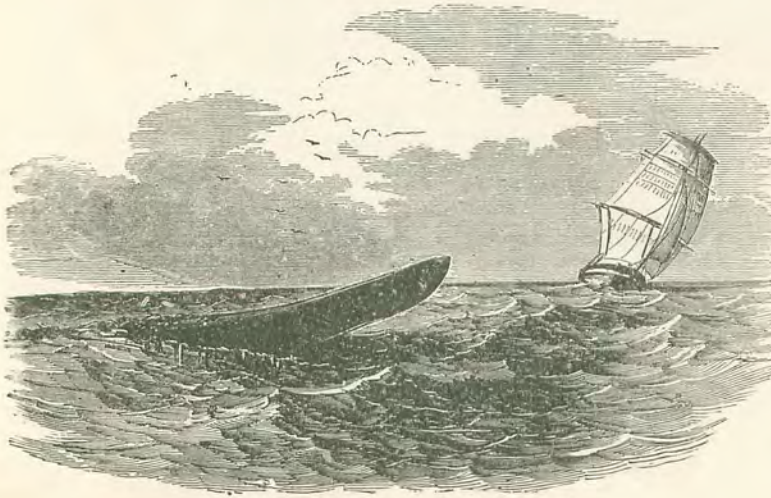
“London,

“Sept. 25th, 1853.

“We hand you the following extract from the log-book of our ship *Princess*, Captain A. K. N. Tremaine, in London Docks, 15th instant, from China, viz.: ‘Tuesday, July 8th, 1853; latitude (accurate) $34^{\circ} 56' S.$; longitude (accurate) $18^{\circ} 14' E.$ At 1 p.m. saw a very large fish, with a head like a walrus,

and twelve fins similar to those of the blackfish, but turned the contrary way. The back was from 20ft. to 30ft. long; also a great length of tail. It is not improbable that this monster has been taken for the great sea-serpent. Fired and hit it near the head with rifle ball. At eight, fresh wind and fine.’ The monster was seen by the entire ship’s crew, as also by Captain Morgan, a passenger by the *Princess*.”

Another well-authenticated sea-serpent is that seen by Dr. Biccard, of Cape Town, in February, 1857, a month later seen by Mr. Fairbridge and others. Dr. Biccard was at the lighthouse at Green Point in the afternoon of the day in question, about 5 p.m., when the lighthouse-keeper asked him to “come and see a sea-monster.” “I proceeded to the lighthouse,” wrote Dr. Biccard, “and from thence I saw on the water, about 150yds. from the shore, a serpent, of which some details have already appeared in print. (This refers to the account by



SEA-SERPENT SEEN FROM H.M.S. “PLUMPER.”

long, black creature with a sharp head, moving slowly, I should think about two knots, through the water, in a north-westerly direction, there being a fresh breeze at the time and some sea on. I could not ascertain its exact length, but its back was 20ft., if not more, above the water, and its head, as near as I could judge, from 6ft. to 8ft. I had not the time to make a closer observation, as the ship was going six knots through the water, her head E. half S., and S.S.E. The creature moved across our wake, towards a merchant barque on our lee-quarter and on the port tack. I was in hopes she would have seen it also. The officers and men saw it, and (those) who have served in parts of the world adjacent to whale and seal fisheries, and have seen them in the water, declare they have never seen or heard of any creature bearing the slightest resemblance to the one we saw. There was something on its back that appeared like a mane, and, as

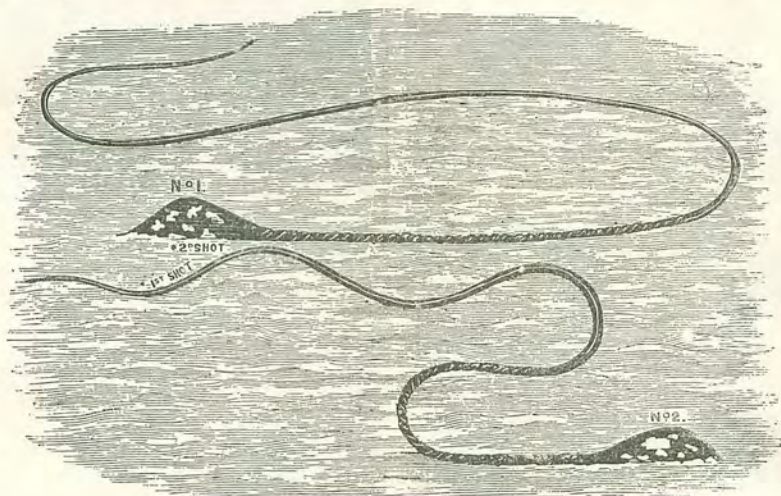


SEA-SERPENT SEEN FROM THE “PRINCESS.”

