259 The Eye (*Oculus*)

The material eye has three: act, object, and defect. The act of the eye is triple: to show the right path, then to beware of obstructions, and to guide the members. Thus, the work of the wise man is to proceed along the right path which happens through the right intention, Prov. 4[:25]: “Let your eyes look straight on.” Matt. 6[:22]: “If your eye be single, your whole body shall be lightsome.” For just as the branches draw the humor and taste of the fruit from the root if the works are endowed by the intention.

Second,[[1]](#endnote-1) finally to beware what happens by consulted caution, Matt. 5[:29]: “And if your right eye scandalizes you,” etc. A harmful branch and an infected member is amputated lest it corrupts others, so an evil counselor ought to be amputated, Haba. 1[:13]: “Your eyes are too pure to behold evil.”

Third, to guide your neighbor as a co-member which happens through preaching, Job 29[:15]: “I was an eye to the blind.” Where note that just as the eye directs oneself and others, so does the spiritual teacher.

¶ Concerning the second, the object of the material eye is the delightfully colored object, so the heart of the wise man is judgment. For where there is love, there is the eye, Eccle. 2[:14]: “The eyes of a wise man are in his head,” that is, in Christ not in his purse through avarice, not in the kitchen through gluttony, not in the street through vanity, Psal. [24:15]: “My eyes are ever towards the Lord.”

Third, the defect of the material eye in respect of others is triple, which also even is found in the spiritual eye. The first is that it does not see itself, but more distant things. But it is otherwise concerning the sea and concerning gold, so many do not pay attention to their own nor the sins of their attendants, but the sins of others, Psal. [37:11]: “The light of my eyes itself is not with me.”

Second, it is because the eyes are more deficient in old age than the other senses,[[2]](#endnote-2) so it is concerning many both clerics and laity, Gen. 27[:1]: “Now Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim.”

Third, it is because it is more easily injured than another member and blemishes appear fouler in it than in another member, so a sin in a prelate, Matt. 7[:3]: “And why do you see the mote that is in your brother's eye,” etc. Eccli. 22[:24]: “He that pricks the eye, brings out tears.” Eccli. 31[:15]: “What is created more wicked than an eye?” The reason for this is that according to the Philosopher,[[3]](#endnote-3) the creation of the eye is immediate with the creation of the heart. And Isidore, book 11, c. 1,[[4]](#endnote-4) the eyes among all these senses exist nearer to the mind. Therefore Augustine, book 7, *Confessiones*,[[5]](#endnote-5) says by such images that go through my eyes, by such images go through my heart, because Lam. 3[:51]: “My eye has wasted my soul.” Therefore,[[6]](#endnote-6) Augustine says in *Regula clericorum*,[[7]](#endnote-7) that the impudent eye, is the messenger of the impudent heart. Therefore, Christ said, Matt. 6[:21-23]: “Where your eye is, there is your heart also,” and he adds, “The light of your body is your eye. If your eye be single, your whole body shall be lightsome. But if your eye be evil your whole body shall be darksome.” Because the whole body follows the condition of the eyes. Therefore “Saul did not look on David with a good eye,” 1 Kings 18[:9]. Wherefore Seneca says,[[8]](#endnote-8) whether in every city there are the eyes of the envious so that thus when every prosperity is seen they may be tortured the more, Psal. [6:8]: “My eye is troubled through indignation.” According to Hugh of Saint Victor,[[9]](#endnote-9) there is a triple kind of eyes, because some are of the flesh, some of the reason, and some of contemplation. Concerning the first [1] John chapter 2[:16] says, “For all that is in the world, is either the concupiscence of the flesh, or the concupiscence of the eyes.”

¶ Certainly the eyes are the stimulants of the vices, the leaders of wicked things, on account of which Abimelech was led on by the beauty of the eyes of Sarah. He should have had a veil for the thousand eyes of Argus, that is, that he might veil his eyes, more are more captivated by those, Gen. 20[:2].

¶ Concerning the second eyes, Psal. [24:15]: “My eyes are ever towards the Lord.” For arousing these eyes God said to Abraham, Gen. 13[:14]: “Lift up your eyes, and look from the place wherein you now are, to the north,” namely, to the infernal pains, “and to the south,” that is, to the joys of paradise. Wherefore Bernard,[[10]](#endnote-10) O true meridian, plenitude of light, place of the sun, the extermination of shadows, the drying up of marshes, the driving off bad smells! O springtime, beautiful summer, o fruitful autumn. When winter has gone away and receded. Look also to the east, that is, to your origin and to the west, that is, to death. So, the eye of reason ought to look.

