



An English-Chinese Collation

# 20000 Leagues Under the Sea 海底两万里

(法)儒勒·凡尔纳

中国戏剧出版社

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中英文对照全译本丛书

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## 外国文学名著精粹文集

The Collected Masterworks of the Foreign Literature

## 译 序

这本小说描绘了博物学家阿龙纳斯教授，他的仆人及鱼叉手尼德·兰等人为探索海中怪物所经历的种种海中奇遇。

怪物在海洋中出没的消息被传得沸沸扬扬。法国巴黎博物馆的博物学家阿龙纳斯教授带领他的仆人康塞尔应邀加盟林肯号远征队开始了追捕怪物的行动。在林肯号上，他们结识了鱼叉手——加拿大人尼德·兰，并与他一起发现了令众多航家闻风丧胆的怪物竟然是一艘人造的潜水艇，但同时他们也成为了该潜水艇——“鹦鹉螺号”上的囚犯，在尼摩船长的许可下，他们开始了一次无比奇妙的海底旅行。其间，他们一次又一次被壮丽的海洋景观所震撼，并不得不叹服“鹦鹉螺号”的神奇及其主人的智慧。

作者以细腻的文笔、精确的数字及澎湃的激情为读者展现了一个五彩缤纷的海底世界，让我们一起随“鹦鹉螺号”去遨游神奇的海底世界吧！

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## Chapter 1 A Shifting Reef

The year 1866 was signalled by a remarkable incident, a mysterious and puzzling phenomenon, which doubtless no one has yet forgotten. Not to mention rumours which agitated the maritime population and excited the public mind, even in the interior of continents, seafaring men were particularly excited. Merchants, common sailors, captains of vessels, skippers, both of Europe and America, naval officers of all countries, and the Governments of several States on the two continents, were deeply interested in the matter.

For some time past vessels had been met by "an enormous thing," a long object, spindle-shaped, occasionally phosphorescent, and infinitely larger and more rapid in its movements than a whale.

The facts relating to this apparition (entered in various log-books) agreed in most respects as to the shape of the object or creature in question, the untiring rapidity of its movements, its surprising power of locomotion, and the peculiar life with which it seemed endowed. If it was a whale, it surpassed in size all those hitherto classified in science.

Taking into consideration the mean of observations made at divers times—rejecting the timid estimate of those who assigned to this object a length of two hundred feet, equally with the exaggerated opinions which set it down as a mile in width and three in length—we might fairly conclude that this mysterious being surpassed greatly all dimensions admitted by the learned ones of the day, if it existed at all.

And that it DID exist was an undeniable fact; and, with that tendency which disposes the human mind in favour of the marvellous, we can understand the excitement produced in the entire

## 第一章 飞逝的大怪礁

公元 1866 年,让人刻骨铭心难以忘怀。这一年,发生了一起稀奇古怪的事件。对于这起尚未得到合理解释的奇异现象,毫无疑问没有谁能够忘记。当时,海员们的心情特别激动,更不用提那些被各种形形色色传闻搞得心神不安的港口居民了。关注这件事的人范围广泛,包括欧洲和美洲的大商贾、船主、船长或各类船只的掌舵人、世界各国的海军官员,以至后来上述两大洲的各国政府。

不久以前,有好几艘船只在海上碰见了一个“庞然大物”:长长的,梭状,有时泛出磷光,体积比鲸鱼大得多,行动也比鲸鱼快得多。

与它有关的事实(各种航海日志所记载的):诸如这个物体或是这个生物的形状,它行进时快得出奇的速度,它运动中显示出的令人吃惊的能量,它那像是天赋的生命活力等方面,相互之间还是相当吻合的。如果说这是一种鲸类动物的话,它的体积却大大超过了该学科中曾经加以归类的鲸鱼。

将几次观察的结果平均一下——摒弃那些保守的估计,即认为这个物体有 200 英尺长,同时也不赞同那些夸大其辞的看法,认为其有一海里宽 3 英尺长——我们可以十分确定地得出结论,假如这个不同凡响的生物真实存在的话,那么,它的体积大大超过了时至今日所有鱼类学家们所认同过的各个鱼类的体积。

然而,这个物体的存在却是个不容否认的事实。因此,对于它这般神奇的超自然事物出现给整个世界带来的激动,我们凭着人类所固有的好奇心便可



world by this supernatural apparition. As to classing it in the list of fables, the idea was out of the question.

