

tain a good foothold, they rise up in such numbers that they may knock you over. Boats, or little skiffs, full of them are brought back to the ships, when the weather permits approach to these islands, which the French have named the Isles of birds.⁵ Ships come into this Gulf on whaling expeditions. We have seen a great many fishing also for cod. I saw here a number of seals, and our people [12] killed some of them. In this great river, which is called the St. Lawrence, white porpoises are found, and nowhere else. The English call them white whales, because they are very large compared with the other porpoises; they go up as far as Quebec.⁶

On the day of Holy Trinity, we were compelled to stop at Gaspay,⁷ a large body of water extending into this country. It was here that we trod land for the first time since our departure. Never did man, after a long voyage, return to his country with more joy than we entered ours; it is thus we call these wretched lands. We found here two ships, one from Honfleur and the other from Biscaye, which had come to fish for cod. We begged the people from Honfleur to [13] raise an altar for us, that we might celebrate the Holy Mass in their cabin; and there was a strife among them as to who should work upon it, so greatly were they pleased. So I said to them, laughingly, that in building their cabin they did not think they were building a Chapel. When I came to the Gospel appointed for that day in the Mass, and which was the first that I had read in these lands, I was very much astonished in hearing these words of the Son of God to his Disciples, *Data est mihi omnis potestas in cælo & in terra, euntes ergo docete omnes gentes baptisantes eos in nomine Patris*, etc. *Ecce ego*