¶ To which it ought to be known according to the Philosopher, *De animalibus*,[[11]](#endnote-11) that those animals which have eyes on the sides of their head inflict tortures, Prov. 4[:25]: “Let your eyes look straight on, and let your eyelids go before your steps.” But those looking laterally to temporal things inflict tortures as serpents and leopards. Wherefore Quintilian in the book *Causarum*, chapter 1,[[12]](#endnote-12) the liberty of the whole man is to lose the eyes.

¶ Certainly the eyes are those through which the poor cannot go, through which our lusts excite, these stare, fall in love, and desire, Eccle. first chapter [:8]: “The eye is not filled with seeing.”

¶ Note here how Demetrius the philosopher,[[13]](#endnote-13) rejoiced that he lost his eyes in the respect that they were every occasion of the vices.

¶ Again, note that for the custody of the material eye many things are required, namely moisture, like an undergarment, eyelids, so for the custody of the mental eye. Wherefore it is no marvel if those demand to be solicitously watched, Deut. 32[:10]: “He kept him as the apple of his eye.”

¶ Again, just as in the custody of the eye, the tunic which softer to the pupil as it is closer, indeed hard the further away, so in the eye of the Church which is the prelate one ought to be closer than the severity of justice.

¶ The example in Eliseus to whom it was said, 4 Kings 2[:12]: “The chariot of Israel,” for supporting the underworld, “and the driver thereof,” for stimulating those without color.

Again, it is proven in the science of perspectives that to the eye existing in the medium of rarer things, things appear greater than as if to the eye existing in air. An object in water appears greater than it is. And on the other hand, to the eye existing in a denser medium an object appears less than it is, as if the eye were in water. An object in air appears less, so a poor man existing in his frailty judges the rich man to be greater in his opulence, Psal. [143:15]: “They have called the people happy, that have these things,” but they are mistaken in this.

¶ For a grain of millet is not great although it is placed upon a mountain. Wherefore Bernard, *Ad Eugenium*,[[14]](#endnote-14)although because you are the supreme pontiff, are you therefore supreme? On the other hand, those immersed in riches consider the poor man small. So, concerning the eye note that the eye in the body is twinned, so one is reinforced by another where nature recommends to us a social life in which one is supported by another, Eccle. 4[:9]: “It is better that two should be together, than one,” and it follows, “for they have the advantage of their society.” For they help each other as far as withdrawing from evil and as far as keeping in the good.

About which see below the chapter [346] the Social life (*Socialis vita*).

Second, the eye is to be ascertain as most like its own, otherwise it would be monstrous, since in us are two eyes: intellect, namely, and feeling. Many have these eyes unequal and deformed. One namely teaching and the other doing. Many speak little but do much, they know little, but they love much, studying about the illumination of the intellect caring little about the inflammation of the feelings, but David asked for both in the Psal. [12:4]: “Enlighten my eyes that I never sleep in death.” But in many things similarly the eye is illuminated, and the right is obscured, about which Zach. 11[:17]: “O shepherd, and idol, that forsakes the flock: his arm shall quite wither away, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.”

¶ The devil tries to root out the right eye rather so that thus he might render one unfit for the fight.

¶ The figure for this, 1 Kings 11[:1-2]: Naas wanted to go into a covenant. However, he wanted to gouge out the right eyes from the men of Jabes, because the devil prefers rather to carry off the cognition and desire for eternal matters than prudence of temporal things.

¶ O how many are clear in questions, but obscure in customs, Job 24[:21]: “For he has fed the barren, that is, the intellect, “that bears not,” that is, that does not merit through good works, “and to the widow,” that is, the feeling, “he has done no good.” Because of these things Hugh of Saint Victor says in his little book, *De institutione*,[[15]](#endnote-15) to vow is better to instruct the habits to virtue than sharpen the senses to subtlety. But alas because so many men as if monsters have the eye of intellect so great that with them, they light up the region, Zach. 5[:6]: “Their eye in all the earth.” In truth they have the eye of feeling or at least the name, Job 16[:21]: “My eye pours out tears to God.” The curious hear that of Seneca, *Ad Lucilium*,[[16]](#endnote-16) why do you torment yourself in this question, which it is more useful to have scorned than to solve.

¶ It is read that the mother of blessed Edmund[[17]](#endnote-17) refuted that vision which he looked upon with the curious arts, showing him in his right hand three circles containing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Whereupon also he, having abandoned his geometry turned himself to theology.

¶ Again, Augustine, book 5, *Confessiones*,[[18]](#endnote-18) speaking to God, Unhappy is the man who knows all those things, who however does not know you. However, blessed is he who knows you, although he does not know those things. Who in truth knows you and those things, is more blessed not because of those things, but because of you is better, absolutely.

Third, the eye in diverse men has diverse colors.[[19]](#endnote-19) Wherefore according the Philosopher, book 19, *De animalibus*,[[20]](#endnote-20) those having recessed eyes have acute vision by day but are obtuse by night. By which the contrary are grey which have a feeble spirit and little humor. Therefore, it designates the wise of the world in whom the humor of grace is deficient and the power of working grows torpid. These see more clearly at night they turn to the earth by their sense in which they are like moles which are keen under the earth and know the open paths, but above the ground it is insensitive.

