

embark on hazardous adventures among the islands of the Eastern Sea.

The sea-cow, which was thus in its last retreat accidentally discovered, is an animal possessed of the greatest interest to the zoologist. Nearly all we know now of its habits and appearances is derived from the descriptions of Steller, a naturalist who accompanied Behring's expedition, and who, though he shared to the full in its hardships and distress, still found time to note and write out his observations on the natural history of the new lands discovered. Muller, quoting from Steller's notes, writes :—

“I return to my design, to show how useful the Manati was to our ship's company with regard to their sustenance. Some of these animals have been caught, which from the snout to the point of the tail were from three to four fathoms long, and weighed 200 pounds, or 8,000 pounds. One was food enough to serve for a fortnight, and the flesh was very savoury like the best beef; that of the young ones was like veal. And the sick found themselves considerably better, when, instead of the hard beaver's [sea-otter's] flesh, they eat of the Manati, though it cost them more trouble to catch than one of the beavers. They never came on the land, but only approached the coast to eat sea-grass, which grows on the shore, or is thrown out by the sea. This good food may, perhaps, contribute a great deal to give the flesh a more agreeable taste than that of the other animals that live on fish. The young ones that weighed 1,200 pounds and upwards, remained sometimes at low water on the dry land between the rocks, which afforded a fine opportunity for killing them, but the old ones could be caught not otherwise than with harpoons, fixed to long ropes. Sometimes the ropes were broke, and the animal escaped before it could be struck a second time. This animal was seen as well in the winter as in the summer time. They melted some of the fat, with which, like hogs, they are covered from three to four inches thick, and used it as butter. Of the flesh, several casks full were pickled for ship's provision, which did excellent service on their return.” *

* Voyages from Asia to America, Muller. Jeffery's translation, pp. 61-62.