

MS. These sheets were hastily written for Mr. Pease Gibbs, in 1855, and were not originally intended for publication - Mr. Gibbs, having afterwards consented to their being printed as under, had a number of extra proofs struck off, of which he sent me some in their uncorrected state - witness the numerous misprints that appear.

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## General Department.

### NOTES ON THE INDIAN TRIBES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA, AND THE NORTHWEST COAST.

COMMUNICATED TO GEO. GIBBS, ESQ.

BY ALEX. C. ANDERSON, ESQ., LATE OF THE HON. H. B. CO.

And read before the New York Historical Society, November, 1862.

The greater portion of that vast tract, over which the commerce of the Hudson's Bay Company extends, is occupied by three distinct families of tribes, differing from each other widely in habits, and totally in language; 1st the CREE or KNISTINEAU, including the SAUTEUX or OJIBWAY, the ALGONQUIN, and other subdivisions; 2d, the CHIPEWYAN, embracing the Ta-cully\*, or Carriers of New Caledonia; and 3d, the SÆLISS, or SHEWHAPMUCH.

The limits occupied by the first of these families may be thus approximately defined. From Labrador, up the St. Lawrence as far as Montreal, through the Ottawa country and along Lake Superior, northwestward, to Lake Winipic and Assineboia. Hence west towards the head of the Saskatchewan, as far as Fort Edmonton. Then north to the Athabasca river, bending afterwards to the east, and continuing along the line of the Missinipi or English river to Churchill on the shores of Hudson's Bay.

Northward of the Cree line, almost to the Frozen Ocean, and from Churchill west-

N. B.—ch, accented, I employ to expr. the guttural sound, as in "Nicuic mach;" 2 to represent the broad sound of that vowel.

\*Tahcally, people who navigate deep waters, from Tah-cally desp. Chipewyan is the true generic name.

ward nearly to the Pacific, lies the broad band roamed over by the Chipewyan.

Crossing the Rocky Mountains to the heads of the northern branches of the Columbia, and the southern tributaries of Frazer's river, we find the Sæliss, or Shewhaphmuch race, whose limits may be defined by the Rocky Mountains eastward; on the west the line of Frazer's river from below Alexandria to Kequeloose, near the Falls, in about Lat. 49° 50'; northward by the Carrier offset of the Chipewyans, and south by the Sahaptins or Nez Percés of Oregon.

Having thus indicated the races of which this portion of the continent is chiefly inhabited, I shall pass over the Chinooks and other tribes living south of the British boundary, and confine my remarks to those who inhabit the coast northward of that line.

The Sæliss or \*Shewhaphmuch connexion, as I have already shown, ceases abruptly upon Frazer's river at a point about eighty-five miles above Fort Langley. From the falls downward nearly to the sea coast, the banks of the river are inhabited by several branches of the Haitlin or Teet† tribe.

Taking these as forming the southern verge, it will be found that a fringe of tribes borders the continent, hence round by Behring's Straits to the banks of the St. Lawrence. The breadth of this fringe,

\*"Atnah," the name given to the Shewhaphmuch by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and thence adopted into the maps, is simply the term by which their neighbors, the Ta-cully distinguish them, and is equivalent to "Stranger tribe," i. e. not of the Chipewyan connexion. To distinguish the tribes living west of them, the Ta-cully use another modification of the term, i. e. "Atnah voo."

† Called in turn by their upper neighbors, "Sa-chinco," a term apparently equivalent to that first explained. The Teets again, call the others, not by their true name of Nicuicmach, but "Saw-moosa." So throughout.

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