On the 20th of July, 1866, the steamer Governor Higginson, of the Calcutta and Burnach Steam Navigation Company, had met this moving mass five miles off the east coast of Australia. Captain Baker thought at first that he was in the presence of an unknown sandbank; he even prepared to determine its exact position when two columns of water, projected by the mysterious object, shot with a hissing noise a hundred and fifty feet up into the air. Now, unless the sandbank had been submitted to the intermittent eruption of a geyser, the Governor Higginson had to do neither more nor less than with an aquatic mammal, unknown till then, which threw up from its blow-holes columns of water mixed with air and vapour.

Similar facts were observed on the 23rd of July in the same year, in the Pacific Ocean, by the Columbus, of the West India and Pacific Steam Navigation Company. But this extraordinary creature could transport itself from one place to another with surprising velocity; as, in an interval of three days, the Governor Higginson and the Columbus had observed it at two different points of the chart, separated by a distance of more than seven hundred nautical leagues.

Fifteen days later, two thousand miles farther off, the Helvetia, of the Compagnie - Nationale, and the Shannon, of the Royal Mail Steamship Company, sailing to windward in that portion of the Atlantic lying between the United States and Europe, respectively signalled the monster to each other in  $42^{\circ}15' \text{ N. lat. and } 60^{\circ}35' \text{ W. long.}$  In these simultaneous observations they thought themselves justified in estimating the minimum length of the mammal at more than three hundred and fifty feet, as the Shannon and Helvetia were of smaller dimensions than it, though they measured three hundred feet over all.

以很容易理解了。至于认为这是子乌虚有的论调,则是毫无意义的。

1866年7月20日,加尔各答——布纳希汽轮航运公司的希金森总督号,在澳洲东海岸5海里处,曾经遇见这个巨型动物。开始,船长贝克还以为是一座未知的巨礁,他甚至想测定它的准确方位,忽然只见两道水柱从这个怪物体内喷射出来,呼啸着冲上云天,窜了150英尺高。由此来看,除非是这座巨礁上面有间歇喷泉,否则希金森总督号所面对的就是一种还不为人知的海洋哺乳动物:它能从鼻孔中喷出两道夹杂着水汽的水柱。

同年7月23日,在太平洋,西印度——太平洋汽轮航运公司的哥伦比亚号也观测到类似的事实。这个奇特的动物能够以惊人的速度从一个地方游到另一个地方,因为希金森号和哥伦比亚号曾分别在相距700海里的两个地点见到过它,但只间隔了3天。

15天之后,在2,000海里外,当国立轮船公司的海尔维蒂亚号和皇家邮轮公司的山农号在位于美国和欧洲之间的大西洋海面上迎面近舷对驶之时,它们在北纬42度15分,西经60度35分同时看见了这个怪物。从两条船同时观测到的结果来看,山农号和海尔维蒂亚号两船首尾相连300码,都比不上它长,而当时最长的鲸鱼,像那些时常出没于阿留申群岛的久兰马克岛和翁居里克岛附近海面的鲸鱼,从来没有超过60码的——甚至还没有达到这一长度。因此,可以大概估计出这个哺乳动

Now the largest whales, those which frequent those parts of the sea round the Aleutian, Kulam-mak, and Umgullich islands, have never exceeded the length of sixty yards, if they attain that.

In every place of great resort the monster was the fashion. They sang of it in the cafes, ridiculed it in the papers, and represented it on the stage. All kinds of stories were circulated regarding it. There appeared in the papers caricatures of every gigantic and imaginary creature, from the white whale, the terrible "Moby Dick" of sub-arctic regions, to the immense kraken, whose tentacles could entangle a ship of five hundred tons and hurry it into the abyss of the ocean. The legends of ancient times were even revived.

