

tribute the discoloration of the water to spawn; but I found this to be the case only on one occasion. At the distance of several leagues from the archipelago of the Galapagos, the ship sailed through three strips of a dark yellowish or mud-like water; these strips were some miles long, but only a few yards wide, and they were separated from the surrounding water by a sinuous yet distinct margin. The color was caused by little gelatinous balls, about the fifth of an inch in diameter, in which numerous minute spherical ovules were imbedded: they were of two distinct kinds, one being of a reddish color and of a different shape from the other. I cannot form a conjecture as to what two kinds of animals these belonged. Captain Colnett remarks that this appearance is very common among the Galapagos Islands, and that the direction of the bands indicates that of the currents; in the described case, however, the line was caused by the wind. The only other appearance which I have to notice is a thin oily coat on the water which displays iridescent colors. I saw a considerable tract of the ocean thus covered on the coast of Brazil; the seamen attributed it to the putrefying carcass of some whale, which probably was floating at no great distance. I do not here mention the minute gelatinous particles, hereafter to be referred to, which are frequently dispersed throughout the water, for they are not sufficiently abundant to create any change of color.

There are two circumstances in the above accounts which appear remarkable: first, how do the various bodies which form the bands with defined edges keep together? In the case of the prawn-like crabs, their movements were as coinstantaneous as in a regiment of soldiers; but this cannot happen from anything like voluntary action with the ovules, or the confervæ, nor is it probable among the infusoria. Secondly, what causes the length and narrowness of the bands? The appearance so much resembles that which may be seen in every torrent, where the stream uncoils into long streaks the froth collected in the eddies, that I must attribute the effect to a similar action either of the currents of the air or