¶ On the other hand those having dark eyes in which the memory of death is impressed see better by day because they approve more the works of light than darkness, Eccli. 7[:40]: “Remember your last end, and you shall never sin.”

¶ Again, the eye is of a spherical shape which certain figure is of all the simplest since it is contained in a single line, which warns us to have a simplicity of intention, Matt. 6[:22]: “If your eye be single, your whole body,” that is, the accumulation of works, “shall be lightsome.”

Again, the rotundity of the figure or its global shape which lacks an end persuades us in our works to look to the eternal reward, 1 Cor. 10[:31]: “Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God.” Of such a kind was Joab who when the city of Rabath was to be captured, he sent for David lest his name be ascribed for the victory, [1 Paral. 20:1]. But many lift their eyes to heaven not for this heaven, but for observing the cloud lest their chicks be seized as does the little old woman, so do many because of a worldly end.

¶ Again, we see that these crossbow men shoot straighter if one eye is covered, so whoever wishes to straighten his work uses a simple intention. Wherefore Augustine in *Confessiones*,[[21]](#endnote-21) Lord you are our glory. Because of you we are loved, and your word is feared in us. For whoever wishes to be praised by men with you reproaching, he shall not be defended by men with you judging, nor will he be rescued with you damning. In sign of this we say at the end of the Psalms, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, just as that is said in the Psal. [113:9]: “Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to your name give glory.”

Fifth, the eye is covered by the eyelid to conserve the visible spirit and for the avoidance of exterior harms. Wherefore the Philosopher says in the fourth book of *De animalibus*,[[22]](#endnote-22) that any one lacking eyelids the sight is debilitated as is evident in fish and lepers, the eyes of which are always open. There is not in them a great loss of spirits, so those who do not hide their goods, but through vain glory boast, they lose everything. Wherefore Gregory in *Homilia*,[[23]](#endnote-23) he desires to be robbed, who carries his treasure publicly along the road. In the sign of this the hand of Moses was sound while it was at his side, but leprous when he withdrew it, Exod. 4[:6]. Similarly, also Ezekias by showing his treasures to the Babylonians afterwards lost all, 4 Kings [24:13]. Concerning this covering Christ says, Matt. 6[:3]: “When you do alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand does,” that is, admit no ostentation to your good work.

Again, according to the Philosopher, book 4, *De animalibus*,[[24]](#endnote-24) birds signify heavenly men by the earthly ability of the wise to walk. About whom it is said in the Psal. [16:11]: “They have set their eyes bowing down to the earth.” And Dan. 13[:9], it is said concerning the evil priests “They turned away their eyes that they might not look unto heaven.”

¶ On the other hand, the spiritual say with the Apostle that of Phil. 3[:20]: “Our conversation is in heaven.” Therefore, blessed Martin,[[25]](#endnote-25) with his eyes and hands, he was always intent on heaven, “Allow me,” he said.[[26]](#endnote-26)

Sixth, the corporal eye is not of oneself but of another agent. So carnal men act, Job 10[:4]: “Have you eyes of flesh?” Wherefore Augustine, *Confessiones*,[[27]](#endnote-27) humankind are curious for thinking about another life, lazy to think of one’s own. And Bernard in his *Meditationes*,[[28]](#endnote-28) namely, many know many things, etc., 1 Cor. 2[:11]: “For what man knows the things of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him?” Luke 6[:41]: “And why do you see the mote in your brother's eye?” Such ones, according to Seneca,[[29]](#endnote-29) are similar thieves who seek hidden things, but passes over things open to view.

¶ Again, the external eye in Luke [11:34]. He sees with that eye which is in darkness. But on the other hand, thus sinners in darkness judge rashly those existing in grace, but the just as if conceal the sins of others considering that either they have fallen in similar things or they could fall. Wherefore it is read concerning John the Greek,[[30]](#endnote-30) that he did not judge anyone easily saying that he had the sin of others. For us however it may not be their penitence, with God it was noted for us. So, it is read in the *Vitae patrum*, concerning the abbot Moses,[[31]](#endnote-31) carrying before him a basket full of sand and another behind him even fuller. And he was saying these are my sins and duties flowing after me. And I go today to judge another’s sins. Wherefore Anselm, in the book *De similitudinibus*,[[32]](#endnote-32) the consideration of another’s sin makes for many evils.

¶ For if a sinner is one who examines by the evil example of another and perseveres in his fault, if a penitent is one who abates by his example, so he who lacks such a vice now is tempted by such a vice, so from this he prefers himself to that one and is lifted in pride. Because if he had loved himself first, then he would begin to be without hate.

