

again its natural size; and the explosion took place about fifteen seconds after the rapid progressive motion had ceased: in a few cases it was preceded for a short interval by a rotatory movement on the longer axis. About two minutes after any number were isolated in a drop of water they thus perished. The animals move with the narrow apex forward, by the aid of their vibratory ciliæ, and generally by rapid starts. They are exceedingly minute, and quite invisible to the naked eye, only covering a space equal to the square of the thousandth of an inch. Their numbers were infinite; for the smallest drop of water which I could remove contained very many. In one day we passed through two spaces of water thus stained, one of which alone must have extended over several square miles. What incalculable numbers of these microscopical animals! The color of the water, as seen at some distance, was like that of a river which has flowed through a red clay district; but under the shade of the vessel's side it was quite as dark as chocolate. The line where the red and blue water joined was distinctly defined. The weather for some days previously had been calm, and the ocean abounded, to an unusual degree, with living creatures.¹

In the sea around Tierra del Fuego, and at no great distance from the land, I have seen narrow lines of water of a bright red color, from the number of crustacea, which somewhat resemble in form large prawns. The sealers call them whale-food. Whether whales feed on them I do not know; but terns, cormorants, and immense herds of great unwieldy seals derive, on some parts of the coast, their chief sustenance from these swimming crabs. Seamen invariably at-

¹ M. Lesson (*Voyage de la Coquille*, tom. i. p. 255) mentions red water off Lima, apparently produced by the same cause. Peron, the distinguished naturalist, in the *Voyage aux Terres Australes*, gives no less than twelve references to voyagers who have alluded to the discolored waters of the sea (vol. ii. p. 239). To the references given by Peron may be added Humboldt's *Pers. Narr.*, vol. vi. p. 804; Flinders' *Voyage*, vol. i. p. 92; Labillardière, vol. i. p. 287; Ulloa's *Voyage*; *Voyage of the "Astrolabe"* and of the "Coquille"; Captain King's *Survey of Australia*, etc.