Mr. Fairbridge.) It was lying in the position shown in the accompanying sketch, No. 1. I borrowed a rifle from Mr. Hall (the father-in-law of the lighthouse-keeper), and fired at the animal. The ball fell short in front of it by about four yards, as shown in the sketch. The animal did not move, and I then fired a second shot, the ball striking about 1ft. or 1½ft. from it. The serpent then, apparently startled, moved from its position, and straightened himself out, and went under water, evidently getting out of the way. He was invisible about

calm. Besides Dr. Biccard, the animal was seen by seven other persons.

One of our illustrations is of the great American sea-serpent, a young one of which was actually caught and dissected by members of the Linnæan Society of Boston (some of the parts being here shown). In consequence of the reports of a great sea-serpent having been frequently seen during the month of August, 1817, in the harbour of Gloucester, Mass., and at a short distance at sea, the Linnæan Society appointed a committee to collect evidence with regard to the



SEA-SERPENT SEEN BY DR. BICCARD, OF CAPE TOWN.

ten minutes, at the expiration of which interval he reappeared at about 200yds. distance, and, I should say, about 40yds. farther off. He then came right on towards the place where I first saw him; but before arriving there, my son, who had joined me, fired at the animal. Unluckily the discharge broke the nipple of the rifle, and I was thus prevented from further firing. Upon reaching the place which he first occupied, the serpent formed himself into the position delineated in sketch No. 2, and then stood right into the bay, and soon afterwards we lost sight of him altogether."

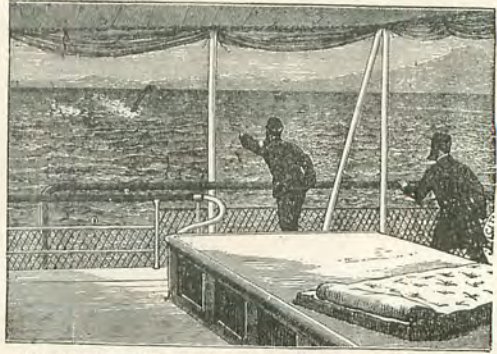
Dr. Biccard goes on to say that the animal was about 200ft. in length, but its thickness he could not tell, only the upper part of its body being visible; the head could be seen but indistinctly. He considered the protuberance to be the upper part of the head, but he could not discover the eyes. The body was of a dull, dark colour, except the head, which was maculated with white spots. The water at the time was very

existence and appearance of such an animal. In due course a report appeared, and if that alone was not convincing, the receipt by the Society a month later of an actual sea-serpent left the matter beyond dispute. It was of remarkable appearance, was decided by the Society to be the young of the great sea-serpent, and was named *Scolioptus Atlanticus*. It was killed on the sea-shore at no great distance from Cape Ann. The next cut is from an engraving of it in a pamphlet relating to the sea-serpent published by the Society.

In its issue of April 19th, 1879, the *Graphic* gave an illustration of a sea-serpent seen by its correspondent, Major H. W. J. Senior, of the Bengal Staff Corps, from a sketch by that gentleman, together with a description of the monster, as it appeared to him from the poop deck of the steamship *City of Baltimore*, in latitude 12° 28' N., longitude 43° 52' E. Major Senior first saw the creature about three-quarters of a mile distant, "darting rapidly out of the water and splashing in

again, with a noise distinctly audible," and rapidly approaching the ship. It arrived within 500 yards before turning its course and finally disappearing. It moved so rapidly that it was impossible to fix it with the telescope, so that Major Senior is doubtful whether it had scales or not, but as well as could be ascertained by the unaided eye it had none. "The head and neck," says Major Senior, "about two feet in diameter, rose out of the water to a height of about twenty or thirty feet, and the monster opened its jaws wide as it rose, and closed them again as it lowered its head and darted forward for a dive, reappearing almost immediately some hundred yards ahead. The body was not visible at all, and must have been some depth under water, as the disturbance on the surface was too slight to attract notice, although occasionally a splash was seen at some distance behind the head. The shape of the head was not unlike pictures of the dragon I have often seen, with a bulldog appearance of the forehead and eyebrow. When the

monster had drawn its head sufficiently out of the water, it let itself drop, as it were, like a huge log of wood, prior to darting forward under the water." Major Senior's statement was countersigned by Dr. Hall, the ship's surgeon, and Miss Greenfield, a passenger, both of whom saw the creature.

