

Rooms of the Literary and Historical Society,

Quebec, 19th August 1871.

My Dear Doctor Dawson

I am this moment in receipt of yours of 17th inst. I had not an opportunity of seeing the whale while it was in Quebec but I availed myself of the polite offer of Mr Gregory who purchased it at Public Sale for \$250 and accompanied him to Patrick's Hole, near St Laurent on the Island of Orleans, where he had caused it to be towed for the purpose of flecking it.

On our arrival we found that a considerable portion of the back & the tail portion had been flecked. It was lying neither on its back nor on its belly, but nearly sideways with the greater portion of its belly upwards. One whole side of the Baleen had been lost in dragging it ashore but the other though loosened was saved. I secured several for our Society & wanted to secure the jaw bones &c but I understood from Mr Gregory, that he had sold it to Seval for \$50. I shall endeavor to secure some baleen for you. The whale is not the Humpback whale of the St Laurent which till lately was caught in great abundance off Gaspe Bay.

and Anticosti - but is a very fine specimen of the Balaena ahycticus, or Right Whale, as described by Du Roi - It is a male, McNeconomy and I measured it as carefully as we could a matter of some difficulty, from the position in which it lay & the state of decomposition, which made it very offensive - It was as nearly as possible 65 feet long - the length of jaw, 15 feet 9 inches - the length of the flukes of the tail 12 feet - One fin was completely covered by its body, the uncovered one I could not reach to measure - I should think it must have been thirty feet in circumference at the broadest, it tapered away very rapidly to the tail - The color of the skin on its back was black; its belly black & dingy white, striped longitudinally corresponding with the furrows which made it look like a clinker built boat - I shall collect as much more information on the subject as I can, as to the quantity of oil produced &c. - When it was first seen on the 7th Oct. it was in company with another whale and was first hit by a man Chabot who claims to have invented a very effective gun harpoon. He lays claim to the whale asserting that his harpoon struck and that the whale immediately died breaking the rope to which the harpoon was attached & that in a few days thereafter it was found by the Indians people dead on the beach - They have not yet found any trace of the Harpoon -

Write me on receipt
of

of this and let me know quickly, what you would wish me to
understand for you, and what I can do, I will do, though
I do not claim any Commission with the Congress now -
I hope you had a pleasant & successful
trip to the Island. We were well & delighted at George's success -
I remain very faithfully
Yours for the Islanders

Dr. M. J. J.
Cincinnati

2
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