

“parting from the African coast, the bed of the ocean sinks very rapidly. A couple of degrees west of the longitude of Cape Verde the soundings are 2,900 fathoms. From this point the mean depth across the ocean may be estimated at about 2,400 fathoms, but from this there are two striking departures—first, a depression, the depth of which is 3,100 fathoms; and, second, an elevation, at which the soundings are only 1,900, the general result of this being a deep trough on the African side and a narrower and shallower trough on the American.”<sup>1</sup>

Referring to the chart (Pl. VII.), in which the greater depths are indicated by the deeper shades of blue, a shade to every 1,000 fathoms; in the Arctic Sea there is deep water ranging to 1,500 fathoms to the west and south-west of Spitzbergen. Extending from the coast of Norway and including Iceland, the Færoe Islands, Shetland and Orkney, Great Britain and Ireland, and the bed of the North Sea to the coast of France, there is a wide plateau on which the depth rarely reaches 500 fathoms, but to the west of Iceland and communicating doubtless with the deep water in the Spitzbergen Sea a trough 500 miles wide and in some places nearly 2,000 fathoms deep, curves along the east coast of Greenland. This is the path of one of the great Arctic return currents.

<sup>1</sup> Cruise of the School-ship ‘Mercury’ in the Tropical Atlantic, with a Report to the Commissioners of Public Charities and Correction of the City of New York on the Chemical and Physical Facts collected from the Deep-sea Researches made during the Voyage of the Nautical School-ship ‘Mercury,’ undertaken in the Tropical Atlantic and Caribbean Sea, 1870-71. By Henry Draper, M.D., Professor of Analytical Chemistry and Physiology in the University of New York. Abstracted in *Nature*, vol. v. p. 324.