¶ Again, the eye is the director not only of itself but also of the whole body in which good things received are taught to communicate to others, Wis. [7:13]: “Which I have learned without guile and communicate without envy.” And 1 Pet. 4[:10]: “As every man has received grace, ministering the same one to another.” For spiritual goods are not lessened in communication. And Prov. 11[:26]: “He that hides up corn, shall be cursed among the people.” And the principal firebrand is not lessened although others are lit by it.

¶ Again, the eye is indicative of the interior. Wherefore the Philosopher, book 22, *De animalibus*,[[33]](#endnote-33) if the eye is too mobile it indicates instability of the mind, if it is too slow pertinacity of the will, Eccli. 19[:26]: “A man is known by his look.” And a fish is judged a keeper if the eye has a bloody desire. And Augustine in his *Regula*,[[34]](#endnote-34)an impudent eye is the messenger of an impudent heart. Wherefore Virgil,[[35]](#endnote-35) the inconstant mind, the wandering eye, the unsteady foot. These are the signs of a man about whom I have no good hope.

¶ Again, Solinus reports, *De mirabilibus*,[[36]](#endnote-36) that in Scythia there are some women having double pupils in their eyes, which when they are angry by this sight alone, they intoxicate those they look at.

Again, although among the members of man the belly is greatly sumptuous, according to that of Eccle. 6[:7]: “All the labor of man is for his mouth.” However, his eyes are more sumptuous, but this shows in the sumptuousness of his clothes, horses, buildings, foods, or vessels. Wherefore Virgil,[[37]](#endnote-37) the eyes feed the soul more than the dishes do the belly.

¶ Again, note that three things impede the due disposition of the eye, namely, the swelling or prominence of pride, the dust of avarice, the hardened humor of lust.

Concerning the first, it is said in book 19, *De animalibus*,[[38]](#endnote-38) that the protruding eye is weak of sight.

Concerning the second, the *Policraticus* says,[[39]](#endnote-39) one who seeks money cannot be the same with the book lover.

Concerning the third, book 22, *De animalibus*,[[40]](#endnote-40) birds having a pure humor in fleshy or wandering eyes that infect the mind, Matt. [5:28]: “Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” Wherefore fornication (*fornicacio*) is said as if a strong killing (*fortis necacio*).

¶ The nature of the lion is if anyone passes next to him not perceiving him escapes unharmed, otherwise it is not so. Concerning a woman, Job 31[:1]: “I made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as think upon a virgin.” Wherefore Gregory,[[41]](#endnote-41) it is not permitted to look upon that which it is not permitted to desire. Note here he narrates how a young monk going with an old one saw women leading a dance. And he asked what they might be. The old monk responded that they were geese. But when they had arrived home that youth asked to have the geese which he had seen. Wherefore also the old monk showed the brothers how perilous it is in looking upon women. From which that youth always raised in a monastery, who never had seen women, so on the first looking was intoxicated.

Again, according to Hugh, *De sacramentis*,[[42]](#endnote-42) the eye in us is triple: contemplation, reason, and flesh. But by the sin of our first parents the first eye in us was extinguished. The second was made bleary. The third remains clear, “For the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light,” [Luke 16:8].

¶ Again, as the eye holds the place of eminence in the body because of its dignity, so the prelates of the Church, just as they excel others by the dignity of their state, so they ought to be superior by the sanctity of their life.

About which see below in the chapter [297] Prelate (*Prelatus*).

Isai. 24[:2]: “And it shall be as with the people, so with the priest.”

Again, the eye is offered to the other languishing members as if a fellow sufferer, just as a prelate by the example of Jeremiah 13[:17]: “My eyes shall run down the tears, because the flock of the Lord is carried away captive.”

See below in the chapter [297] Prelates (*Prelates*).

And other ecclesiastical men so that they do not multiply too much their temporal goods.

About which see below in the chapter [297] Prelate (*Prelatus*).

¶ Again, a blemish in the eye is considered great which in another member seems modest, so a sin in a prelate appears greater than in the subordinate.

See below in the chapter [297] Prelate (*Prelatus*).

¶ Again, there are three ways in which the eye is delightful, namely in the clearness of water, in the freshness of flowers, and in the clarity of a mirror. Wherefore Bernard,[[43]](#endnote-43) the eye delights for clearness, freshness, and as a mirror. The water designates Mary, the flowers the saints, and the mirror Christ.

Concerning the first, Can. 4[:15]: “The fountain of gardens, the well of living waters.” Wherefore also that is just like the regular water. Wherefore Bernard,[[44]](#endnote-44) Mary was created all things for all people, so that from her plenitude all may receive, the captive his redemption, therefore her care, etc.

