

Chapter 17 OF SPANIELS AND OF THEIR NATURE

Another kind of hound there is that be called hounds for the hawk and spaniels, for their kind cometh from Spain, notwithstanding that there are many in other countries. And such hounds have many good customs and evil. Also a fair hound for the hawk should have a great head, a great body and be of fair hue, white or tawny, for they be the fairest, and of such hue they be commonly best. A good spaniel should not be too rough, but his tail should be rough. The good qualities that such hounds have are these: they love well their masters and follow them without losing, although they be in a great crowd of men, and commonly they go before their master, running and wagging their tail, and raise or start fowl and wild beasts. But their right craft is of the partridge and of the quail. It is a good thing to a man that hath a noble goshawk or a tiercel or a sparrow hawk for partridge, to have such hounds. And also when they be taught to be couchers,¹⁶⁶ they be good to take partridges and quail with a net. And also they be good when they are taught to swim and to be good for the river, and for fowls when they have dived, but on the other hand they have many bad qualities like the country that they come from. For a country draweth to two natures of men, of beasts, and of fowls, and as men call greyhounds of Scotland and of Britain,¹⁶⁷ so the alauntes and the hounds for the hawk come out of Spain, and they take after the nature of the generation of which they come. Hounds for the hawk are fighters and great barkers if you lead them a hunting among running hounds, whatever beasts they hunt to they will make them lose the line, for they will go before now hither now thither, as much when they are at fault as when they go right, and lead the hounds about and make them overshoot and fail. Also if you lead greyhounds with you, and there be a hound for the hawk, that is to say a spaniel, if he see geese or kine, or horses, or hens, or oxen or other beasts, he will run anon and begin to bark at them, and because of him all the greyhounds will run to take the beast through his egging on, for he will make all the riot and all the harm. The hounds for the hawk have so many other evil habits that unless I had a goshawk or falcon or hawks for the river, or sparrow hawk, or the net, I would never have any, especially there where I would hunt.

166 Setters, from coucher, to lie down. G. de F.: "chien couchant" (p. 113).

167 Brittany. In Shirley MS. "England" precedes "Scotland." G. de F. says nothing about Scotland. He says "Bretainhe," meaning Brittany (p. 113).

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