Then burst forth the unending argument between the believers and the unbelievers in the societies of the wise and the scientific journals. "The question of the monster" inflamed all minds. Editors of scientific journals, quarrelling with believers in the supernatural, spilled seas of ink during this memorable campaign, some even drawing blood; for from the sea-serpent they came to direct personalities.

During the first months of the year 1867 the question seemed buried, never to revive, when new facts were brought before the public. It was then no longer a scientific problem to be solved, but a real danger seriously to be avoided. The question took quite another shape. The monster became a small island, a rock, a reef, but a reef of indefinite and shifting proportions.

On the 5th of March, 1867, the Moravian, of the Montreal Ocean Company, finding herself during the night in  $27^{\circ}30'$  lat. and  $72^{\circ}15'$  long., struck on her starboard quarter a rock, marked in no chart for that part of the sea. Under the combined efforts of the wind and its four hundred horse power, it was going at the rate of thirteen knots. Had it not been for the superior strength of the hull of the Moravian, she would have been

物至少有 350 多英尺长。

在各大城市,这怪物成为时髦话题,人们在咖啡馆里赞叹不止,在报刊上嘲弄不休,甚至把它搬上了舞台。报纸正好有了机会来制造各色奇谈。在那些发行量不大的报刊上,还出现了关于各种巨形奇异动物的报道,从白鲸、北极海中可怕的“莫比·狄克”直到庞然大物“克拉肯”(它可以用触须缠住 500 吨重的大船,将其拖下海底。)都一应俱全。古典文献都被搬出来了。

当时,在学术团体中和科学报刊上,相信者与怀疑论者之间展开了不停的争论。“怪物问题”使得人们群情激昂。科学杂志编辑同一些自命不凡的文人打起了笔墨官司,有一些人甚至还为此付出了血的代价,因为他们的矛头所向的不是海蛇,而是变成了人身攻击。

在 1867 年的头几个月里,这个问题似乎被人淡忘了,看起来不会有人再提起。可就在此时,公众又了解到了一些新的情况。此时此刻,这已不再是一个有待解决的科学问题,而完全是一桩必须加以避免的严重的现实危险。问题转变成了另一种情况。这怪物变成了小岛、岩山、巨礁,而且行动莫测,难以把握。

1867 年 3 月 5 日夜,蒙特利尔海运公司的摩拉维安号行驶至北纬  $27^{\circ}$  度  $30'$  分,西经  $72^{\circ}$  度  $15'$  的海面时,船的右舷后半部撞上了一座礁石,而在任何航海图上都没有标示出这一海域有一座礁石。其时,摩拉维安号凭着风力及其本身 400 马力的推动,船速达到了每小时 13 海里,要不是船体特别坚固,被撞之后,无疑会连同它从加拿大乘载的

broken by the shock and gone down with the 237 passengers she was bringing home from Canada.

The accident happened about five o'clock in the morning, as the day was breaking. The officers of the quarter-deck hurried to the after-part of the vessel. They examined the sea with the most careful attention. They saw nothing but a strong eddy about three cables' length distant, as if the surface had been violently agitated. The bearings of the place were taken exactly, and the Moravian continued its route without apparent damage. Had it struck on a submerged rock, or on an enormous wreck? They could not tell; but, on examination of the ship's bottom when undergoing repairs, it was found that part of her keel was broken.

This fact, so grave in itself, might perhaps have been forgotten like many others if, three weeks after, it had not been re-enacted under similar circumstances. But, thanks to the nationality of the victim of the shock, thanks to the reputation of the company to which the vessel belonged, the circumstance became extensively circulated.

The 13th of April, 1867, the sea being beautiful, the breeze favourable, the Scotia, of the Cunard Company's line, found herself in 15° 12' long. and 45° 37' lat. She was going at the speed of thirteen knots and a half.

At seventeen minutes past four in the afternoon, whilst the passengers were assembled at lunch in the great saloon, a slight shock was felt on the hull of the Scotia, on her quarter, a little aft of the port-paddle.