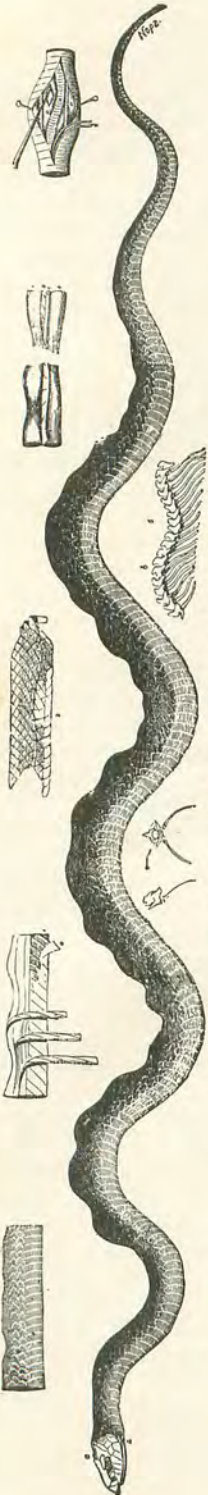


SEA-SERPENT SEEN FROM THE SS. "CITY OF BALTIMORE."

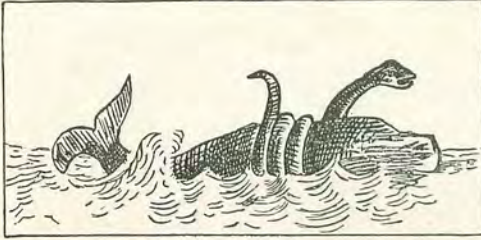
One of the most extraordinary accounts of the sea-serpent was that given by Captain Drevar, of the barque *Pauline*, and declared before a magistrate by himself and his crew. Much ridicule was cast upon the story by certain journalists, who felt it necessary to be funny on the occasion, and Captain Drevar bitterly resented the doubts cast upon his veracity and capabilities for observation. It is difficult to dismiss the story as not proven, except upon the assumption that Captain Drevar and his crew agreed to tell a great lie for no earthly reason, and without the slightest inducement. This is the narrative, shortened in places, for considerations of space:—

"Barque *Pauline*.—July 8th, 1875; lat. 5° 13' S., long. 35° W.; Cape Roque, north-east corner of Brazil, distant twenty miles at 11 a.m.

"The weather fine and clear, the wind and sea moderate. Observed some black spots on the water and a whitish pillar, about 35ft. high, above them. At first I took it all to be breakers, as the sea was splashing up fountain-like about them, and the pillar, a pinnacle rock bleached with the sun; but the pillar fell with a splash and a similar one rose. They rose and fell alternately in quick succession, and good glasses showed me it was a monster sea-serpent coiled twice round a large sperm whale. The head and tail parts, each about 30ft. long, were acting as levers, twisting itself and victim around with great velocity. They sank out of sight about every two minutes, coming to the surface still revolving, and the struggles of the whale and two other



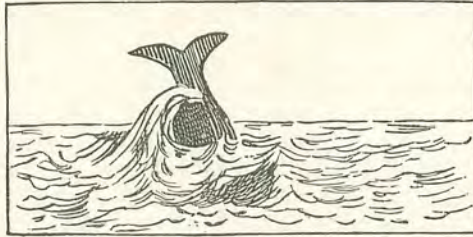
SEA-SERPENT CAUGHT BY THE LINNEAN SOCIETY, 1817.



SEA-SERPENT ATTACKING WHALE. SEEN BY CAPTAIN DREVAR IN 1875.

whales that were near, frantic with excitement, made the sea in this vicinity like a boiling caldron, and a loud and confused noise was distinctly heard. This strange occurrence lasted some fifteen minutes, and finished with the tail portion of the whale being elevated straight in the air, then waving backwards and forwards and lashing the water furiously in the last death struggle, when the whole body disappeared from our view, going down head foremost towards the bottom, where, no doubt, it was gorged at the serpent's leisure Then two of the largest sperm whales that I have ever seen moved slowly thence towards the vessel, their bodies more than usually elevated out of the water, and not spouting or making the least noise, but seeming quite paralyzed with fear; indeed, a cold shiver went through my own frame on beholding the last agonizing struggle of the poor whale that had seemed as helpless in the coils of the vicious monster as a small bird in the talons of a hawk.

