

FISHING FOR WHALES WITH BAIT OF TUNNY \neq MARCO POLO
thither; and wherever they pass the fat which is in the brine leaves as it were a path on the waters, which is seen by the fat. And if it happens that they pass by a place where a whale is, or by some means the whale perceives the scent of the fat of the tunny, because it may come upon the place where the small ship has passed, it follows that track by the scent which it perceives of the tunny for a hundred miles if the small ship where the tunny was should be so far distant. And it does this from eagerness to come up to the tunny. And when it has reached the small ship so that the men see it, they throw it two or three pieces of tunny. And when it has eaten them it is immediately made drunk as a man is made drunken with wine. Then some of them climb on to it and have a stake of iron barbed at the end so that if it is fixed in it cannot be pulled out because of the barb. And one will put the stake on the head of the whale and another will strike the stake with a wooden mallet and will immediately fix it all in the head of the whale. For the whale through its drunkenness hardly feels the men who stand on it, so that they can do whatever they wish. But at the upper end of the stake is tied a thick rope and quite 300 paces long; and at every end of fifty paces of the rope is tied a bottle and a board. Above the bottle is fixed a flag,¹ and at the bottom a counterpoise so that the bottle may not roll round, namely so that the flag may be upright. And the last end of the rope is tied to a boat which they have with them. And some of them will be in that boat so that when the whale feeling itself wounded turns to fly, and those who shall be upon it to fix the stake remaining on the surface of the water swim to the boat and enter into it, then one of the bottles with a flag is thrown out into the water, and so it has fifty paces of rope. And when the whale plunges and flees it drags the boat to which the rope is tied after it. And if it seems to succeed in drawing downward too much, then another bottle with another flag is thrown out, because it cannot draw the bottles under the water, and so it is so much tired by dragging them after it that in the end it is weakened by the wound and dies. And the small ship goes following it by the sight of the flags, and when it is dead they draw it up to the small ship and afterwards tow it to R their island or to one near them, where they sell it. They take the ambergris out of the belly Z and many butts of oil from the head.² And they take indeed from one the value of a thousand Z pounds. And in this way they catch them.³ They have moreover in the said island very Z beautiful cotton cloth in great quantity and other wares enough, and specially great

¹ *penellus* cf. p. xcv. In the first two places where the word comes it seems to be written *periellus*, & was so copied in all five places in 1795 & so printed by B.. For a contemporary example of the word see *Chron. Parmense ad an. 1296* (in MURATORI IX, 9., 1902, p. 74): *et habuerunt quinque penellos et insignia marchionis Exstensis com tribus aliis banderiis magnis; & DANTE Purg. 29, 75: di tratti pennelli avean sembiante.* For "bottle" (*boticula*) and "board" (*asser*) we should perhaps substitute "barrel" and "spar".

² *& della testa assai botte di olio.* Professor PELLIOT suggests that this remark in R is due to misunderstanding or explanation of *caudoio* or *capdoille*, "oil-head".

³ The passage seems to end imperfectly: *ipsas capiunt & quandoque* cf. p. xcv.