The Scotia had not struck, but she had been struck, and seemingly by something rather sharp and penetrating than blunt. The shock had been so slight that no one had been alarmed, had it not been for the shouts of the carpenter's watch, who rushed on to the bridge, exclaiming, "He are sinking! we are sinking!"

At first the passengers were much fright-

237 名乘客一起沉到海底去。

这起事故发生在清晨 5 点钟左右,正值天放亮的时候。出事之时,值班船员迅速跑向船后部。他们非常仔细地观察海面,但什么也没有发现,只看见在距离船 200 米处有一个波涛碎成浪花生起的巨大漩涡,似乎该处海面方才受到过猛烈的搅动。当时,对出事地点做了精确的记录。摩拉维安号在没有明显损坏的情况下,又继续航行。它是撞上了一处海底的岩石?还是撞上一遇难船只的残骸?人们无从知道。摩拉维安号直到进船坞检修的时候,才发现它的一部分龙骨已经断裂。

这事实本身虽然是极其严重的,但是要不是在 3 个星期之后,在类似的境况下发生了同样的事件,它也会同其他事件一样被人忘记。而新发生的那次撞船事故,不过是由于受损船只的国籍及其所属公司的声望,才使之广泛传播。

1867 年 4 月 13 日,海上风平浪静,适于航行。当时,堪纳德轮船公司的航班斯戈蒂亚号正在西经 15 度 12 分,北纬 45 度 37 分的海面上行驶。时速为 13.5 海里。

下午 4 时 17 分,乘客们正在大厅里用餐的时候,斯戈蒂亚号稍后一点靠左舷机轮的地方,感到了一次轻微的撞击。

斯戈蒂亚号并没有撞上别的什么东西,而是它被别的东西撞到了。撞它的东西谈不上尖锐锋利,而且像是钝器。这次碰撞感觉非常轻微,如果不是货舱监视员跑到甲板上面叫喊:"我们的船在下沉!我们的船在下沉!"恐怕船上谁也不会对这起碰撞引起警觉。

开始,乘客们异常慌乱,但安德森

ened, but Captain Anderson hastened to reassure them. The danger could not be imminent. The Scotia, divided into seven compartments by strong partitions, could brave with impunity any leak.

Captain Anderson went down immediately into the hold. He found that the sea was pouring into the fifth compartment; and the rapidity of the influx proved that the force of the water was considerable. Fortunately this compartment did not hold the boilers, or the fires would have been immediately extinguished.

Captain Anderson ordered the engines to be stopped at once, and one of the men went down to ascertain the extent of the injury. Some minutes afterwards they discovered the existence of a large hole, two yards in diameter, in the ship's bottom. Such a leak could not be stopped, and the Scotia, her paddles half submerged, was obliged to continue her course. She was then three hundred miles from Cape Clear, and, after three days' delay, which caused great uneasiness in Liverpool, she entered the basin of the company.

The engineers visited the Scotia, which was put in dry dock. They could scarcely believe it possible; at two yards and a half below water-mark was a regular rent, in the form of an isosceles triangle. The broken place in the iron plates was so perfectly defined that it could not have been more neatly done by a punch. It was clear, then, that the instrument producing the perforation was not of a common stamp and, after having been driven with prodigious strength, and piercing an iron plate  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches thick, had withdrawn itself by a backward motion.

Such was the last fact, which resulted in exciting once more the torrent of public opinion. From this moment all unlucky casualties which could not be otherwise accounted for were put down to the monster. Upon this imaginary creature rested the responsibility of all these shipwrecks, which unfortunately were considerable;

船长很快便稳住了局势。事实上,这种危险也并非很紧迫。而且,斯戈蒂亚号的7间船舱是由水密舱壁分隔开来的,少量漏洞不会损害整个船体。

船长安德森迅速跑到底舱。他发现海水已经浸入了第5间船舱,而且速度相当快,这说明水量很大。庆幸的是,这间舱里没有蒸汽锅炉,否则,炉火就会立刻熄灭掉。

安德森船长命令立即关闭发动机,并且叫其中一位水手潜水查清楚船体受损程度。不一会儿,便查明轮船船体机身处有一个直径两米的大洞。这样的漏洞是不可能堵住的。因此,斯戈蒂亚号就只能在它的轮处于半淹状态下继续航行。它当时距离克利尔海峡还有300海里,在延误了3天以后才驶进公司的船坞。这次事件使得整个利物浦都人心惶惶。