Again, Anselm, in his *Meditationes*,[[45]](#endnote-45) O mistress the happy assemblage of the just praises you, to you fly the frightened crowd of the guilty. Would that my heart may languish in your love, withdraw from the flesh. Therefore, she explains herself to all says that of Eccli. 24[:26]: “Come over to me, all you that desire me.” And if she may say that of Isai. 55[:1]: “All you that thirst, come to the waters.”

Second,[[46]](#endnote-46) because the eye delights, it is the freshness of flowers as a pleasing garden, Eccli. 40[:22]: “The eye desires favor and beauty, but more than these green sown fields.” And Eccli. 39[:19]: Send forth flowers, as the lily.” Because the holy ones flower interiorly through holy intention and send out fronds exteriorly through pleasing example, and they bear fruit through their work. Therefore, the holy ones are pleasing to the eye, they are delightful to be seen. If certainly the eye of the just man when it perceives the roses of the martyrs, the violets of the confessors, and the lilies of the virgins.

¶ Third, because it delights, the eye is a mirror. That happens because it looks at nothing else than itself. Where it takes away what is disfigured, it can wipe it away, Exod. 25[:40]: “Look and make it according to the pattern, that was shown to you in the mount.” It does this, Job [42:5], when it says, “now my eye sees you.” Therefore, I reprehend myself and I do penance, but as commonly the foul one does not look into the mirror. So, neither does the sinner against those, Jer. 2[:27, 36]: “They turn their back to me, and not their face,” and it follows, “How exceeding base are you become.” Therefore, according to the Psal. [83:10]: “Look on the face of your Christ.” Because John 17[:3]: “Now this is eternal life: That they may know you, God.”

1. Cf. Hugh Ripelin of Strasburg, *Compendium Theologicae Veritatis* 5.20 (8:201a): Octavum est de vitanda occasione peccati. Unde dicitur: *Si oculus tuus scandalizat te, erue eum, et projice abs te*. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Aristotle, On the Soul, 1.4 408b21-22 (Barnes 1:651): if the old man could recover the proper kind of eye, he would see just as well as the young man. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.11 492a21-23 (Barnes 1:783-784): The eyes also are connected with the brain, and each of them lies at the end of a little vein. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Isidore, *Etymologiae* 11.1.24 Note (PL 82:400): Atque ex eo omnis vigendi causa oriatur. Ambros., VI Hexam., cap. 9:: Viciniores oculi sunt cerebro, unde omnis manat usus vigendi. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Augustine, *Confessiones*  7.1.2 (PL 32:733): Per quales enim formas ire solent oculi mei, per tales imagines ibat cor meum: nec videbam hanc eamdem intentionem, qua illas ipsas imagines formabam, non esse tale aliquid; quae tamen ipsas non formaret, nisi esset magnum aliquid. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. *Fasciculus morum* 7.2 (p. 650): Et ideo ait Augustinus: “Impudicus oculus impudici cordis est nuncius, quia frequenter cordi mala et feda denunciat, puta carnales voluptates et similia. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Augustine, *Regula ad servos Dei* 6 (PL 32:1381): quia impudicus oculus, impudici cordis est nuntius. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Seneca, cf. Petri Berchorii, *Opera omnia* (4:364a): quia scilicet oculi invidorum illos, qui sunt prosperitate lucentes et fulgentes videre nequeunt, nec respicere prae invidia et dolore; illos vero, qui per paupertatem sunt extincti, et qui in hoc mundo nihil prosperum mundi habet, sine dolore invidiae respiciunt atque vident, quia secundum Senecam sola miseria caret invidia. Isti ergo infirmantur oculis per invidiam. <https://books.google.com/books?id=McM_LtFoe_EC&pg=PA364&lpg=PA364&dq=oculi+invidorum&source=bl&ots=ewvMHrAuO_&sig=ACfU3U1Ifkxpnn4yUFupk47k66Jz5Ps-VA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjm-oLhm7zhAhVECKwKHZ2fCyMQ6AEwAXoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=oculi%20invidorum&f=false> [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Hugh of St. Victor, *Elucidationes Variae in Scriputura Moraliter* 1 (PL 177:471): Qui enim videt oculo contemplationis, videt Deum et ea quae in Deo sunt. [Col.0471C] Qui videt oculo rationis, videt animum et ea quae in animo sunt. Qui videt oculo carnis, videt mundum et ea quae in mundo sunt. Qui autem videt ea quae videntur oculo contemplationis, videt et ea quae videntur oculo rationis et ea quae videntur oculo carnis, quia in superioribus inferiora cognoscuntur. Qui autem videt oculo rationis, ea quidem quae videntur oculo carnis videt; sed non similiter ea quae videntur oculo contemplationis videt. Qui vero oculo carnis videt, ex eo nec ea videt quae videntur oculo contemplationis, nec ea quae videntur oculo rationis. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Bernard, *In Cantica Canticorum* 33.6 (PL 183:954): O vero meridies, plenitudo fervoris et lucis, solis statio, umbrarum exterminatio, desiccatio paludum, fetorum depulsio! O perenne solstitium, quando jam non inclinabitur dies! o lumen meridianum, o vernalis temperies, o aestiva venustas, o autumnalis ubertas; et, ne quid videar praeteriise, o quies et feriatio hiemalis! Aut certe, si hoc magis probas, sola tunc hiems abiit et recessit. Hunc locum, inquit, tantae claritatis et pacis et plenitudinis indica mihi, ut quemadmodum Jacob adhuc in corpore [Col.0954C] manens vidit Dominum facie ad faciem. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Aristotle, cf. Jason G. Goldman, “Evolution: Why do your eyes face forward,” There are those animals with eyes on the sides of their heads – chickens, cows, horses, zebras – and then there are those with eyes that are closer together on the front of their face, like monkeys, tigers, owls, wolves. … There's a trade-off when it comes to eye placement. As the eyes move forward along the face, two fields of vision overlap. It's that overlap – the slightly different perspective on the scene in front of you that each of your two eyes sends to your brain – that allows you to perceive depth. Animals with sideways-facing eyes may not have this well-developed depth perception, but they are able to see an extremely wide panorama instead.

