

It is extraordinary, notwithstanding the fact that we have been slaughtering these seals for fully two centuries, that we know comparatively little to-day, of their Natural History. I don't believe ten persons in Newfoundland can tell with certainty, how many different varieties of seals we have on our coasts, or can afford any really authentic information about their habits and peregrinations, much less classify them in a scientific manner. It would no doubt be considered presumption on my part to pretend to know more about our seals and their movements than old and experienced ice-hunters. Yet, I must confess it seems to me a blot on our intelligence, that at this late date when the sealing industry shows signs of fast becoming a thing of the past, that we really know so very little about them.

It is true most people can call them by their common or local names, such as the Harp, the Hood, the Square Flipper, the Harbour or Bay Seal, etc., but these are not their scientific names. The Harp is the Greenland seal, (*Phoca Greenlandica*); the Hood, (*Stenmatopus cristatus*) so called from that peculiar appendage on the top of the head of the male, which he can inflate at will so as to form a protective cap or shield. Its resemblance to a hood has given rise to his name, the "Hooded Seal." It is said that when attacked, this seal inflates his hood, which then becomes such a perfect safeguard to his head that it is useless to try and kill him in the ordinary manner by a blow from a gaff or club. The gaff rebounds from it like a drum stick from the head of a drum, without injuring the animal. It is even claimed that shot fired from a gun will glance off instead of penetrating it.

The male hood is a very vicious animal, and for such a huge clumsy one, exceedingly nimble. It takes two or three men to despatch one, and they have to be very careful he does not catch them, as he has been