myddel of þe water for cause þat þe houndes shuld not sent of hym. And al þat doþ he for ij resouns bifore saide. And whan he may fynde no Ryuers þan he draweþ hym to greete stankes[1] and laies or to grete morsshes, and he fleeþ þen myghttyly and fer fro the houndes, it is to say þat he be a grete way from hem,[2] and þan he wil go into þe Stank and shal soile hym þerinne oo turne or tweyn in al þe Stank, and þan he shal come out aȝeyn by þe same waye þat he come inne and he shal ruse aȝein þe same waye þat he come a bowe shoot or moore and þan he shal ruse out of þe way for to stalle[3] or quatte[4] to rest hym, and þat he dooþ for he knowethe well þat the houndes shal come by þe fues into þe Stange where he was. And whan þei shuld fynde þat he is goo no ferþere þan þei shuld seche hym no ferþere, for þei shul wel knowe þat þei haue be þere oþer tymes.[5] An hert lyuoþ lengest of eny beest for he may wel lyve an c. yere,[6] and þe eldere he is, þe fairere he is of body and of heed and more lecherous, but he is not so swift ne so liȝt ne so myghty. And ȝit mony men seyn but I make non affirmacioun vpon þat whan he is ryght olde he hetyth a serpent wiþ his foote til she be wrothe, and þan he oteth hure and þan gooþ drynk, and þan he rennethe hidere and þidere to þe watir, and venyin be medled togydere and makeþ hym cast al his euel humours þat he had in his body and makeþ his flesshe come al newe.[7] The heed of þe hert bereth meedecyne aȝenst þe hardnes of þe synewes[8] and is good to take away alle aches namely whan þe ben come of cold. And is þe marie,[9] that þei haue aboue withe in þe hert þe whiche haþ grete medycine for he comforteþ þe hert *þe whiche helpeþ for þe cardyacle* and mony oþer þinges, þe whiche were to longe to wryte, þe whiche bere medecyne and byn profitable in mony dyuerse maners. þe hert is more wyse in two þinges þan eny man or eny other beest þat on is in tastyng of herbes for he hathe better taast and better sauereþ and smelleþ þe good herbes and louos and oþer pastures and metynges[10] þe which ben profitable to hym better þan eney man or beest That oþer is þat he haþ more witte and malice to saue hym self þan eny oþere beest or man for þer nys noon so good hunter in þe world whiche may þenk þe grete malice, and gynnes[11] þat an hert can do, ne þer nys non so good hunter ne soo good houndes, þat mony tymes faillen to sle þe hert and þat is by is wytt and by his malice and

water, so that the hounds should not scent of him. And all that doth he for two reasons before said.

And when he can find no rivers then he draweth to great stanks[1] and meres or to great marshes. And he fleeth then mightily and far from the hounds, that is to say that he hath gone a great way from them,[2] then he will go into the stank, and will soil therein once or twice in all the stank and then he will come out again by the same way that he went in, and then he shall ruse again the same way that he came (the length of) a bow shot or more, and then he shall ruse out of the way, for to stall[3] or squatt[4] to rest him, and that he doeth for he knoweth well that the hounds shall come by the fues into the stank where he was. And when they should find that he has gone no further they will seek him no further, for they will well know that they have been there at other times.[5]

An hart liveth longest of any beast for he may well live an hundred years[6] and the older he is the fairer he is of body and of head, and more lechorous, but he is not so swift, nor so light, nor so mighty. And many men say, but I make no affirmation upon that, when he is right old he beateth a serpent with his foot till she be wrath, and then he eateth her and then goeth to drink, and then runneth hither and thither to the water till the venom be mingled together and make him cast all his evil humours that he had in his body, and maketh his flesh come all new.[7] The head of the hart beareth medicine against the hardness of the sinews[8] and is good to take away all aches, especially when these come from cold; and so is the marrow. They have a bone within the heart which hath great medicine, for it comforteth the heart, and helpeth for the cardiac, and many other things which were too long to write, the which bear medicine and be profitable in many diverse manners. The hart is more wise in two things than is any man or other beast, the one is in tasting of herbs, for he hath better taste and better savour and smelleth the good herbs and leaves and other pastures and feeding[10] the which be profitable to him, better than any man or beast. The second is that he hath more wit and cunning to save himself than any other beast or man, for there is not such a good hunter in the world that can think of the great malice and gins[11] that a hart can do, and there is no such good hunter nor such good hounds, but that many times fail to slay the hart, and that is by his wit and his malice and by his gins.

