

netrable to the water, which immediately covers the skin; the other longer, bristly, and shining, but thinner, which serves as an upper coat, and defends the former from filth and dust. The latter is of little value, it is the first alone which is used by our manufacturers. The blackest furs are generally thickest, and consequently most esteemed; nor is the fur of the solitary beavers equal to that of those who live in society. These animals, like all other quadrupeds, shed their hair in summer, and therefore the furs of such as are taken in that season are of little value. The fur of the white beaver is esteemed because of its rarity; and the perfectly black is nearly as uncommon as the white. But, independent of the fur, which is the most valuable article, the beaver furnishes a substance which has been considerably used in medicine; it is known by the name of *castoreum*, and is contained in two large bladders, and which the ancients mistook for the testicles of this animal; but as they are to be found in every pharmacopæia, it is unnecessary to give here a description of them or their uses*. The savages are said to obtain an oil from the beaver's tail, which

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* It is pretended, that the beavers extract this liquid by pressing the bladders with their feet, and that it gives them
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