266 Mouth, Of the Mouth (*Os, Oris*)

According to the Philosopher, *De animalibus*,[[1]](#endnote-1) some animals have a large mouth and cutting, some a small mouth, as a man in which nature teaches that man ought to be temperate in the use of his mouth in his every office for the cause of eating as well as speaking, Eccli. 19[:28-30]: “Make doors and bars to your mouth. ... Lest you slip with your tongue,” etc. For according to James 3[:10]: “Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing.” According to the Philosopher, book 7, *De animalibus*,[[2]](#endnote-2) when the lion opens his mouth a strong odor goes forth. Nor is it a wonder because he eats raw flesh, Psal. [143:8]: “Whose mouth hath spoken vanity.” But Prov. 16[:23]: “The heart of the wise shall instruct his mouth.” And Eccli. 21[:29]: “The heart of fools is in their mouth: and the mouth of wise men is in their heart.” And Prov. 10[:11]: “The mouth of the just is a vein of life.”

And Matt. 17[:26] it is said that “when he opened the fish’s mouth, Peter found a stater,” that is, a weight of half an ounce, weighing in three. Thence it is said *staterem* as if weighing in three parts in which it is designated that in the mouth of any faithful person there ought to be discretion, Eccli. 21[:28]: “The words of the wise shall be weighed in a balance.” Therefore, says Job 7[:11] in small things of the penitent “I will not spare my month, I will speak in the affliction of my spirit.” For Wis. 11[:17] it is said “by what things a man sins, by the same also he is tormented.” Therefore, because one sins by the mouth and confesses it, because Rom. 10[:10]: “With the heart, we believe unto justice; but, with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.” For when the stomach is filled too full it is purged by the mouth, Prov. 12[:6]: “The mouth of the just shall deliver them.”

1. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 2.7 502a5-8 (Barnes 1:798): Furthermore, animals differ from one another in the relative size of their mouths. In some animals the mouth opens wide, as is the case with the dog, the lion, and with all the saw-toothed animals; other animals have small mouths, as man; and others have mouths of medium capacity, as the pig and his congeners. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Aristotle, *History of Animals* 8.5 594b17-29 (Barnes 1:930): The lion, like all other savage and jag-toothed animals, is carnivorous. It devours its food greedily and fiercely, and often swallows its prey entire without rending it at all; it will then go fasting for two or three days together, being rendered capable of this abstinence by its previous surfeit. It is a spare drinker. It discharges the solid residuum in small quantities, about every other day or at irregular intervals, and the substance of it is hard and dry like the excrement of a dog. The wind discharged from off its stomach is pungent, and its urine emits a strong odour, a phenomenon which, in the case of dogs, accounts for their habit of sniffing at trees; for, by the way, the lion, like the dog, lifts its leg to void its urine. It infects the food it eats with a strong smell by breathing on it, and when the animal is cut open an overpowering vapour exhales from its inside. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)