斯戈蒂亚号被架了起来,工程师们对它进行了检修。他们都不敢相信看到的事实。船体吃水线下两码半的地方显现出一个规则的等边三角形裂口,铁皮上的裂痕齐齐整整,即使打洞钳也无法轧制得那般精确。轧穿这个洞的器械肯定不是普通钢材制作的,因为它在以神奇的力量向前冲撞,戳穿了  $1\frac{3}{8}$  英寸的铁皮之后,还能做出一种倒退动作,使其自身得以逃脱。

这次事件的事实就是这样,结果它又使得公众的情绪重新激昂起来。因为从此以后,以前那些无法查明原因的不幸的海难事件现在全都归到了这个怪物头上。这个神奇的动物负起了所有沉船事故的责任,而沉没船只的数目巨大。根据劳埃德报告记载,每年因下

for of three thousand ships whose loss was annually recorded at Lloyd's, the number of sailing and steam - ships supposed to be totally lost, from the absence of all news, amounted to not less than two hundred!

Now, it was the "monster" who, justly or unjustly, was accused of their disappearance, and, thanks to it, communication between the different continents became more and more dangerous. The public demanded sharply that the seas should at any price be relieved from this formidable cetacean.

## Chapter 2 Pro And Con

At the period when these events took place, I had just returned from a scientific research in the disagreeable territory of Nebraska, in the United States. In virtue of my office as Assistant Professor in the Museum of Natural History in Paris, the French Government had attached me to that expedition. After six months in Nebraska, I arrived in New York towards the end of March, laden with a precious collection. My departure for France was fixed for the first days in May. Meanwhile I was occupying myself in classifying my mineralogical, botanical, and zoological riches, when the accident happened to the Scotia.

I was perfectly up in the subject which was the question of the day. How could I be otherwise? I had read and reread all the American and European papers without being any nearer a conclusion. This mystery puzzled me. Under the impossibility of forming an opinion, I jumped from one extreme to the other. That there really was something could not be doubted, and the incredulous were invited to put their finger on the wound of the Scotia.

On my arrival at New York the question was at its height. The theory of the floating island,

落不明而判定失踪的航船,其数量至少有 200 艘!

这个时候,这个“怪物”便因船只失踪受到了人们公正或不公正的指责。由于它的存在,各大洲之间的航行变得越来越危险了。公众纷纷表态,坚决要求不惜一切代价把这条令人生畏的鲸怪消灭。

## 第二章 支持与反对

这些意外事件发生的时候,我刚结束在美国内布拉斯加州的贫困地区的一项科学研究工作回来。我作为巴黎自然史博物馆的助理教授,法国政府委派我参加了该项科研。我在内布拉斯加州呆了 6 个月之后,带着一些珍贵的收集品,3 月底到达纽约。我定于 5 月上旬起程回法国。于是,我便利用这段时间,对我收集的那些矿物和动植物标本进行分类整理,而斯戈蒂亚号出事刚好是发生在此时。

我完全了解时下这个时髦的话题,我怎么会不了解呢?我反复阅读欧美各类刊物,但对此事的认识却未能更进一步。这个谜团让我困惑。我拿不定主意,当时只好在两种极端的见解之间游疑不定。这个事实确实存在,这一点毫无疑问,谁要是怀疑,就请他指出斯戈蒂亚号那个创口是怎么造成的吧。

在我到达纽约的时候,这个问题的讨论已经白热化。某些不学无术的人

and the unapproachable sandbank, supported by minds little competent to form a judgment, was abandoned. And, indeed, unless this shoal had a machine in its stomach, how could it change its position with such astonishing rapidity?

From the same cause, the idea of a floating hull of an enormous wreck was given up.

There remained, then, only two possible solutions of the question, which created two distinct parties: on one side, those who were for a monster of colossal strength; on the other, those who were for a sub-marine vessel of enormous motive power.

