

In the Genoese system, 100 « pounds » (*libbre*) made a *centinaio*, « hundredweight »; the *centinaio* was 72 *saggi*; the *saggio*, 24 *carati* (Pegolotti, EVANS, 32).

YULE, in his *Marco Polo* (Y, II, 442), rendered « cantar » as « hundredweight »; but in *Cathay* (Y¹, III, 165, 167), he has retained « cantar » and reserved « hundredweight » for the equivalence of « centinaio ». Although both « cantar » and « centinaio » etymologically mean « hundred [weight] », they have diverged in value to such an extent that the course adopted in *Cathay* seems to be safer.

116. CAPDOILLE

capadocle P
capdoille, capdol F
capdoilz FB
capdos FA

capi dollio VB
capidioli L
capidolii L¹
capita olei, cauodoio Z

chapedoge, gapedoge VA
chapidoglie, chapodoglie TA¹
chapodogli TA³

This is of course the word which has survived in Italian as *capidoglio* and *capidoglia*; although earlier Italian dictionaries mention *capodoglio* only from Polo's Italian versions, this latter form has been revived in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* and is adopted in modern Italian by BENEDETTO (B¹, 352, 357). Literally the name means of course « head of oil », « oil-head » (cf. *capita olei* in Z), and it is still the Italian name of the sperm whale or cachalot. At one time it was more or less adopted as a technical term in French; BECHERELLE still listed « capidolio » as being the name of a dolphin among French naturalists.

In Vol. I, 426, mention is made of a suggestion of mine which I wish to develop and also to qualify. I no longer think now that the sentence found only in RAMUSIO is due, in its second part (*e della testa assai botte di olio*), to a « misunderstanding or explanation of *cauodoio* ». It seems more likely that there was there a genuine sentence, omitted in Z, perhaps because it was corrupt in the ms. from which Z was copied or translated. As MOULE has suggested to me, the unintelligible *et quandoque* of Z may belong to that lost sentence, and represent **et cauodoie*. Whatever the case may be, the fact that oil was extracted from the head of the « capdoille » is of course true, and it accounts for the very name of the animal.

The English names for the « capdoille », *i. e.* « cachalot » and « sperm whale », are not very old. The first occurrence of « cachalut », as a word used in the region of Bayonne and Biarritz, is in 1670, in the Latin *Miscellanea Curiosa*, Francfort, 1670, p. 266; « cachalot » is then found in a French book in 1746, and in English in 1747 (MURRAY). The most probable etymology is to derive « cachalot » from Gascon *cachau*, Catal. *caxal*, meaning « tooth »; the teeth, of which the cachalot makes good use for his defence, are his distinctive characteristic, while the true whale has no teeth.

The other name, « sperm whale », is a survival of the belief that the waxy white substance actually found in a large cavity and in the subcutaneous folds of the head of the cachalot was the sperm of the animal, hence its name *spermaceti*, lit. « whale sperm ». Through the same