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THE USE OF WILD PLANTS AS FOOD BY INDIANS.

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Previous to the advent of the Christian Missionaries, the Indians of British Columbia did no cultivation, as such. They depended for their vegetable food on certain kinds of roots, shoots, leaves and berries which grew in their immediate neighbourhood, or which they might come across in their wanderings.

The coast Indians were fishermen and lived mostly in villages, but were partly nomadic as the seasons changed. The interior Indians were wholly so, and lived by hunting and trapping. Their methods of preparing vegetable stores varied with the locality and its climate. Fruits, such as saskatoon, salmon berry, etc., among the coast Indians were beaten to a pulp, partially fermented, then mixed with fish or bear's grease, and so kept, while in the dry or arid part of the country sun drying or evaporation was the method. This was prevalent among the Indians of the Lillooet, Shuswap, Okanagan and Similkameen countries, and to a limited extent among the Kootenays.

Commencing with the Service Berry, *Amelanchier florida* Lindl. and *A. Cusickii* Fern, Saskatoon, Stcokim, Sheea, or whatever happens to be the local tribe name, it is certainly the most important berry in their estimation. It grows plentifully in different parts of the province, extending up the coast as far as Alaska, and even into the interior and away beyond the confines of British Columbia. On the coast, the berry was pulped and mixed with oolachan grease, then pounded and moulded into cakes. This practice was carried on by the Tsimtsians, Tclinkets and other coast tribes. In the dry belt the berries were simply sundried.

The Soap-oolalie, *Shepherdia canadensis* L., was partially cooked by spreading on layers of damp grass after pulping and allowing it to steam over hot stones. The fruit was bitter, though not unpleasantly so. It was highly prized among the Indians, and an extensive trade existed between the people of the Thompson River and those of the coast, where it grows