<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20141013-why-do-your-eyes-face-forwards> [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Quintilian, cf. *Bibliothek des Litterarischen Vereins* CLXXVII (Tübingen: Kosten des Litterarischen Vereins, 1886, p. 364): Tocius hominis libertas est oculos perdidisse. Quint. in libro causarum in prima causa (Declam. II pro caeco, c. IX, aber “debilitas” statt “libertas”)

Cf. M. FABI QVINTILIANI DECLAMATIO MAIOR SECVNDA 9: totius hominis debilitas est oculos perdidisse

<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/quintilian/quintilian.decl.mai2.shtml> [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Demetrius, Cf. *Fasciculus morum* 7.2 (pp. 650-652): Unde narratur in *Vitas Patrum* quod cum quidam senex cum alio fratre laudabili vita vineam excolendam intrasset, accidit ut unus ramunculus oculum eius evulsit. Quod videns socius contristatus valde flevit. Quod videns senex ait: “Ne doleas, frater, set pocius gaude, quia pessimum inimicum amisi. Duos enim capitales prius habui, set iam—laudetur Deus—unum perdidi. Si vero ambos perdidissem, de salute anime satis securus essem.” [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Bernard, *De consideratione ad Eugenium* 7.15 (PL 182:750): Quid si summus Pontifex sis? Numquid quia summus Pontifex, ideo summus? [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Hugh of St. Victor, *De institutione novitiorum* 8 (PL 176:933): Vos autem fratres, qui scholam disciplinae jam intrastis, in lectione divina prius debetis quaerere, quod mores instruat ad virtutem, quam quod sensum acuat ad subtilitatem, magisque velle informari praeceptis Scripturarum, quam quaestionibus impediri. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Seneca, *Epistula* 49.6 LCL 75:326-327): Quid te torques et maceras in ea quaestione, quam subtilius est contempsisse quam solvere?

Why do you torment yourself and lose weight over some problem which it is more clever to have scorned than to solve? [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Cf. *St* *Edmund Archibishop of Canterbury* ed. Bernard Ward (London: Sands & Co, 1903, p. 259): It is evident that the three rings or circles are in consequence of that open vision of St. Edmund’s, when his blessed mother Mabel appeared to him after her holy death, and drew in his right hand three circles, in which she wrote the names of the Three Divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=y8YxAQAAIAAJ&pg=PA259&lpg=PA259&dq=St.+Edmund+has+three+circles+on+his+right+hand&source=bl&ots=sbzEABpzho&sig=bM93SVPBNb5s4wUp4Sdkg0djt8U&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwin6c634OzbAhVrwYMKHRRIDfAQ6AEIKTAA#v=onepage&q=St.%20Edmund%20has%20three%20circles%20on%20his%20right%20hand&f=false> [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Augustine, *Confessiones* 5.4.7 (PL 32:708): Infelix enim homo qui scit illa omnia, te autem nescit: beatus autem qui te scit, etiamsi illa nesciat. Qui vero et te ut illa novit, non propter illa beatior, sed propter te solum beatus est, si cognoscens te, sicut Deum glorificet, et gratias agat, et non evanescat in cogitationibus suis. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.10 492a5-6 (Barnes 1:783): Man is the only, or nearly the only, creature, that has eyes of diverse colours. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.10 492a9-10 (Barnes 1:783): Of these, the receding eye is in all animals the most acute; but the last kind are the sign of the best disposition. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Augustine, *Confessiones* 10.36.59 (PL 32:804): Gloria nostra tu esto; propter te amemur, et verbum tuum timeatur in nobis. Qui laudari vult ab hominibus vituperante te, non defendetur ab hominibus judicante te, nec eripietur damnante te. Cum autem non peccator laudatur in desideriis animae suae, nec qui iniqua gerit benedicitur (Psal. X, 3), sed laudatur homo propter aliquod donum quod dedisti ei; at ille plus gaudet sibi laudari se, quam ipsum donum habere unde laudatur: etiam iste te vituperante laudatur; et melior jam ille qui laudavit, quam iste qui laudatus est. Illi enim placuit in homine donum Dei; huic amplius placuit donum hominis quam Dei. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 4.10 536b33-537a4 (Barnes 1:849): And the same may be said of water animals, such as fishes, molluscs, crustaceans, to wit crawfish and the like. These animals sleep without doubt, although their sleep is of very short duration. The proof of their sleeping cannot be got from the condition of their eyes-for none of these creatures

