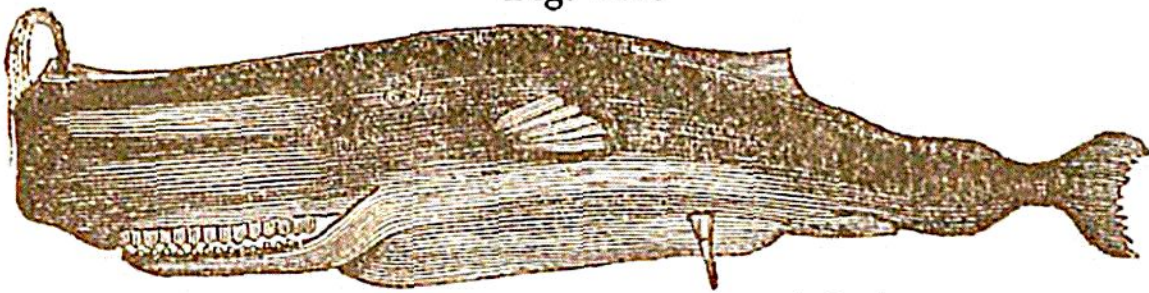


Sub-class 2. Order 1.—At the foot of the present Class are found the most gigantic animals with which it has pleased God to people the globe that we inhabit.

The destruction, however, at least in the Arctic seas, of these animals, is so great, that it has been supposed, they are not suffered to live long enough to attain their full dimensions; but this has been doubted. Mr. Scoresby saw none in those seas that exceeded sixty-eight feet in length; but some are said to reach one hundred and twenty feet.

Fig. 112.



Onchelot Whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*).

I saw one, which was exhibited two years ago, in the King's Mews, the length of the skeleton of which was more than ninety feet. In the Antarctic seas, where the cupidity of mercantile enterprise does not occasion any great destruction of them, some are said even to reach the enormous length of one hundred and sixty feet. God has placed these Leviathans,* where their enormous bulk can have full play, and their enormous appetite be fully satiated, in the vast and teeming depths of the ocean, where, whether they move horizontally, or by the aid of that powerful organ, their forked tail, seek the deep waters, there is space, and to spare, even for them.

The carnivorous, or predaceous Cetaceans may very conveniently be divided into sections by characters which distinguish their *maxillary* organs; the common whale,† and the fin-whale,‡ have their jaws armed with no real teeth, but only furnished with transverse plates, formed of

* See above, p. 316.

† Balæna.

‡ Balænoptera.