

WHICH ARE THE MOST CRAFTY, WATER-ANIMALS  
OR THOSE CREATURES THAT BREED UPON THE  
LAND?

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AUTOBULUS, SOCLARUS, OPTATUS, PHAEDIMUS, ARISTOTIMUS,  
HERACLEO.

1. AUTOBULUS. Leonidas, being asked the question what he thought of Tyrtaeus, made answer, that he was a good poet to whet minds of young men; as a person who, by the vigor and spirit of his poetical raptures, kindled that wrathful indignation and ambition of honor, which emboldened them in combat to the contempt of death and danger. Which makes me afraid, my dearest friends, lest the encomium of hunting yesterday recited may have inflamed our young gentlemen beyond the bounds of moderation, so as to deem all other things fruitless and of little worth, while they rendezvous from all parts to this exercise. So much the rather, because I myself, when I was but very young, even beyond the strength of my age, seemed to be more than became me addicted to this sport, and to be over desirous with Phaedra in Euripides,

With hounds and horn and merry hollow,  
The spotted hart and hind to follow

So did that discourse affect me, fortified with many and probable arguments.

SOCLARUS. You say very truly, Autobulus. For that same poet seems to me to have awakened the force of rhetoric, for a long time lulled asleep, to gratify the incli-

nations of the youthful gentry, and to make himself their spring companion. But I am most pleased with him for introducing the example of single combatants, from whence he takes occasion to praise the sport of hunting, as being that which for the most part draws to itself whatever is natural in us, or what we have by use acquired, of that delight which men take in fighting with single weapons one against another, thus affording an evident prospect of artifice and daring courage, endued with understanding, encountering brutish force and strength, and applauding that of Euripides :

Small is the nerveless strength of feeble man,  
Yet through the cunning of his reaching brain,  
By various slights and sundry stratagems,  
Whatever land or th' Ocean breeds he tames.\*

2. AUTOBULUS. And hence it was, as they say, my dearest Soclarus, that men at first became insensible and inhuman, having once tasted of murder, and being all accustomed, by hunting and following the chase, not only to behold without remorse the wounds and blood of wild beasts, but to rejoice at their being killed and slaughtered. Afterwards, as at Athens, some sycophant was by the Thirty Tyrants set apart for death, as a proper object of capital punishment, then a second, and a third ; till, proceeding by degrees, they seized upon good men, and at length spared not the best and most worthy citizens. In like manner the first that slew a bear or a wolf obtained applause, then the ox and hog were appointed to be killed, under pretence of having tasted the sacred things that lay before them. Next to them deer, hares, and goats were made use of for food, and in some places the flesh of sheep, dogs, and horses grew familiar to human taste. The tame goose also and pigeon, man's familiar domestic, according to Sophocles, — not for nourishment or to assuage hunger,

\* Eurip. Hippol. 218.

as cats and weasels do, but to indulge voluptuous appetites, — they dressed and mangled to pieces. This gave strength and vigor to whatever was in nature bloodthirsty and savage, and rendering the disposition of man inflexible to pity, had almost erased out of his breast whatever was inclinable to humanity and mildness. Whereas, on the other side, the Pythagoreans, that they might accustom men to the love of humanity and compassion, still inculcated into their minds a particular care of being mild and gentle towards beasts. For there is nothing more powerful than custom to win upon all the affections of man, and to draw them from moderation to extremity. But I know not how it comes to pass, that being entered into this discourse, we have forgot not only the subject we were yesterday upon, but what we had also this day agreed to make the theme of our colloquy. For yesterday, as you well know, having thrown out a proposition, that all creatures were in some manner partakers of understanding and reason, we gave an occasion to you, young huntsmen, for a fair dispute, which of the two excelled in craft and cunning, the land animals, or the creatures that breed in the sea? Which, if you please, we will determine this day, if Aristotimus and Phaedimus will stand to their agreement; of which two gentlemen, the one has offered himself to his friends to be the patron of the land animals, the other reserves the honor of being more crafty to those of the sea.

SOCLARUS. They will be as good as their words, I assure you, Autobulus, and will be here presently; for I saw them both early this morning preparing for the combat. In the mean time, if you please, before they begin, let us resume something of what was yesterday not so fully discoursed of for want of time, or not so carefully argued in our wine, as it ought to have been. For there seemed a dispute to resound in my ears from the Stoics' portico, that,

as immortal is opposite to mortal, incorruptible to corruptible, incorporeal to corporeal, in like manner things void of reason ought to be opposed to those beings that are endued with reason, lest among so many pairs of contraries this alone should be found maimed and imperfect.