Allowing for two coils round the whale, I think the serpent was about 160ft. or 170ft. long and 7ft. or 8ft. in girth. It was in colour much like a conger eel, and the head, from the mouth being always open, appeared the largest part of the body. . . . I wrote thus far, little thinking I should ever see the serpent again. But at 7 a.m., July 13th, in the same latitude, and some eighty miles east of San Roque, I was astonished to see the same or a similar monster. It was throwing its head and about 40ft. of its body in a horizontal position out of the water, as it passed onwards by the stern of our vessel. . . . I was startled by the cry of 'There it is again,' and, a short distance to leeward, elevated some 60ft. in the air, was the



SEA-SERPENT ATTACKING WHALE—THE END OF THE STRUGGLE.

great leviathan, grimly looking towards the vessel. . . . This statement is strictly true, and the occurrence was witnessed by my officers, half the crew, and myself, and we are ready at any time to testify on oath that it is so, and that we are not in the least mistaken. . . . A vessel, about three years ago, was dragged over by some sea-monster in the Indian Ocean.

"GEORGE DREVAR,

"Master of the *Pauline*."

Upon seeing doubts cast upon his account in certain newspapers, Captain Drevvar appeared before Mr. Raffles, stipendiary magistrate at the Dale Street Police Court, Liverpool, accompanied by some of his officers and crew, and made the following declaration:—

"We, the undersigned, captain, officers, and crew of the barque *Pauline*, of London, do solemnly and sincerely declare that on July 8th, 1875, in latitude 5° 13' S., longitude 35° W., we observed three large sperm whales, and one of them was gripped round the body with two turns of what appeared to be a large serpent. The head and tail appeared to have a length beyond the coils of about 30ft., and its girth 8ft. or 9ft. The serpent whirled its victim round and round for about fifteen minutes, and then suddenly dragged the whole to the bottom, head first.

"GEORGE DREVAR,
Master.

"HORATIO THOMPSON.

"HENDERSON LANDELLO.

"OWEN BAKER.

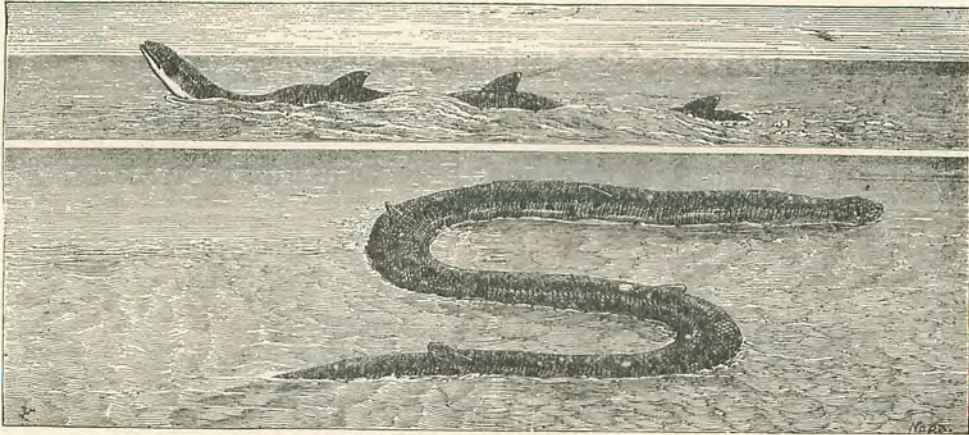
"WILLIAM LEWAN."

There were also two other declarations, relating to the sub-

sequent appearance, and the declaration was again made at a Liverpool police-court.

Captain Hassel, of the barque *St. Olaf*, from Newport to Galveston, Texas, testifies to having seen, two days before arrival at the latter port, on May 13th, 1872, a large sea-serpent lying upon the surface of the water. Such part of the creature as was visible seemed about 70ft. long, and had four fins along the back. It was about 6ft. in diameter, and it was of a greenish-yellow colour, with brownish spots over the upper part. One of the mates made a sketch of the animal.

