

of the weasel, nor is it even capable of artifice; and lastly, it does no mischief to bee-hives, nor is it fond of honey. I enquired of M. de la Roy, intendant of the royal forests, as to this last fact, and this was his answer: "*M. de Buffon may be assured that the ferret has no absolute inclination for honey; but if kept on slender diet, it may be forced to eat it. For four days I fed some with bread soaked in water mixed with honey; but though they ate pretty large quantities of it the last two days, the weakest of them was become sensibly more thin.*" This is not the first time M. de la Roy has furnished me with facts for the advantage of this work. Having no ferret in my possession, I made the like experiment on the ermine, by giving him nothing but honey to eat, and milk to drink; but he died in a few days. It appears, then, that neither the ferret nor ermine are fond of honey, like the ictis of the ancients, which leads me to think that the word ictis is nothing more than a generic name; or if it denotes any particular species, it is rather that of the marten or polecat; both of which possess the cunning of the weasel, attack bee-hives and are particularly fond of honey.