3. AUTOBULUS. Good now, friend Soclarus, who was he that maintained that, because there are certain beings endued with reason, therefore there is nothing void of reason? For we abound with examples in all things that are destitute of a soul; nor do we want any other antithesis to irrational, but only to oppose whatever is deprived of a soul — as being void of reason and understanding — to that which is endued with reason and understanding together with a soul. But if any one will assert, that Nature is not defective, and that therefore animated Nature is partly rational, partly without reason; another may at the same time allege, that animated Nature is partly endued with imagination, partly deprived of it; partly sensible, partly insensible; to the end that Nature may not want these opposite habits and privations, as it were, equally balanced in the same kind. For, as it would be absurd to expect to find some living creatures sensible and others without sense, and equally ridiculous to grant imagination to some living creatures and not allow it to others, — since there is no living creature that comes into the world but what is presently endued with sense and imagination, — thus would he be as much out of the way, who should require one living creature to be rational and another void of reason, and that too when he is disputing with men who hold that nothing whatever can partake of sense which does not also partake of understanding, and that there is no animal not endued by Nature with opinion and ratiocination, as well as with sense and instinct. For Nature, which, as they truly say, made all things for the sake of something and to some end, did not make a sensible

creature to be merely sensible of barely suffering something; but since there are many things familiar and agreeable, and other things as baneful and pernicious, no one of them could survive for a moment, did they not learn to avoid some things and covet the use and benefit of others. Sense it is, therefore, that affords to every creature the knowledge both of useful and hurtful; but the discretion which accompanies the said sense, choosing and seizing upon things profitable, and discerning and avoiding things pernicious or troublesome, can never be thought to reside in any creature not capable to reason, to judge, remember, and consider. Therefore, if you will deprive the creatures of expectation, memory, design, preparation, hope, fear, desire, and grief, you must at the same time deny them the use either of eyes or ears, and indeed of all sense and imagination; which it is better for them to be without, since they cannot make use of them, than to labor under grief and pain, with no means present of averting them.

There is an oration of Strato the philosopher, demonstrating that without sense there can be no understanding. For many times letters cursorily glanced upon by the eye, and speeches little regarded by the ear, escape our knowledge, our minds being intent on other matters. Afterwards by recollection the same things return into our mind, for us to run through and pursue them in our thoughts as we please. Whence we say proverbially, "The mind sees, the mind hears; all other things are deaf and blind," in regard there can be no sense in the eyes and ears, if understanding be wanting. Therefore King Cleomenes, after great commendations given to a copy of verses recited at a banquet where he was present, being asked whether it were not an admirable piece, bid them that heard it give their judgment, for that his mind was in the Peloponnesus. Therefore of necessity, whatever creatures are capable of sense must also be capable of understanding, if we can

no otherwise be sensible than by the force of understanding.

But suppose we should grant that sense has no need of the understanding for the performance of the duty incumbent upon it; nevertheless, when that same sense which has shown an animal the difference between what is grateful and what is averse to Nature has departed, where is that faculty which retains this difference in the memory, — dreading things that are abominable, and longing after things that are useful, and if they are wanting, seeking means to compass them, — which provides animals receptacles and places of refuge, that they may look out after their prey, and avoid the snares and gins of the hunters? And yet those very authors inculcate these things in their introductions, even to the teasing our ears: defining purpose to be an indication that something is to be brought to completion; design to be an impulse before an impulse; preparation to be an action before an action; memory to be the comprehension of some certain past impression, which at first was apprehended by sense. In all which things there is nothing which may not rightly be said to partake of reason, and yet all these things are common to all creatures; as indeed are certainly all cogitations; which, while they lie concealed in the brain, we call thoughts, but when they come to be in motion, we name conceptions. In the mean time they acknowledge all passions and perturbations of the mind to be false judgments and erroneous opinions; so that it is a wonder to me, that the same men should oversee so many operations and motions, some of desire, others of fear, nay, by Jupiter, many times of envy and emulation itself. And many times they themselves punish their dogs and horses when they commit a fault, and this not to no purpose, but to chastise them by causing in them through pain that trouble of mind which we call repentance. Now the tickling the

ear by pleasing sounds is called enchantment, but the bewitching the eye is called bewitching; both which we make use of in the domesticating of wild beasts. Harts and horses are allured by the sounds of pipes and flutes. And there are a sort of crabs which are charmed out of their holes by fifes; and it is reported that the shadfish are drawn to show themselves above water by singing and clapping of hands. The otus also, which is a bird not much unlike a night-raven, is taken by allurement of the sight; for that while he stands staring upon the fowlers dancing before him in measure and figure, and out of affection will be striving to act his part by aping their motions with his wings and shoulders, he is frequently surprised and taken.

But as for those that more foolishly affirm that beasts are not affected with joy or anger or fear, that the swallow does not build, that the bee does not remember, that the lion is not angry, that the hart is not timorous, but that they do all these things only as it were and apparently; I would fain know what answer they will make to those who say, that beasts neither see nor hear, but as it were see and as it were hear; that they neither neigh nor bleat, but as it were send forth a certain sound; lastly, that they do not absolutely live, but live as it were? For, in my opinion, to aver this is as contrary to plain demonstration as the rest.

4. SOCLARUS. Well then, Autobulus, suppose me to be one of those that affirm these things. For it is great folly for men to compare the actions of beasts with the customs, actions, and manner of living men, and above all, to deny that beasts have the least inclination or aim at any progress towards virtue, to which we bent our discourse. Indeed, I doubt whether Nature gave them a beginning or no, since they are so incapable to attain the end.

AUTOBULUS. Why truly, Soclarus, this is not a thing that

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