In June, 1877, the officers and crew of the Royal yacht *Osborne* encountered a sea-monster off the coast of Sicily. Lieutenant



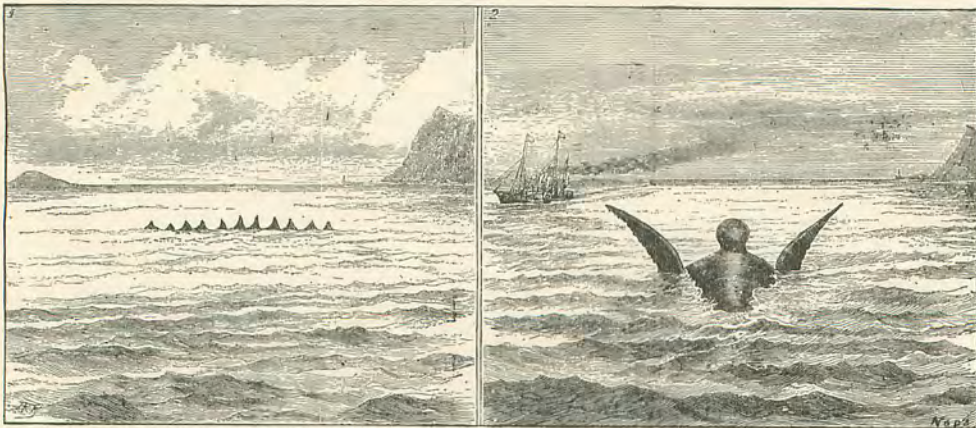
SEA-SERPENT SEEN BY CAPTAIN HASSEL.

Haynes describes it thus: "My attention was first called by seeing a long row of fins appearing above the surface of the water at a distance of about 200yds. from the ship, and away on our beam. They were of irregular heights and extending about 30ft. or 40ft. in line (the former number is the length I gave, the latter the other officers). In a few seconds they disappeared, giving place to the forepart of the monster. By this time it had passed astern, swimming in an opposite direction to that we were steering, and as we were passing through the water at ten and a half knots I could only get a view of it 'end on,' as shown in the sketch. The head was bullet-shaped, and quite 6ft. thick, the neck narrow, and its head was occasionally thrown back out of the water, remaining there for a few seconds at a time. It was very broad across the back or shoulders, about 15ft. or 20ft., and the flappers appeared to have a semi-revolving motion, which seemed to paddle the monster

along. They were about 15ft. in length. From the top of the head to the part of the body where it became immersed, I should consider 50ft., and that seemed about one-third of the whole length. All this part was smooth, resembling a seal. I cannot account for the fins, unless they were on the back below where it was immersed."

But we have still more recent witnesses to the fact of the existence of a sea-monster than the above. Captain R. J. Cringle, of the steamship *Umfuli*, one of the ten vessels of the Natal Line, belonging to Messrs. Bullard, King, and Company, less than two years ago commanded the following to be written in his ship's log:—

"Ss. *Umfuli*, Monday, Dec. 4th, 1893, 5.30 p.m., lat. 23deg. N., long. 18deg. W. —Sighted and passed, about 500yds. from ship, a monster fish of serpentine shape, about 80ft. long, with shining skin, and short fins, about 20ft. apart, on the back; in



1. ROW OF FINS AS FIRST SEEN.

2. HEAD AND FLAPPERS.

SEA-SERPENT SEEN FROM H.M.V. "OSBORNE."

circumference, about the dimensions of a full-sized whale."

The position indicated, as will be seen by reference to a map, is off the coast of Africa, a little south of the Canary Islands, and, broadly speaking, between Cape Bojador and Cape Blanco. When questioned more narrowly about the monster he had seen, Captain Cringle said he had never set eyes upon anything of the kind before, nor had any of the sailors on board the *Umfuli*. People had laughed at him for what they called his credulity, and said that both he and his crew and the passengers on board had been deceived; but he was quite certain his eyes did not deceive him. The sea was like a mirror at the time, with not a cat's-paw nor a ruffle upon it; "and this thing," he added, "whatever it was, was in sight for over half an hour. In fact, we did not lose sight of it until darkness came on."

