

Gentlemen, no species in creation has suffered as much from the law of evolution as the canine species. Its faithfulness to man from prehistoric times down to our own days has meant it has acquired a remarkable ability to adapt to environmental and geographical changes determined by the struggle for life imposed by its owner, not because of great geological changes but rather because of human capriciousness.

People who have not had a chance to observe the enormous morphological difference that exists between a corpulent dog of the Great Dane breed and the minute Pekinese? Between the sleek, aristocratic Irish greyhound and the thickset dachshund? Between the beautiful coat of a setter or a collie and the bare skin of a pila? Is there not perhaps more difference in the morphology in the breeds that we have just compared than the difference existing and perceptible between a lion and a tiger, a lama and a guanaco, and between an anthropoid and a human being in the primitive era? Why among members of a single species and only in this species on the vast zoological scale is it possible to have differences so great as to outdo the differences between distinct species? Gentlemen, there is but one answer to these questions.

It is due to the magnificent capacity to adapt that the canine species has had, acquired through following their masters down through the ages along all the paths on the planet and in the hostile weather conditions of all the climates on earth, to serve with the same self-denial a master of all breeds, of all characters and all cultures. Because gentlemen, history teaches that beyond the night of the centuries, beyond the threshold of pre-history where the first path and the first human footprint appeared was that of its noble and faithful friend. The companion of always... In cheerfulness and in pain in misery and in plenty, in hope and in desperation, in the cradle and in the tomb, in life and in death... there was the dog, the only being with such nobility that it is able to lick the wounds of its master before licking its own and make his life happy, the only being able capable of kissing both the hand that strokes it .. and the one that beats it in punishment. Gentlemen, I, in all this see something more than a simple expression of instinct..., I see traced in its psychogenesis a superior sentiment. I see in the first gesture, much concreteness and devotion, in the second much gratitude and in the third... the sublime gesture of forgiveness.

This magnificent adaptability of the canine species to changes in climate or paratypes both from the psychic point of view and from the morphological point of view following the biological paths of evolution, is what has allowed the development of the immense number of breeds and dog varieties that we know today, some fixed by natural selection others by man beyond the goal of functionality as beauty and companionship, caprice or as could be said for some of them a clear aberration of good, human taste. All these breeds have always had in common a sole end, to be at the service of the master and the most tyrannical lord that creation knows: man, they serve with the same submission the aristocratic pedigree in the same way as the humble son of no-one... taking advantage of this easy adaptation of the species and of that docility to human selection, I set out twenty years ago to give birth to a new breed of dog that brought together the conditions necessary for creating a dog suitable for big game hunting in Argentina. Because hunting conditions in our virgin, impenetrable forests are very different from those that are found on European hunting preserves where the breeds that we import for these uses were selected.

Here we hunt in open mountains that stretch out over vast expanses where sometimes there are people who cover the paths crawling on the ground behind groups of boars, native to Argentina and imported,

or even pumas and tapirs, that once they have heard the pack approaching must be captured the moment one encounters them otherwise it is pointless trying to chase them to catch them over land stretching for thousands of acres. All the efforts of the breeder and the dog would be in vain. So, what qualities should a dog have for this type of hunting? In the first place, it must be a dog who knows how to move silently through the mountains and that is focus solely on the prey; because if all the mountain breeds behaved like fox hounds, who begin sniffing when they happen on the prey, the hunter can be sure that they will not catch anything because the yelping of the dogs warns the animals who hear them coming from a very long way off.

Secondly it must be a dog with a great sense of smell with nostrils set high like the pointer, not on its face because when hunting pumas for example the animal can trick the dogs by running off in a circular direction and returns on its tracks; other times it climbs a tree and jumps from one tree to another or manages to escape with a single leap from a precipice that leaves the dogs following it to turn around in circles quite confused; on the contrary when the dog follows the animal sniffing there is no chance of being cheated. It is the known stratagem of the pécari to split off from the group staying hidden among the bushes while the pack chases after the prey, which is therefore useless because the dogs sniff. For this reason it is common to hear people living in the country where pumas live say that the best guard dog is the pointer or their mongrel because they find the prey immediately, they immobilise it and the hunter is able to administer the coup de grace. Thirdly, it must be an agile dog more in fighting than in speed because any dog with a structure that is not too heavy can catch up with boars, pumas or pécaries.

Finally it must above all be courageous. In clashes with the puma or the pig it must hold on even if hurt and be able to keep it under control alone until the other dogs or the hunter arrive and if they do not it must be able to kill the animal itself because in our hunts, given the vastness of our country, it is not possible to cover a hundred kilometres with a pack of twenty or fifty dogs. It is neither practical nor convenient for us. The quality of courage is what I consider fundamental because here where the mountains are not cultivated it is not possible to follow the pack on horseback, it is difficult enough to cover the terrain on foot; we can have no advantage in the fact that dogs capture the animals a long way away from us if they are not able to kill them; the best thing is that once the dog has found the animal it "knocks it flat", as we provincial say, that is to say it immediately gets a hold. With regard to the "size" of the dog, since the paths in our mountains are very low it is more practical to have dogs of medium build but since it is necessary when selecting breeds to choose stronger examples it is advisable for the stud kennel to choose those that are bigger and heavier, because the stud kennels in the country - as they are snowed under with work and have bad feeding regimes - tend to reduce the size: this what the creoles mean when they say "size comes in through the mouth".

The quality of courage also essential for the guard dog is the other special feature of the [Dogo Argentino](#). There is a widespread belief that the watch dog is the dog that barks or is capable of biting a stranger. This idea means that dogs of all breeds are great guards. But in my opinion the guard dog needs to be something else: it must be able to kill by taking hold to defend its master and its home. The dog that attacks an intruder is not worth a thing if the first time it is hit with a club or the first stab wound abandons its prey to yelp; an animal like that does not represent security for its master nor, in my opinion, does it deserve the honourable name of guard dog. Here in broad brushstrokes I have outlined what I have tried to obtain for the Dogo Argentino, whether I have succeeded or not enthusiasts of the manly sport of hunting and dog lovers, of whom I am one, will have to judge.

In the same canine adaptability to environmental characteristics that I have referred to, there is the variety of characteristics of the distinct breeds for which it is essential to remember in breeding together with the somatic characteristics of a fixed standard, the training oriented towards an established objective, that is to say remembering the key formula for improving dog breeds advanced by another partner that expresses himself with the following formula:

F X M + T, that means: Father X Mother + Training; that in genetic language translates into: Heredity + Training and environment, or Genotype + Paratype.

This monitoring, gentlemen, is essential in all breeds for biological reasons because in biology dynamism is life, inertia is death. The species and breeds that do not improve get worse and those that do not evolve become something else. But becoming something else means going backwards and retreading the path down the generations, it is a synonym of degenerating because it is losing qualities acquired for planned purposes. And to finish, I apologise gentlemen if I have injected a little passion into my words, but for the purposes of explanation I would like to remind you that it is possible to stand a great deal of fervour in the proposer of an idea, because passion is the engine, the driving force of ideas, ideas that are born without passion are stillborn. For this reason the story of humanity is the story of human passion, the biography of its great figures and above all the defence of its great passions.