are furnished with eyelids-but can be obtained only from their motionless repose. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Gregory, *Homilia* 11.1 Matth. 13:44-52 (PL 76:1115): Depraedari ergo desiderat, qui [Col.1115B] thesaurum publice portat in via. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.1 487b24-31 (Barnes 1:776): Some birds have feet of little power, and are therefore called Apodes. This little bird is powerful on the wing; and, as a rule, birds that resemble it are weak-footed and strong winged, such as the swallow and the drepanis or (?) Alpine swift; for all these birds resemble one another in their habits and in their plumage, and may easily be mistaken one for another. (The apus is to be seen at all seasons, but the drepanis only after rainy weather in summer; for this is the time when it is seen and captured, though, as a general rule, it is a rare bird.) [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. Saint Martin, cf. James of Voragine, *The Golden Legend* 166 (Ryan 2:298): His eyes and his hands he kept always pointed to heaven, and never let his unconquered spirit slacken in prayer. He lay always on his back, and when his priests begged him to let them ease his poor body by turning him on his side, he said: “Leave me as I am, brothers! Let me keep my eyes on heaven rather than on earth, so that my spirit may always be directed toward the Lord!” [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Cf. Antiphona: Sinite me, inquit, caelum videre, ut spiritus dirigatur ad Dominum; nihil in me reperiet inimicus, sed sinus Abrahae me suscipiet.

<http://gregorien.info/chant/id/7695/9/en> [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Augustine, *Confessiones*, 10.3.3 (PL 32:780): Curiosum genus ad cognoscendam vitam alienam, desidiosum ad corrigendam suam. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Bernard, *Meditationes piissimae de cognitione humanae conditionis* 1.1 (PL 184:485): Multi multa sciunt, et se ipsos nesciunt. Alios inspiciunt, et se ipsos deserunt. Deum quaerunt per ista exteriora, deserentes sua interiora, quibus interior est Deus. Idcirco ab exterioribus redeam ad interiora, et ab inferioribus ad superiora ascendam: ut possim cognoscere unde venio, aut quo vado; quid sum, vel unde sum; et ita per cognitionem mei valeam pervenire ad cognitionem Dei. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. Seneca, *Epistula* 68.4 (LCL 76:46-47):Multi aperta transeunt, condita et abstrusa rimantur; furem signata sollicitant. Vile videtur, quicquid patet, aperta effractarius praeterit.

Many men pass by that which is visible, and peer after things hidden and concealed; a locked room invites the thief. Things which lie in the open appear cheap; the house-breaker passes by that which is exposed to view. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. John [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. Abbot Moses, cf. *Vitae Patrum* Historia Lausiaca 8.19 and 20: Vita abbatis Macarii (PL 73:1118): Et cum duorum modiorum sportam implesset arena, et imposuisset humeris, pervadebat totam solitudinem. Huic occurrit Theosebius Cosmetor, genere Antiochenus, et ei dicit: Quid portas, abba? Cede mihi onus, et ne vexeris. Ille autem dixit: Vexo eum qui me vexat; nam cum sim remissus et ignavus, suggerit mihi peregrinationes. Cum autem diu promovisset, ingressus est cellam contrito corpore. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. Anselm, cf. Eadmeri Monachi *Liber de sancti Anselmi Similitudinibus*, 111 (PL 159:669): Consideratio namque, vel cognitio alieni peccati, mala multa in diversis parit. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.10 492a10-13 (Barnes 1:783): Again, eyes are sometimes inclined to wink under observation, sometimes to remain open and staring, and sometimes are disposed neither to wink nor stare. The last kind are the sign of the best nature, and of the others, the latter kind indicates impudence, and the former indecision. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. Augustine, *Regula* 6 (PL 32:1381): Nec [Col.1381] dicatis vos habere animos pudicos, si habeatis oculos impudicos: quia impudicus oculus, impudici cordis est nuntius. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. Virgil, cf. *Jankyn’s Book of Wikked Wyves*, 6. ll. 134-136 ed. Traugott Lawler et al. (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2014), 2:405: De hoc notatur: “Inconstans animus, oculus vagus, instabilis pes—hec tria sunt hominis de quo michi nulla boni spes.” [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Solinus, *De mirabilibus mundi*, 1.101 (Mommsen p. 26): Apollonides perhibet in Scythia feminas nasci, quae bitiae uocantur: has in oculis pupillas geminas habere et perimere uisu si forte quem iratae aspexerint. [Hae sunt et in Sardinia.] [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. Virgil, cf. H. Walther, *Proverbia sententiaeque Latinitatis medii aevi,* Bd. 3 1965, Nr. 21730): Plus Oculi: Plus oculi pascunt animum quam fercula ventrem; Plus honor obsequii quam sapor ipse sapit. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.10 492a8-10 (Barnes 1:783): Moreover, eyes sometimes protrude, sometimes recede, sometimes are neither protruding nor receding. Of these, the receding eye is in all animals the most acute; but the last kind are the sign of the best disposition. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* Entheticus (PL 199:384): Nummipetae cum libricolis nequeunt simul esse. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. Cf. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 2.12 504a24-29 (Barnes 1:801): Like all other animals they all have two eyes, and these

