

The first large sailing vessel which used Magellan Strait after the survey of the "Adventure" and "Beagle" was H.M.S. "Fisgard" in 1842. She occupied 17 days in the transit from east to west in October, and was followed in 1851 by a Swedish frigate, and in the same year H.M.S. "Havannah," homeward bound, passed through from west to east, as also did H.M.S. "Calypso" in 1862. The first steamer that adopted this route was the "Peru," commanded by Captain George Peacock, formerly a Master in H.M. Navy. She was followed by H.M. steamships "Salamander," "Cormorant," "Gorgon," "Vixen," "Virago," &c., and it is now the practice for all steamers to take this passage in preference to the route round Cape Horn, a practice which is likely to continue, unless in the course of time a canal is cut through the Isthmus of Panama.

From this it appears that the shortest time taken by sailing vessels to pass through the Strait of Magellan is 17 days, and that two men have performed this feat, viz., Sir Francis Drake in 1578, and Captain Duntze of the "Fisgard" in 1842.

The navigation of the Strait of Magellan is difficult owing to a variety of causes: in the eastern part there are numerous shoals and rapid tides, but the weather is fairly clear and little rain falls, whereas in the western part the depths are so great that although there are few dangers and but little tide, there are few places where large vessels can anchor, and the rainfall is abundant. The weather is boisterous in all parts of the strait and at all seasons of the year, and the rain which is so abundant on the Pacific seaboard, gradually decreases in copiousness from the western to the eastern end.

The scenery of the western Patagonian fjords is very beautiful. The successive ranges of mountains are capped here and there by snow, and glaciers, the dwindled representatives of those that scooped out the main features of the region, fill some of the valleys. The fjords remind one somewhat of those in Norway; they branch and send offsets on either hand. Thus, as these long sounds are traversed constant glimpses are obtained down the communicating channels bounded by successions of mountain ridges, fading gradually out of sight one behind the other. In some parts of the Messier Channel the mountains are covered by a dense forest of small trees, and one peculiarity of the scenery is due to the fact that these forests come down to the seashore and overhang the beds of mussels growing on the rocks. In some harbours it is impossible to get away from the shore, so dense is the barrier of forest undergrowth everywhere. On the eastern side, about Sandy Point, the country is more open, and there are wide stretches of grass-land.

From a register kept for a period of nearly ten years at Sandy Point, it appears that the mean temperature there in July is $35^{\circ}4$, or $2^{\circ}9$ colder than the mean temperature for January at Greenwich, whilst the mean temperature at Sandy Point in January is $54^{\circ}8$, or $7^{\circ}4$ colder than the mean temperature at Greenwich in July. The following table will enable an opinion to be formed of the climate.