But this last theory, plausible as it was, could not stand against inquiries made in both worlds. That a private gentle man should have such a machine at his command was not likely. Where, when, and how was it built? and how could its construction have been kept secret?

Certainly a Government might possess such a destructive machine. And in these disastrous times, when the ingenuity of man has multiplied the power of weapons of war, it was possible that, without the knowledge of others, a State might try to work such a formidable engine.

But the idea of a war machine fell before the declaration of Governments. As public interest was in question, and transatlantic communications suffered, their veracity could not be doubted. But how admit that the construction of this submarine boat had escaped the public eye? For a private gentleman to keep the secret under such circumstances would be very difficult, and for a State whose every act is persistently watched by powerful rivals, certainly impossible.

Upon my arrival in New York several persons did me the honour of consulting me on the phenomenon in question. I had published in France a work in quarto, in two volumes, entitled *Mysteries of the Great Submarine Grounds*. This book, highly approved of in the learned world, gained

提出的诸如浮动的小岛,无法接近的礁石之类的解释,已经遭到了否定。否定的理由非常简单:除非这礁石腹部藏有一台机器,否则,它怎么可能以这般惊人的速度四处游动呢?

说它是一只浮动的船体,是一遇难船只的巨型残骸漂流物的论调也被否定,理由同上。

那么,就只剩下两种可能的解释,而人们也由此分成了两个派别:一派认为,这是一种拥有无限力量的怪物;另一派则说,它是一艘功率巨大的“潜水”艇。

这后一种假设尽管可以成立,但经过在两大洲所进行的调查之后,它便站不住脚了。因为,一个个人拥有一种这样的器械,在当时几乎是不可能的。他在何时何地如何制造出这种器械?他又怎么能够保守住这个秘密?

当然一个国家的政府才可能拥有这样的一种毁灭性武器装置,在人类为增强武器威力而费尽心机的可悲时代,一个国家是可能会瞒着其他国家去制造这种可怕的武器的。

然而这种战争器械的假设,在各国政府的正式声明面前也站不住脚了。因为这件事关系到公共利益,既然海上运输遭到破坏,各国政府的诚实难以置疑。此外,又怎么能够说这艘潜艇的建造可以瞒得过大众的监督呢?在这种情形下,个人要想保守住秘密尚且极端困难,而对于一个行动往往受到敌对势力密切监视的国家来说,就更加不可能了。

我一到纽约,就有好几个人专程来向我征求对于这件事情的意见。此前我曾经在法国出版过一部名为《海底的秘密》的专著,八开本,两卷。这本书受到了学术界的好评,而我也因此成了博物学中这一颇为神秘的领域的专家。



for me a special reputation in this rather obscure branch of Natural History. My advice was asked. As long as I could deny the reality of the fact, I confined myself to a decided negative. But soon, finding myself driven into a corner, I was obliged to explain myself point by point.

I discussed the question in all its forms, politically and scientifically; and I give here an extract from a carefully - studied article which I published in the number of the 30th of April. It ran as follows:

"After examining one by one the different theories, rejecting all other suggestions, it becomes necessary to admit the existence of a marine animal of enormous power.

"The great depths of the ocean are entirely unknown to us. Soundings cannot reach them. What passes in those remote depths—what beings live, or can live, twelve or fifteen miles beneath the surface of the waters—what is the organisation of these animals, we can scarcely conjecture.

However, the solution of the problem submitted to me may modify the form of the dilemma.

Either we do know all the varieties of beings which people our planet, or we do not.

If we do NOT know them all—if Nature has still secrets in the deeps for us, nothing is more conformable to reason than to admit the existence of fishes, or cetaceans of other kinds, or even of new species, of an organisation formed to inhabit the strata inaccessible to soundings, and which an accident of some sort has brought at long intervals to the upper level of the ocean.

"If, on the contrary, we DO know all living kinds, we must necessarily seek for the animal in question amongst those marine beings already classed; and, in that case, I should be disposed to admit the existence of a gigantic narwhal.

