

or *Macrocystis pyrifera*. This plant grows on every rock from low-water mark to a great depth, both on the outer coast and within the channels.' I believe, during the voyages of the "Adventure" and "Beagle," not one rock near the surface was discovered which was not buoyed by this floating weed. The good service it thus affords to vessels navigating near this stormy land is evident; and it certainly has saved many a one from being wrecked. I know few things more surprising than to see this plant growing and flourishing amid those great breakers of the western ocean, which no mass of rock, let it be ever so hard, can long resist. The stem is round, slimy, and smooth, and seldom has a diameter of so much as an inch. A few taken together are sufficiently strong to support the weight of the large loose stones, to which in the inland channels they grow attached; and yet some of these stones were so heavy that when drawn to the surface they could scarcely be lifted into a boat by one person. Captain Cook, in his second voyage, says that this plant at Kerguelen Land rises from a greater depth than twenty-four fathoms; "and as it does not grow in a perpendicular direction, but makes a very acute angle with the bottom, and much of it afterward spreads many fathoms on the surface of the sea, I am well warranted to say that some of it grows to the length of sixty fathoms and upward." I do not suppose the stem of any other plant attains so great a length as three hundred and sixty feet, as stated by Captain Cook. Captain Fitz Roy, moreover, found it growing<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Its geographical range is remarkably wide; it is found from the extreme southern islets near Cape Horn, as far north on the eastern coast (according to information given me by Mr. Stokes) as lat. 43°—but on the western coast, as Dr. Hooker tells me, it extends to the R. San Francisco in California, and perhaps even to Kamtschatka. We thus have an immense range in latitude; and as Cook, who must have been well acquainted with the species, found it at Kerguelen Land, no less than 140° in longitude.

<sup>2</sup> Voyages of the "Adventure" and "Beagle," vol. i. p. 363.—It appears that sea-weed grows extremely quick. Mr. Stephenson found (Wilson's Voyage round Scotland, vol. ii. p. 228) that a rock uncovered only at spring-tides, which had been chiselled smooth in November, on the following May, that is within six months afterward, was thickly covered with *Fucus digitatus* two feet, and *F. esculentus* six feet, in length.