

raging the race of polecats, from which no advantage could have accrued but the death of the rabbit, whereas by the ferret some benefit is also obtained by the hunter. The ferret, though easily tamed and rendered docile, is exceedingly irascible; he has always an ill smell, but more so when heated or irritated. He has lively but inflamed eyes; all his movements are quick, and is besides so strong, that he will easily master a rabbit three or four times as big as himself.

Notwithstanding the authority of interpreters and commentators, there are still doubts whether the ferret be the *ictis* of the Greeks. “The *ictis* (says Aristotle) is a kind of wild weasel, smaller than the little Maltese dog, but resembling the weasel in its hair, form, whiteness in the under parts of its body, and also in its cunning. Though easily tamed, it does mischief among the bee-hives, being extremely fond of honey. It will also attack birds, and like the cat, its genital member is bony.” It appears first a contradiction, in saying the *ictis* is a species of wild weasel, which is easily tamed, for with us the common weasel is not to be tamed at all; secondly, the ferret, though larger than the weasel, cannot be compared with the lap-dog in point of size; thirdly, it is evident that the ferret does not possess the cunning of
of