

Then the skin is hung over a pole and dried. When dried, it is smoked as before described, put into a basket or other vessel with some warm water and a strong solution of soap, where it remains for twenty-four hours or more, and is then rolled lengthwise, together with a little dry grass. One end is fastened with a rope to a log, while the other end is folded around a short stout stick held in the hands. The stick is then turned until the skin is well twisted and the water wrung out. The dry grass is intended to soak up the moisture oozing out on the inside.



Fig. 128 (188a). Skin-Scraper. 2 nat. size.

After wringing, the skin is stretched on a frame and pounded on the inside in the usual way until quite dry and soft, when it is again smoked as before. To assist the drying process, especially in cool weather, a fire is often lighted close by, and the stretched skin gently warmed in front of it from time to time. In cold weather, skins are dressed inside the house. To give a skin a bright yellow color, dry corncobs with a little wood are burned under it. Fawn-skins are generally softened by spreading over the knee and rubbing with a sharp stone or scraper. Skins are also tanned in a decoction of *Betula papyrifera* Marsh.

Sometimes skins are left in water in a warm place till the hair can be pulled off. By this means the outside cuticle of the skin is left on. Skins thus treated are never smoked, and after being softened present a glossy appearance on the outside. These are generally made into gloves. The Indians prefer the first



Fig. 129 (188b). Skin-Scraper. 2 nat. size.

method of curing. Some Indians claim that the custom of smoking buckskins was learned from the Okanagan. It is said that, after being smoked, the skin does not shrink so much when it gets wet as it otherwise would; while many insist that if the skin be rubbed with brains, it need not be smoked at all.

The implements formerly used for sewing skins were wooden, bone, and horn needles, and awls of different sizes. Bone awls are still used, but steel needles have entirely supplanted the old-fashioned needles. In sewing skins, glovers'