

stondyng and that oþer yleyde lowe vpon her ryge she fereþ but litel þe houndes. An hare þ' crompes hure tayle vpon hure rumpe whan she sterteth out of here fourme as a conyng it is token she is stronge and wele rennyng. The hare renneth in mony dyuerse maners, for summe rennen in al þat eyr þei may hale ii myle or iii, and after renneþ and rysethe agayn and abideþ stille, Whan þei mow no more, and lateth hem self by byten þerof she haue not be say of al þe day. And sumtyme she lateþ hure be ybite at þe first tyme þat she sterteth for she haþ no more myȝt, and somme renneth a litel while, and than abiden and squatteþ, and that don þei oft, and than þei taken her flight þe while þei mowe renne or þei be dede, And som þer be þat abideþ to þei ybit in here forme and specially whan þei ben yong þat þei haue not passid half a yere. Men knowen in þat oþere side of þe hares legge whan she is passid a yere,<sup>1</sup> and men shuld know of an hounde or of a fox, And of a woolf by a lytel boon þat þei han by þe boon þat is next þe Synewes, where þere is a litel pitte, And sumtyme whan þei ben hunted with houndes þei rennen in to þe hoolis as a conyng, or in to þe halowe trees, or þei passen a grete reure. Houndes folowyn not so wele þe hares some as some doþ for iiii resouns, what hares be yȝote wiþ þe kynde of a cony as some be in þe wareieis the houndes lust nor senteth hom not so welle. That oþere for þe fues of some hares ben of hatter sent þan somme, and þerfore the houndes senteth of on more þan of oþer; as of Rooses somme smellen better oon þan oþer, And jit þei ben alle roses. The oþer ben þei þat stelyn away or þei be founde, þat þe houndes folowen alway forthe ryghte, þe oþere rennen goyng about and þan abideth.<sup>2</sup> Wherfore þe houndes ben þe offer on stynt, The oþer is aftir þe contre þat þei rennen inne, for jif þei renne in Couert þe houndes shal sent hem bettir þan jif þei renne in playn contre, or in þe way, for in þe Couerte þei touchen hure bodies agayn þe twigges or leeves for þe stronge contre, and whan þei rennen in þe playne contre or in þe feeldes þei touche noon but wiþ þe foot, and þerfore þe houndes may not so wel sent þe fues of hem, and also I say þat some contre is more suete and more louyng than oþer. The hare abideþ comonly in oo contre and if she haue felowship of anoþer, eiþer of hire kyndels, or len rettis, þei be v. or vi., for no strange hare shal þei neuere suffre come dwelle in hure marches, þor þei be of here nature.<sup>3</sup> And þerfore men sayn in olde sawes, who so huntet most þe hares moost

upright and the other laid low on her back, she fears but little the hounds. An hare that crumps her tail upon her rump when she starteth out of her form as a rabbit does it is a sign that she is strong and can run well. The hare runneth in many different ways, for some run all they are able a whole two miles or three, and after run and ruse again and then stop still when they can no more, and let themselves be bitten (by the hounds), although she may not have been seen all the day. And sometimes she letteth herself be bitten the first time that she starteth, for she has no more strength. And some run a little while and then abide and squat, and that they do oft. And then they take their flight as long as they can run till they are dead. And some be that abide in their form till they be taken, especially when they be young that have not passed half a year. Men know by the outer side of the hare's leg if she is passed a year.<sup>1</sup> And so men should know of a hound, of a fox, and of a wolf, by a little bone that they have in a bone which is next the sinews, where there is a little cavity.

Sometimes when they are hunted with hounds they run into a hole as a coney, or into hollow trees, or else they pass a great river. Hounds do not follow some hares as well as others, for four reasons. When hares are begotten of the kind of a coney, as some are in warrens, the hounds lust not nor scenteth them so well. The other is that the fues (footing) of some hares carry hotter scent than some, and therefore the hounds scent one more than the other, as of roses, some smell better than others, and yet they are all roses. The other reason is that they steal away ere they be found, and the hounds follow always right ahead. The others run rioting and turning, and then stop,<sup>2</sup> so that the hounds are often on stynt (at fault). The other reason is according to the country they run in, for if they run in covert, hounds will scent them better than if they run in plain (open) country, or in the paths, for in the covert their bodies touch against the twigs and leaves. And when they run in plain country or in fields they touch nothing, but with the foot, and therefore the hounds can not so well scent their fues. And also I say that some country is more sweet and more loving (to scent) than another. The hare abideth commonly in one country, and if she hath the fellowship of another or of her kyndels or leverettes, they be five or six, they will allow no strange hare to dwell in their marches (district), though they be of their kind,<sup>3</sup> and therefore men say in old saws: "Who

