

are nearly acquainted with every thing; when that is the case, we can conclude a negative from the positive, and this negative hence becomes a positive fact. For example, I believe that by long study, I have attained a knowledge of almost every quadruped. I know that Aristotle could not have had any knowledge of those peculiar to the continent of America. I also know those which are amphibious, and among these I separate those that belong to America, as the tapir, the cabiai, the ondatra, &c. and then there remains only the amphibious animals of our own continent, namely, the hippopotamus, the walrus, or sea-cow, the sea-wolf of Belon, the beaver, the otter, the sable, the water-rat, the Muscovy muskrat, the water shrew-mouse, and we may include the ichneumon, which some have looked upon as an amphibious animal, and styled it the Egyptian otter. I retrench from this number the walrus, or sea-cow, the seal, or sea-cow, which being only met with in the northern seas, was not known to Aristotle; I also retrench the hippopotamus, the water-rat, and the ichneumon, because he speaks of them in another part of his work by their proper names; and I likewise retrench the seal, the beaver, and the otter, which are well known, and the  
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