Questioned as to how far the creature was away when they first saw it, Captain Cringle said, "When we first saw it I estimated that it would be about 400yds. away. It was rushing through the water at great speed, and was throwing water from its breast as a vessel throws water from her bows. I saw full 15ft. of its head and neck on three several occasions. They appeared and disappeared three times. The body was all the time visible."

Asked what the body looked like, Captain Cringle said he could liken it to nothing so well as to a hundred-ton gun partly submerged. It showed three distinct humps or swellings above the waves. Taking a pencil, he made a rough sketch of what he saw. (This was afterwards filled out by our artist, and is given in our illustration.) "The base,

or body," said he, "from which the neck sprang was much thicker than the neck itself, and I should not, therefore, call it a serpent. Had it been breezy enough

to ruffle the water, or hazy, I should have had some doubt about the creature; but the sea being so perfectly smooth, I had not the slightest doubt in my mind as to its being a sea-monster. I turned the ship round to get closer to it, and got much nearer than we were at first; but the sun was then setting and the light gone, so that to have run the ship nearer to the coast would have been folly."

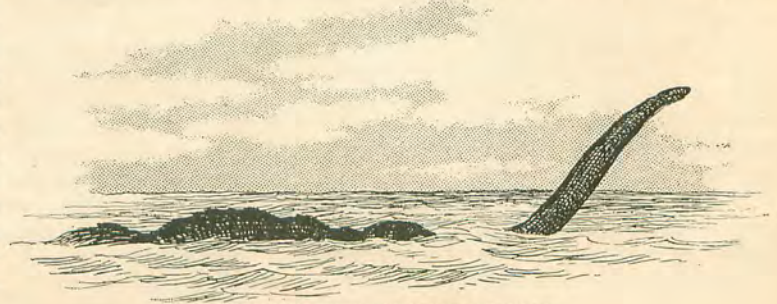
In reply to a question as to whether the creature seemed scaled, Captain Cringle said that so far as he could judge it was not. It appeared to have a smooth skin, and to

be of a dark brown colour. They were at one time so near to it that one of the passengers, a Mr. Kennealy, a gentleman of some scientific attainments, said he could hear the creature hiss, but the first officer said, "No, that is the rushing of the water from his bows." The scientific gentleman had a camera on board, but he was so excited that he never thought of it. A little less excitement, and Mr. Kennealy might have immortalized himself.

It will be seen from the photograph of the *Umfuli's* log that the chief officer, who has the keeping of it, had a look at the monster through his glass, and describes it as having an enormous mouth, with great rows of teeth.



CAPTAIN R. J. CRINGLE.
From a Photograph by W. F. Greene.



SEA-SERPENT SEEN BY CAPTAIN CRINGLE.

Log of the S.S. *Unifoli* from London towards Natal

H.	K.	F.	COURSES.	WINDS.	LEE-WAY.	Deviation.	REMARKS.
1	10	5	9 1/2 W 1/4 N	S S W			Monday Dec 4 th 1893 A.M.
2	10	5	"	"			2. Light wind forecast
3	10	5	"	"			"
4	10	5	"	"			4. do do
5	10	5	"	"			
6	10	5	"	"			Hands employed cleaning paintwork
7	10	5	"	"			rammishing grain work & painting forecast
8	10	5	"	"			Carpenter filling Engine Room stove
9	10	5	"	"			
10	10	5	"	"			12. Calm & clear.
11	10	5	"	"			
12	10	5	"	"			Pumps, wells, carefully attended

Course	Dist.	Dif. Lat.	Dep.	Lat. by Acct.	Lat. by Obs.	Dif. Long	Long. by Acct.	Long. by Obs.
South	255	32			11 38 54 N	nil.		17.26.00 W
					Barometer. 30.20	Thermometer. 78°	Aneroid.	

1	10	5	"	Calm				10m
2	10	5	"	"				2. Calm & smooth sea
3	10	5	"	"				
4	10	5	"	"				4. Same weather. 10 H 3
5	10	5	"	"				
6	10	5	"	"				5.20 Sighted and passed about 500 yds
7	10	5	"	"				from ship a monster fish of the Serpents
8	10	5	"	"				shape, about 80 ft long with slimy skin
9	10	5	"	"				and short fins at about 20 feet apart on
10	10	5	"	"				the back all in air about the size of a
11	10	5	"	"				full sized whale, I distinctly saw the fishes
12	10	5	"	"				mouth open & shut with my glasses. The

just like a Conger eel, I saw two of them on the 11th Dec. *John F. Stille* Mate

REDUCED FACSIMILE OF PAGE OF CAPTAIN CRINGLE'S LOG, WITH ENTRY REGARDING SEA-SERPENT.

