CAPITULUM VI.—OF THE WILDE BOOR AND OF HIS NATURE

A WYLDE boor is a common best ynowe, and þerfore it nedith not to telle of his makyng, for ther ben fewe gentilmen þat ne han sey somme of hem. It is þe beest of þis world þat is strongest armed and rathest shul slee a man of eny other, neiþer ther nys no beest þat he ne shuld slee ȝif þei were allon, rather þane þat other beest shuld sle hym,[1] neiþer lyon neiþer leoparde but ȝif þei wold lepe vpon his bake, where he myte not turne hym ayen with his teth. And ther nys neither lyon ne leoparde that scleeth a man at oo stroke as þe boor dooþ, for þei must scle with rasyng of her clees and þorgh byteng But þe wilde boor sleeþ a man at oo stroke as þoo it were with a knyffe. And þerfore he shuld rather sle eny oþere beest þan eny beest shuld slee hym. It is a bronde[2] beest and a fers and a perelous for many tymes men han seyn moch harm þat he haþ do for some men han sey hym slytte a man fro þe knee vp to þe brest and slee hym al starke dede at oo stroke þat he neuere speke after They goon in heere loue to þe bremyng[3] as sowes don about þe fest of Seynt Andrew[4] tyde and in here bremyng loue iii wekes and for cause þat þe sowe shal be refrected,[5] the boor goþ not fro hem for, he abideþ with hem to þe xii day after Cristmasse, and þan þe boor gooþ from þe sowes and goþ to take his couert and to seche her lyvelode allone, and þer abideþ in to that oþere yere that þei goon aȝen to þe sowes. Thei abide not in oon place oo nyght þer as þe be anoþere but þer as þei fynde her pasture for alle pastures faillen hem as hawþorns[6] and oþir þingges. And some tyme a grete boor hath anoþer with hym but þat happeth selde. They pharowyn[7] in Marche and onys in þe yeere þei gon in hur loue and þere be fewe wilde sowes þat farowen moor þan onys in þe yeere. Naþeless men han seye some farowe ii tymes in þe yeere þei goon wel ferre somtyme in heer fedyng by twix nyȝgt and day and goon in to her gouert and her denn or it be day and ȝife some tyme þe day take hem by þe way or þei may come to her

CHAP. 6.—OF THE WILD BOAR AND OF HIS NATURE

A WILD boar is a common beast enough and therefore it needeth not to tell of his making, for there be few gentlemen that have not seen some of them. It is the beast of this world that is strongest armed, and can sooner slay a man than any other. Neither is there any beast that he could not slay if they were alone sooner than that other beast could slay him,[1] be they lion or leopard, unless they should leap upon his back, so that he could not turn on them with his teeth. And there is neither lion nor leopard that slayeth a man at one stroke as a boar doth, for they mostly kill with their claws and through biting, but the wild boar slayeth a man with one stroke as with a knife, and therefore he can slay any other beast sooner than they could slay him. It is a proud[2] beast and fierce and perilous, for many times have men seen much harm that he hath done. For some men have seen him slit a man from knee up to the breast and slay him all stark dead at one stroke so that he never spake thereafter.

They go in their love to the brimming[3] as sows do about the feast of St. Andrew,[4] and are in their brimming love three weeks, and when the sows are cool the boar does not leave them.[5]

He stays with them till the twelfth day after Christmas, and then the boar leaves the sows and goeth to take his covert, and to seek his livelihood alone, and thus he stays until the next year when he goes again to the sows. They abide not every night in the same place, but go where they can find their pasture till all pasture fails them such as hawthorns[6] and other things. Sometimes a great boar has another with him but this happens but seldom. They farrow[7] in March, and once in the year they go in their love. And there are few wild sows that farrow more than once in the year, nevertheless men have seen them farrow twice in the year.

Sometimes they go far to their feeding between night and day, and return to their covert and den ere it be day. But if the day overtakes them on the way they like to stay in some little

[1] In spite of the boar being such a dangerous animal a wound from his tusk was not considered so fatal as one from the antlers of a stag. An old fourteenth-century saying was: "Pour le sanglier faut le mire, mais pour le cerf convient la bière."

[2] Proud. G. d. F., p. 56, *orguilleuse*. G. d. F., p. 57, says after this that he has often himself been thrown to the ground, he with his courser, by a wild boar and the courser killed ("et moy meismes a il porté moult de fois à terre moy et mon coursier, et mort le coursier").

[3] Brimming. From Middle English *brime*, burning heat. It was also used in the sense of valiant-spirited (Stratmann).

[4] November 30.

[5] G. d. F., p. 57, adds: "comme fait l'ours."

[6] G. d. F. says "acorns, beachmast and other things."

[7] Farrow. See Appendix: Wildboar.