"The common narwhal, or unicorn of the sea, often attains a length of sixty feet. Increase its size fivefold or tenfold, give it strength propor-

人们询问过我的意见。要是我能够否定这个事件的真实性,我总是给予断然的拒绝。可很快,我出于无奈只好明确表示了自己的见解。

我从政治角度和学术角度讨论了这个问题的方方面面。现将我发表在4月30日该报上的一篇材料极其丰富的文章节录如下:

"在对各种不同的假设——研究,否定了其他的猜想之后,我们不得不承认确实存在着一种具有惊人力量的海洋生物。"

"我们对深层海底毫无知识。探测器也无法深入到哪里。海洋最底层究竟如何呢?海面下12,000米或15,000米的地方有什么或者可能有什么生命存在呢?这些生物体的机体构造又是怎样的呢?这一切实在难以预测。"

"但是,我们眼前的这个问题可以用二难推理的方式来解决。"

"对于生活在我们这颗星球上的各种各样的生物,我们或许认识,或许不认识。"

"要是我们不认识所有这些生物,而大自然又仍然对我们保守着某些生物秘密的话,我们就不能不承认某些鱼类或鲸类新类型甚至新品种的存在,而它们具有一种基本上'不可漂浮'的器官,生活在探测器不能达至的海底深层。出于某种原因,它们偶尔也会浮出海面。这种说法看来比较切合实际。"

"反之,倘若我们认识所有这些生物,那么就必须从业已分类的海洋生物中找出我们讨论的这只动物。在这种情形下,我就不得不承认有一种巨大的独角鲸的存在。"

"一般的独角鲸即海麒麟通常身长60英尺。将这一长度扩大5倍,乃至10倍,再给这只鲸类动物以同它的身

tionate to its size, lengthen its destructive weapons, and you obtain the animal required. It will have the proportions determined by the officers of the Shannon, the instrument required by the perforation of the Scotia, and the power necessary to pierce the hull of the steamer.

“Indeed, the narwhal is armed with a sort of ivory sword, a halberd, according to the expression of certain naturalists. The principal tusk has the hardness of steel. Some of these tusks have been found buried in the bodies of whales, which the unicorn always attacks with success. Others have been drawn out, not without trouble, from the bottoms of ships, which they had pierced through and through, as a gimlet pierces a barrel. The Museum of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris possesses one of these defensive weapons, two yards and a quarter in length, and fifteen inches in diameter at the base.

“Very well! suppose this weapon to be six times stronger and the animal ten times more powerful; launch it at the rate of twenty miles an hour, and you obtain a shock capable of producing the catastrophe required.

Until further information, therefore, I shall maintain it to be a sea-unicorn of colossal dimensions, armed not with a halberd, but with a real spur, as the armoured frigates, or the ‘rams’ of war, whose massiveness and motive power it would possess at the same time.

Thus may this puzzling phenomenon be explained, unless there be something over and above all that one has ever conjectured, seen, perceived, or experienced; which is just within the bounds of possibility.”

These last words were cowardly on my part; but, up to a certain point, I wished to shelter my dignity as professor, and not give too much cause for laughter to the Americans, who laugh well when they do laugh. I reserved for myself a way of escape. In effect, however, I admitted the existence of the “monster.”

材成比例的力量,同时让其进攻型武器的性能得到相应的增强,这便成了我们所要求的动物。它就具有山农号军官们测定的长度,有能够戳穿斯戈蒂亚号船的触角和洞穿一只轮船船壳的力量。”

“事实上,据某些博物学家讲,这种独角鲸有一柄牙质利剑或一把骨质的戟,那是一根具有钢铁般硬度的大牙。有人曾经在鲸鱼身上发现过这样一些牙齿,说明独角鲸总是能成功地用牙齿发动进攻。也有人从船底费力地拔出过类似的牙齿,这些牙齿凿穿船底就像利锥钻透木桶一样。巴黎医学院陈列馆时下就拥有这样的一根巨齿,它的长度是 2.25 码,底宽为 15 英寸!”

