

islands, situated at but a little distance from the continent, there were only five species of animals, the largest of which was not bigger than a rabbit? Than this fact, as affirmed by Laet, Acosta, and Father du Tertre, in their different histories, no stronger proof can be adduced of the empty and desart state of this new-discovered world.

M. Fabry, who travelled for fifteen months over the western parts of America, beyond the Mississippi, assured me that he sometimes did not meet a single man for the space of 300 or 400 leagues; and all our officers who went from Quebec to the Ohio, and from that river to Louisiana, agree that it is not uncommon to travel upwards of 100 leagues without seeing a single family of savages. From these testimonies it is plain, that the most agreeable countries of this new continent were little better than desarts; but what is more immediately necessary to our purpose, they prove that we should distrust the evidence of our nomenclators, who set down in their catalogues animals as belonging to the new world which solely belong to the old, and others as natives of particular districts where in fact they never existed; and in the same manner they have classed some animals as natives of the old world, which belong exclusively to America.