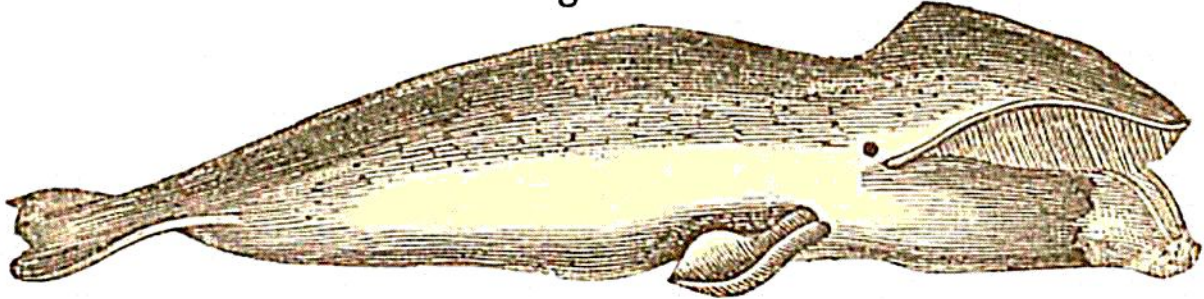


what is called whalebone, consisting of a fibrous horny substance, sufficient for the mastication of their, for the most part, gelatinous food, which swarms in such infinite

Fig. 113.

Whalebone Whale (*Balena mysticetus*).

myriads in the Arctic and icy seas, that Scoresby calculates it would require eighty thousand persons, constantly employed from the creation, to count the number of those existing simultaneously.

Animals of this section are further subdivided into those that have, and those that have not a dorsal fin. To the latter sub-division belongs the animal commonly distinguished as the *whale* by way of eminence,* and which is the principal object of the whale fishery. The senses of seeing and hearing in these animals, in the water, are extremely acute; and their eyes are so placed that they can see behind as well as before, and above them, and for a great distance; but when the head emerges from the water, this activity of sight and hearing ceases.

Their motions in the water are extremely rapid. They will sometimes assume a perpendicular position, with their head downwards, and rearing aloft their tremendous tail, lash the water with terrific violence, like the Indian god, churning the sea into foam, and filling the air with vapour. Sometimes, by the motion of this organ, they produce a thundering noise. They will dive to the bottom of the ocean; and when confined in the shallows, these unwieldy monsters will sometimes leap out of the water. Their

* Fig. 113.