“那么,假设那武器的威力还要强 6 倍,那动物的力量还要大 10 倍,它以每小时 20 海里的速度前进,这样一来,就能得出制造那种海难事故所需要的撞击力。”

“因此,在获得更多资料之前,我倾向可以把这动物说成一条独角鲸,它体形巨大,身上长有的不是一把剑戟,而是如同铁甲船或战舰那样的真正的冲角,而且还同时具备战舰的那般重量和力量。”

“这种令人不解的怪现象便得到了解释——或者恰恰相反,无论人们瞥见、看到、感受或者经历过什么,而这一切都纯属于虚乌有,这也是完全可能的!”

最后这几句话说明我没有定论,我这么说,只是想在一定程度上保持一名教授的尊严,同时也不愿让美国人笑话,因为他们笑起来是很过分的。我自己留了一条退路。实际上,我承认了这只奇异怪物的存在。

My article was warmly discussed, which procured it a high reputation. It rallied round it a certain number of partisans. The solution it proposed gave, at least, full liberty to the imagination. The human mind delights in grand conceptions of supernatural beings. And the sea is precisely their best vehicle, the only medium through which these giants (against which terrestrial animals, such as elephants or rhinoceroses, are as nothing) can be produced or developed.

The industrial and commercial papers treated the question chiefly from this point of view. The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette, the Lloyd's List, the Packet - Boat, and the Maritime and Colonial Review, all papers devoted to insurance companies which threatened to raise their rates of premium, were unanimous on this point.

Public opinion had been pronounced. The United States were the first in the field; and in New York they made preparations for an expedition destined to pursue this narwhal. A frigate of great speed, the Abraham Lincoln, was put in commission as soon as possible. The arsenals were opened to Commander Farragut, who hastened the arming of his frigate;

But, as it always happens, the moment it was decided to pursue the monster, the monster did not appear. For two months no one heard it spoken of. No ship met with it. It seemed as if this unicorn knew of the plots weaving around it. It had been so much talked of, even through the Atlantic cable, that jesters pretended that this slender fly had stopped a telegram on its passage and was making the most of it.

So when the frigate had been armed for a long campaign, and provided with formidable fishing apparatus, no one could tell what course to pursue. Impatience grew apace, when, on the 2nd of July, they learned that a steamer of the line of San Francisco, from California to Shanghai, had seen the animal three weeks before in the

我的文章引起了人们热烈的讨论,产生了巨大的反响。有许多人赞同这篇文章。而且文中的结论可以勾起人们海阔天空地幻想。人类总是喜欢沉湎于种种奇异怪诞生命的伟大遐想之中,而海洋正是这般幻想的最佳媒介,是巨型动物(与之相比,陆地上的动物,大象或者犀牛,简直小得可怜)赖以产生或成长的唯一环境。

工商界的报刊主要是从这后一种看法的角度来讨论问题的。《海运业商情杂志》、《劳埃德航海杂志》、《邮船杂志》、《海洋殖民杂志》,以及为那些声明要提高保险费的保险公司做宣传的各类报纸,在这一点上全都论调一致。

公共舆论一经统一,美利坚合众国便第一个发表声明,在纽约,组织一支远征队去清除独角鲸。一艘大型高速驱逐舰林肯号开始紧锣密鼓地筹备,并决定尽可能早地驶出海面。所有兵工厂都为急欲装备驱逐舰的法拉古舰长优先提供种种便利。

事情往往如此,正当人们决心要清除这个怪物的时候,这只怪物又销声匿迹了。两个月间,谁也没有它的消息。没有任何一艘船舶遇见过它。这条独角鲸似乎知道大家都已经准备好了要对付它,因为有关它的话题谈论得太多了,甚至还有通过大西洋海底电缆谈论的呢!所以,一些人开玩笑说,这个精明的家伙一定是中途截获了电报,现在已经有所防备了

这样,这艘用于远征并装备上强大威力捕鱼器械的大型驱逐舰只,竟不知道应该驶往何处。人们的心情便因此变得越发烦躁。直到7月2日,才有消息说,从加利福尼亚州的旧金山开往上海的一只轮船,3个星期前在太平洋北部海面上又看见了这个怪物。