Captain Cringle, however, who does not appear to have seen the creature's mouth open, said nothing about it.

In concluding his account of what he saw on that notable 4th of December, Captain Cringle said, "I have been so ridiculed about the thing that I have many times wished that anybody else had seen that sea-monster rather than me. I have been told that it was a string of porpoises, that it was an island of seaweed, and I do not know what besides. But if an island of seaweed can travel at the rate of fourteen knots an hour, or if a string of porpoises can stand 15ft. out of the water, then I give in, and confess myself deceived. Such, however, could not be."

Three months before Captain Cringle turned the *Unifoli* round in order to get a nearer sight of his sea-monster, Dr. Farquhar Matheson, of London, had a still closer view of a similar creature. Dr. Matheson is a

trained observer, and one of the men least likely to be the subject of an illusion. What he saw he described shortly afterwards to several gentlemen. They laughed at him at first, because it is so usual to laugh at sea-serpent stories; but they afterwards confessed that they thought there must be something in what he described, as he was not a person likely to be deceived. The ridicule to which he was subjected, however, made him decide to say very little about the matter. He gave the writer a succinct account of the monster he saw, which was made a note of at the time; but, as he declined to have his name go forth in connection with it, no use was made of the narrative. Having now, however, given his consent for his name to be mentioned, his interesting experience is here for the first time put on record.

The occurrence took place in September,

1893, while Dr. Matheson was spending some time at his home in the north-west of Scotland. He was at the time enjoying a sail with his wife on Loch Alsh, which separates the Island of Skye from the mainland. "It was a beautiful day," said Dr. Matheson, "clear as possible, the sun shining brightly, and without clouds. The time was between one and two. Our sail was up and we were going gaily along, when suddenly I saw something rise out of the Loch in front of us—a long, straight, neck-like thing as tall as my mast. I could not think what it was at first. I fancied it might be something on land, and directed my wife's attention to it. I said, 'Do you see that?' She said she did, and asked what it could be, and was rather scared. It was then 200yds. away and was moving towards us. Then it began to draw its neck down, and I saw clearly that it was a large sea-monster—of the saurian type, I should think. It was brown in colour, shining, and with a sort of ruffle at the junction of the head and neck. I can think of nothing to which to compare it so well as the head and neck of the giraffe, only the neck was much longer, and the head was not set upon the neck like that of a giraffe; that is, it was not so much at right-angles to it as a continuation of it in the same line. It moved its head from side to side, and I saw the reflection of the light from its wet skin."

Asked if the creature appeared to have scales, Dr. Matheson said he should judge not. It showed a perfectly smooth surface. He went on to say that it was in sight about two minutes and then disappeared. Then it rose again three different times, at intervals of two or three minutes. It stood perpendicularly out of the water, and

seemed to look round. "When it appeared the second time," said Dr. Matheson, "it was going from us, and was travelling at a great rate. It was going in the direction of the northern outlet of the Loch, and we were sailing in its wake; I was interested, and followed it. From its first to its last appearance we travelled a mile, and the last time we saw it it was about a mile away."

As to the body of the monster, Dr. Matheson said, "I saw no body—only a ripple of the water where the line of the body should be. I should judge, however, that there must have been a large base of body to support such a neck. It was not a sea-serpent, but a much larger and more substantial beast—something of the nature of a gigantic lizard, I should think. An eel could not lift up its body like that, nor could a snake."

As to the possibility of his being the subject of an optical illusion, Dr. Matheson said, "That is a common theory. But what I saw precludes all possibility of such an explanation. In the case of an optical illusion, what the eye sees becomes attenuated, and thus gradually disappears. But in the case of the creature I saw, it slowly descended into the water; it reappeared the same way, gradually ascending. I saw it move its head from side to side, and I noticed the glistening of the light on its smooth, wet skin." The doctor added, "In the evening at dinner I described to some gentlemen who were present, Sir James Farrar amongst the number, what I had seen. As I said, they laughed at the story at first, and suggested various ways in which I might have been deceived; but when I showed them that none of their theories would fit the case, they admitted that the sea-serpent, or sea monster, could not be altogether a myth."



SEA-SERPENT SEEN BY DR. MATHESON.