hal he fynde of hem for *Phebus Erle of Foys þe good huntere seiþ þat whane þer bene fewe hares in a Countre þei shul be hunted and slayn, for þe hares of oþere contre about shul come in þat marche. Of hares soom goon fastere and ben strongere þan oþer as of men and of oþer bestis, And also þe pasture and þe contre where þei abiden, helpeþ moch þerto, for whan an hare abideþ and formeth in a playn contre þer as no bussches be suche hares ben comonly strengest and wel rennyng, And also whan þei pasturen of too herbes þat oon is clepyd Soepol<sup>1</sup> and þat oþer Pulegiun<sup>2</sup> þei be stronge and fast rennyng. The hares han no sesoun of her loue, for as I said it is cleped rydyng tyme, for in euery month of the yere ne shal not be þat some ne be with kyndeles. Narþelasse commonly here most loue is in the monythe of Januere, and in þat monyth þei rennen moost fast of eny tyme of the yere, both mascle and femel. And fro May in to Septembre þei ben moost slaw, for þei ben most fulle of herbes, and of fruytes, eiþer þei ben grete and ful of kyndeles. And comonly in þat tyme þei haue her kyndeles. The hares abiden in sondry contre, al after þe sesoun of the yere, somtyme þei sitten in the feerne, somtyme in the hethe, and in the þe (*sic*) corn and in growyng wedis and somtyme in the wodes. In Aueryll and in May, Whan þe corn is so longe þat þei mowe hide hem self þerinne, gladly þei wil sitte þerynne, And whan men bygynne to repe þe corn þei wil sitte in þe vynes and in oþer stronge hethes, and in bussches and in hegges, and alway comynly in þe couert vndir þe wynde, and in Couert of þe Reyne, and jif ther be eny sonne shyneng þei wil gladly sitt aȝeinst þe beme of þe sonne, for an hare of his owyn kynd knoweþ þe nyght bifore what wheder shal be on the next morow, and þerfore she kepeþ hure in the best wyse þat she may for þe euele wedir. The hare bereþ ii monthes<sup>3</sup> her kyndels, and whan þei han kyndeled þei likken her kyndels as a biche doothe here whelpes, and þan she renneþ a grete way þennes and gooþ to seke the male, for jif þei shuld abide with her kyndels þei shuld gladly eten hem and if thei fynde not þe þei commen aȝen to her kyndeles a grete while after and yeue hem to souke and norssh hem þe mountnace of xx dayes or þerabout. An hare bereþ comonlyche ii kyndelz, but I haue sey some whiche han kyndeled at ones somtyme vi., somtyme v., somtyme iiii., somtyme ii.<sup>4</sup> and but she fynde the male wiþ ynne*

hunteth the most hares shall find the most." For Phebus the Earl of Foix, that good hunter, saith that when there are few hares in a country they should be hunted and slain, so that the hares from other countries should come there.

Of hares, some be faster and some stronger than others, as it is of men and other beasts. Also the pasture and the country where they abide helpeth much thereto. When the hare abideth and formeth in a plain country where there are no bushes, such hares are commonly strongest and well-running. Also when they pasture on two herbs—that one is called wild thyme<sup>1</sup> and that other pennyroyal,<sup>2</sup> they are strong and fast running.

The hares have no season of their love for, as I said, it is called ryding time, for there is not a month in the year that you will not find some that be with kindles (young). Nevertheless, commonly their love is most in the month of January, and in that month they run faster than at any other time of the year, both male and female. And from May unto September they be most slow, for then they are full of herbs and of fruits, or they be great and full of kindles, and commonly in that time they have their kindles. Hares remain in sundry parts of the country, according to the season of the year, for sometimes they sit in the fern, sometimes in the heath, sometimes in the corn, and in growing weeds, and sometimes in the woods. In April and in May when the corn is so long that they can hide themselves therein, gladly will they sit therein. And when men begin to reap the corn they sit in the vineyards and in other thick heaths, in bushes and in hedges, and commonly in cover under the wind and in cover from the rain, and if there be any sun shining they will gladly sit in the beams of the sun. For a hare of its own kind knoweth the night before what weather it will be on the morrow, and therefore she keepeth herself the best way that she may from the bad weather. The hare beareth her kindles two months,<sup>3</sup> and when they are kindled she licketh her kindles as a bitch doeth her whelps. Then she runneth a great way thence, and goeth to seek the male, for if they should abide with her kindles they would gladly eat them. And if she finds not the male, she cometh again to her kindles a great while after and giveth them to suck, and nourisheth them for the extent of 20 days or thereabouts. A hare beareth commonly 2 kindles, but I have seen some which have kindled at once sometime 6, sometime 5, or 4 or 2;<sup>4</sup> and but she

<sup>1</sup> *Thymus Serpyllum* (Wild Thyme).

<sup>2</sup> This is incorrect: the hare carries her young thirty days (Brehm, vol. ii. p. 626; Harting, "Ency. of Sport," vol. i. p. 504).

<sup>3</sup> Should read "three." (G. d. F., p. 47.)

<sup>4</sup> *Menther Pulegium* (Penny Royal).

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix: Hare.

<sup>2</sup> G. d. F. has: "vonts riotans tournians et demourant," p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> The Shirley MS. has the same, but G. de F., p. 45, has, "except those of their nature" (*fors que celle de leur nature*).