are devoid of lashes. The heavy-bodied (or gallinaceous) birds close the eye by means of the lower lid, and all birds blink by means of a skin extending over the eye from the inner corner; the owl and its congeners also close the eye by means of the upper lid. The same phenomenon is observable in the animals that are protected by horny scutes, as in the lizard and its congeners; for they all without exception close the eye with the lower lid, but they do not blink like birds. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. Gregory, *Moralia* 21.2.4 (PL 76:189): Intueri non decet quod concupiscere non licet. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. Hugh of St. Victor, *De sacramentis* 10.2 (PL 176:329-330): Et ipsa anima, quasi in medio quodam erat habens extra se mundum, intra se Deum, et acceperat oculum quo extra se mundum videret et ea quae in mundo erant: et hic erat oculus carnis. Alium oculum acceperat quo seipsam videret et ea quae in ipsa erant, hic est oculus rationis. Alium rursum oculum acceperat quo intra se Deum videret et ea quae in Deo erant, et hic est oculus contemplationis. Hos igitur oculos quandiu anima apertos et revelatos [Col.0329D] habebat, clare videbat et recte discernebat; postquam autem tenebrae peccati in illam intraverunt, oculus quidem contemplationis exstinctus est, ut nihil videret; oculus autem rationis [H]lippus effectus ut dubie videret. Solus ille oculus qui exstinctus non fuit in sua claritate permansit, qui quandiu lumen habet clarum, judicium dubium non habet. Oculus vero rationis quandiu lumen ejus est nubilum, judicium certum habere non potest; quia quod clare non videt discernit ambigue. Hinc est quod corda hominum facilius sibi consentiunt in his quae oculo carnis percipiunt, quam in his quae acie mentis et sensu rationis attingunt, quia ubi in videndo non caligant, in judicando non discrepant. Homo ergo [Col.0330A] quia oculum carnis habet mundum videre potest, et ea quae in mundo sunt. Item quia oculum rationis ex parte habet, animum similiter ex parte videt et ea quae in animo sunt. Quia vero oculum contemplationis non habet, Deum et quae in Deo sunt videre non valet. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. Bernard, cf. John Bromyard, *Summa Praedicantium* Visus, cap. 4.1 (Venice: Dominicum Nicolinum, 1586) (col. 227a): delectant oculum lympha, uiror, speculum: ita spiritualiter oculum bonorum delectant consideratio nostrae fluxibilitatis ad modum aque quia omnes morimur,

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44. Cf. Bernard, *In vigilia nativitatis Domini* Sermo 5.6 (PL 183:108): misericordiae, omnibus omnia factus est, et universos perfundit oleo quodam mansuetudinis et lenitatis, quo sic infusus est, sic perfusus etiam et superfusus, ut stillare videatur undique? [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. Anselm, *Oratio* 51 (PL 158:949): Maria sanctissima, cujus beata virginitate omnis sacratur integritas, cujus glorioso partu omnis salvatur fecunditas. Domina magna, cui gratias agit concie laeta justorum, ad quam fugit territa turba reorum. Ad te, praepotens et misericors domina, ego peccator et utique nimis peccator anxius confugio. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. Cf. William de Lancea, *Dietae salutis* 7.1 (8:313a): Est insuper humilitas in decore mentis valde speciosa; et propter hoc comparatur virori, et colori viridi, qui super omnes colores est proportionabilis oculis, et delectabilis ad videndum. Unde dicitur in *Ecclesiastico: Gratiam et speciem desiderabit oculus, et super omnes virides sationes*, vel segetes, satior viridiorque est virtus humilitatis. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)