CAP. XII. 12.—OF ÞHE MANERE AND TATCHES AND CONDICIONS OF HOUNDES

Aftir þat I haue spokyn of þe nature of beestis, of venery and of chace þe whiche men shal hunte, nowe wil I telle yow of þe nature of hundes þe which hunteth and nemetþ hem, and fyrst of hure noble condicions þat be so grete and merveillous in some hundes þat þer is no man þat maye leve it but he were a good skilful hunter and wel knowyng, and þat I haunted hem longe, for an hounde is þe moost resonable beest and beste knowyng of eny beest þat euere God made, and ȝit in som case I neiþer out take man ne oþer þing for men fynde it in so many stories and so moche noblesse in houndes alway from day to day, þat as I haue said þer nys no man þat may leue ne þenk it. Naþelees natures of men and of alle beestes goon eueremore descendyng and decresyng bothe of lif, and of goodnesse, of streyngth and of alle oþere þinges so wondirly, *as þe Eerle of Foix Phebus seiþ in his booke* that whan he seeth þe houndes þat ben now at huntyng and þenkeþ on the houndes þat he haþ I seie in tyme þat is passed, and also in þe goodnesse and þe trouthe þe whiche was sumtyme in þe lordes of þis world and oþer comoun men, and seeth þat is in hem this tyme, trewly he seithe þat þer non comparisoun, and þis koweþ wel euery man þat hath eny good reson. But now lat God ordeyne therof what his good wille is. But for to drawe to my matere and telle þe noblenesse of þe houndes, þe whiche han ben, some good tales I shal you telle þe which I fynde in verrey wrytinge, And first of þe Kyng Claudoneus[1] of Fraunce he sent ones aftir his greet courte whereof where oþer Kyngges þat heelde londe of hym among þe whiche was Kyng Apollo of Lyonnys[2] and brouȝt wiþ hym to þe courte his wif and a greihounde þat he had, þat was boothe good and faire. The Kyng Claudoneus of Fraunce had a semoly yong man to his sone of xx^ti^ yere of age and also so sone as he seghe þe Quene of Lyonnys he loued hure and prayed hure of loue. The Quene she was a good lady and loued wel her lord, forsoke hym and wold hym not, and said hym ȝif ȝif he spoke to hure ony moore þerof þat she wold telle it to þe Kyng of Fraunce and to hure lord. And after þat þe feest was passed, the Kyng Apollo of Lyonnys turned agayn he and his wiff in to her cuntre. And whan þei were so turned agayn he

CHAP. 12.—OF THE MANNER AND HABITS AND CONDITIONS OF HOUNDS

After that I have spoken of the nature of beasts of venery and of chase which men should hunt, now I will tell you of the nature of the hounds which hunt and take them. And first of their noble condition the which is so great and marvellous in some hounds that there is no man can believe it, unless he were a skilful good hunter, and well knowing, and that he hunted them long, for a hound is a most reasonable beast, and best knowing of any beast that ever God made, and yet in some case I neither except man nor other thing, for men find it in so many stories and see so much nobleness in hounds, always from day to day, that as I have said there is no man that liveth but must think it. Nevertheless natures of men and all beasts go ever more descending and decreasing both of life and of goodness and of strength and of all other things so wonderfully, as the Earl of Foix Phebus sayeth in his book, that when he seeth the hounds that be now hunting and thinketh of the hounds that he hath seen in the time that is passed, and also of the goodness and the truth, which was sometimes in the lords of this world, and other common men, and seeth what now is in them at this time, truly he sayeth that there is no comparison, and this knoweth well every man that has any good reason. But now let God ordain thereof whatever His good will is. But to draw again to my matter, and tell the nobleness of the hounds, the which have been, some good tales I shall tell you the which I find in true writings. First of King Clodoveus[1] of France, the which sent once after his great court whereof were other kings which held of him land, among the which was the King Appollo of Léonois,[2] that brought with him to the court his wife and a greyhound that he had, that was both good and fair. The King Clodoveus of France had a seemly young man for his son, of twenty years of age, and as soon as he saw the Queen of Léonois he loved her and prayed her of love. The Queen was a good lady and loved well her lord, forsook him and would him not, and said (to) him that if he spake to her any more thereof that she would tell it to the King of France, and to her Lord. And after that the feast was passed, King Appollo of Léonois turned again, he and his wife to their country. And when they were turned again, he and his wife, the King

[1] In G. de F. "Clodoveus," p. 82. See Appendix: Legends of Hounds.

[2] G. de F. p. 82.

THE FIVE BREEDS OF DOGS DESCRIBED IN THE TEXT