[1] Ponds, pools. See Appendix: Stank.
[2] G. d. F., p. 21: "Et s'il fuit de fort longe aux chiens, c'est à dire que il les ait bien esloinhés." See Appendix: "Forlonge."
[3] Stall: to remain stationary (*demeurer*).
[4] Lie down.
[5] G. d. F., p. 21: "Quar ils sentiront bien qu'ils y ont esté autrefois."
[6] Most old writers on the natural history of deer repeat this fable. See Appendix: Hart.
[7] See Appendix: Hart.
[8] G. d. F., p. 21, "nerfz."
[9] Marrow.
[10] Metyngs. See Appendix.
[11] Gynnes: tricks, ruses.

by his gynnes. As of þe hyndes some bene bareyn, and some be þat bere calfes, of þise þat bene bareyn here sesoun bygynneþ whan þe sesoun of þe hert failleþ, and lasteþ to lenton. And þei which beren calues, in þe mornyng whan she shal go to her leire she wil not abide wiþ her calf but she shal hold hym and leue hym a greet way fro hure, and smyteþ hym wiþ þe fote and makoþ hym lie adoun, and þer þe calf shal abide alway þe hynde while she gooþ to fede hure. And þane she shal calle hure calf in hure langage and he shal come to hure, and þat doþ she for cause þat if she were hunted þat hure calf myght be saued and þat he were not founde nyee hure. The herts han more power to renne wel fro the entryng of Maij in to seynt John tyde[1] þan eny oþere tyme For þei han take new flesshe and nowe heere and here heedis for þe newe herbes and newe comyng out of troes and of fruytes and ben not heuy, for ȝit þei han not rekeueryd her greys[2] noiþer withe inne ne with oute neiþer her heedes wher fore þei ben moche þe ligtere and swiftere but fro seynt John in to þe monyth of August they wexen alway more heuy and her Skynn is ryght good for to do wiþ mony þinges, whan it is wel itawed and take good in seson. The hertes þat bene in greet hilles whane it commeþ to Rut some tyme þei come adoun in to grete forestis and in þe hethes and into þe laundes and þer þei abide alle þe wyntere in to þe entryngis of Auerille and þan þei take hure hauntz for to lat her heuedes wexe nye þe townes and þe villages in the playn contre þeras þei fynde good fedyng in þe newe growyng lond and whan þe gras is hie and wel wexen þei drawe hem into þe grettest hilles þat þei may fynde for þe faire pastures and fedynges and faire herbes þat bene þer vpon, And also for þer bene no flies ne noon oþere vermyn as þere is in þe playn contre. And also doþ þe beestaile þe whiche comen adoun from þe hilles in wyntere tyme, And þe somere tyme draweþ hem into þe hilles,[3] and al þe tyme fro þe Rutson in to Whitsonday[4] into Rut som tyme men shul fynde but fewe gret deer saue upon þe hilles and þe wyntere þei shul be þennes a iiii. or a v. myle and this is sothe but ȝif it be some yonge deere þe whiche ben calfed in þe playn contre but þer shal noon fynde þe whiche bene calfed in þe playn contre but þer shalbe noon founde þe whiche bene calfed in þe hilles *and euery day in þe hete of þe day and he be not lett from maij into Septembre he goþ to soile þof he be not hunted.*

As of the hinds some be barren and some bear calves, of those that be barren their season beginneth when the season of the hart faileth and lasteth till Lent. And they which bear calves, in the morning when she shall go to her lair she will not remain with her calf, but she will hold (keep) him and leave him a great way from her, and smiteth him with the foot and maketh him to lie down, and there the calf shall remain always till the hind goeth to feed. And then she shall call her calf in her language and he shall come to her. And that she doeth so that if she were hunted her calf might be saved and that he should not be found near her. The harts have more power to run well from the entry of May into St. John's tide[1] than any other time, for then they have put on new flesh and new hair and new heads, for the new herbs and the new shoots of trees and of fruits and be not too heavy, for as yet they have not recovered their grease,[2] neither within nor without, nor their heads, wherefore they are much lighter and swifter. But from St. John's into the month of August they grow always more heavy. Their skin is right good for many things when it is well tawed and taken in good season. Harts that are in great hills, when it cometh to rut, sometimes they come down into the great forests and heaths and to the uncultivated country, and there they abide all the winter until the entering of April, and then they take to their haunts for to let their heads grow, near the towns and villages in the plains there where they find good feeding in the new growing lands. And when the grass is high and well grown they withdraw into the greatest hills that they are able to find for the fair pastures and feedings and fair herbs that grow thereupon. And also because there be no flies nor any other vermin, as there is in the plains. And also so doth the cattle which cometh down from the hills in winter time, and in the summer goeth to the hills again.[3] And all the time from rutting time into Whitsunday great deer and old will be found in the plains, but from Whitsunday[4] to rutting time men shall find but few great deer save upon the hills, if there are any (hills) near or within four or five miles, and this is truth unless it be some young deer calved in the plains, but of those that come from the hills there will be none. And every day in the heat of the day, and he be not hindered, from May to September, he goes to soil though he be not hunted.

[1] Nativity of St. John the Baptist, June 24.
[2] See Appendix: Grease.
[3] This custom of cattle going to the hills in summer and returning to the plains in winter still obtains in the mountainous regions of the continent, where cattle are regularly driven from the valleys about the end of May to pasture on the higher Alpine meadowlands.
[4] This sentence reads somewhat confusedly in our MS., so I have taken this rendering straight from G. de F., p. 23.