

The sailors pull close along side of the whale, and the steersman throws the iron or harpoon. If it fastens, the whale shoves off, or goes down. The harpoon has a wooden handle, to the end of which, is fastened a rope, which is wound on to a roller in the bow of the boat. If the whale moves faster than they can row, the line is run out—if they gain on him again, it is taken in. If they can pull up to his whaleship a second time, they commence throwing lances into him about the gills. When he spouts blood his doom is sealed, and the prize is secured to the adventurers. Sometimes they go down, and draw out several hundred fathoms of line, and it is sometimes the case that the line has to be cut, to prevent the boats being drawn under. It is no uncommon thing, for boats to be stove in pieces, by the whale in the agonies of death. In the present instance, Capt. Young's boat was upset, and all hands thrown overboard. The mate's boat also, had a hole stove in her bottom, and it was with difficulty she returned to the ship. But they conquered the old fellow—the ship wore away to them, and he was lashed along side for dissection. The workmen now commenced cutting him in pieces. I noticed the skin of the whale was very thin and delicate for so large a monster. The blubber or fat is from six to twelve inches in thickness.—Planks are slung over the sides of the ship for the workmen to stand on, and the gangways into the bulwarks are opened. They do their cutting with spades made for the purpose, with handles from ten to twelve feet in length. They cut a place in the blubber, into which is fastened an iron hook of the size of a man's arm and this is fastened by a tackle into the main-mast, above the main hatches. While the men with the spades are cutting, others at the windlass are raising the hook, and in this way they will in a short time peel up a piece twelve feet in length by six or eight in width. This is raised above deck, over the main hatches, when the hook is cut loose, and it falls with a heavy crash on the deck below, where it is cut into smaller pieces for trying. When the blubber and head is taken off, the carcass is let loose, and serves as food for sharks, who are generally in readiness to help themselves. In this way, a few men, and as many sharks, will use up a large whale in a short time. The head of the right whale contains the common black whale-bone of the markets. The head of the spermaceti whale is valued on account of its ivory teeth. The blubber is placed upon a bench or table, and sliced into thin pieces, with an instrument resembling a carrier's knife, and is then thrown into the boilers. Two or three potash kettles, set in brick arches, built up square, are generally in use for trying the blubber. At each corner of the brick arch there is a large cast iron standard fastened into the deck for the purpose of keeping the try-works steady and firm in their place in all kinds of rough weather. The fire is started under the kettle with wood, after which it is kept up by taking out the scraps with a copper skim-