

the flat close to the beach, was seen about a hundred yards off. It contrasted most strongly in its appearance and gait with the Elephant Seal, and was soon made out to be a Fur Seal (*Arctocephalus gazella*). It was an old male, covered with greyish-brown shaggy hair, and with a short greyish mane about the neck. It moved its head up and down uneasily when disturbed, just as a bear sways its head. On one of the party running up too close to the beast thinking it as helpless as the Elephant Seal, he was forced to retreat in a hurry, for it made a savage dash at him, open-mouthed.

Two of the whaling schooners met with at the island killed over 70 Fur Seals on one day, and upwards of twenty on another, at some small islands off Howe Island to the north. It is a pity that some discretion is not exercised in killing the animals, as is done in St. Paul Island in Behring Sea, in the case of the northern Fur Seal. By killing the young males, and selecting certain animals only for killing, the number of seals may even be increased;¹ the sealers in Kerguelen Island kill all they can find. They said that the southern Fur Seals sometimes eat Penguins, and that they had found the remains of them in their stomachs, and the sealers also said that sometimes, but very rarely, they found another kind of Seal, somewhat like the Fur Seal, which they called the "Sea Dog." A second species of Eared Seal probably thus occurs as a rarity at Kerguelen Island.

Professor Peters of Berlin identified the skull of a Fur Seal procured by the Challenger at Kerguelen as belonging to his new species *Arctocephalus gazella*. The skeleton of a specimen called by the sealers "Sea Leopard" has not yet been determined, but Professor Turner states that it is not a *Stenorhynchus*.

The flat stretch of land at the head of Christmas Harbour is covered with a thick rank growth of grass (*Poa cookii*), and a Composite herb with feathery leaves and yellow flower (*Cotula* [*Leptinella*] *plumosa*), also with *Azorella* and *Acæna* as at Marion Island (see Pl. XV.). The soil is black and peaty and saturated with water. It is almost impossible to find fuel; the *Azorella* is the only thing that will burn, and sometimes pieces of this may be found that are dry enough, in places where the bunches overhang small precipices, so that the water can drip away.

The feature which distinguishes the general appearance of the vegetation of Christmas Harbour from that of Marion Island is the presence of the Kerguelen Cabbage (*Pringlea antiscorbutica*) in large quantities. The plant grows on the slopes and bases of the cliffs in thick beds, and resembles a small garden cabbage, but often with a long trailing stalk. It is, however, not annual but perennial, and the flowering stalks instead of coming out from the centre of the head, come out laterally from the sides of the stalks between the leaves. The old flower stalks die and wither, but do not drop off. On one Cabbage at Betsy Cove were counted 28 flowering stalks, of different ages, three of them only being of the current year's growth and fresh; they appeared to belong to

¹ J. A. Allen, The Eared Seals. *Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool.*, vol. ii. pp. 1-88, 1870-71.