

Poplar¹ and one of Aspin,² one kind of Larch,³ two of Fir;⁴ four of Pine;⁵ with Alders and Willows. Of these the White Birch is the most valuable, and contributes more than all the others to the necessities and comforts of life. Of the Birch their Bows, Axe helms and Spear handles are made, and several other things; in the Spring the sap, when boiled down, yields a weak molasses: but the most useful part is the Rind, which is peculiar to this tree; the bark is of a redish color, and good for tanning: this bark is covered with a Rind, it's growth in a horizontal, or longitudinal, direction; while that of the Tree, and it's bark are vertical; in my travels I have noticed, that the thickness of the Rind depends on the climate; the colder the climate the thicker the Birch Rind; on the west side of the Mountains where the winter is very mild, the White Birch is a noble large Tree, but the Rind too thin to be useful for Canoes. In this region, few white Birch exceed thirty inches in girth; but in general the Rind is excellent for all purposes and is from two eights to three eights in thickness; it is all marked with what is called cores on the outside of the rind, of about an inch in length; and narrow, when these go through the rind, it makes it useless for canoes. When the Natives see a Birch tree with deep cores, they say it has been severely flogged by Weesaukejauk (the Flatterer) for by their tradition, when the Trees were renovated after the deluge, Weesaukejauk commanded them all to appear before him, which order they all obeyed but the Birch Tree; which for disobedience he flogged, of which the cores are the marks. The best time for raising the rind off the Birch Tree is the early part of the summer; the tree being smooth is difficult to ascend, and

¹ *Populus balsamifera* Linn. [E. A. P.]

² *Populus tremuloides* Michx. [E. A. P.]

³ *Larix laricina* (Du Roi). [E. A. P.]

⁴ *Abies balsamea* (Linn.). [E. A. P.]

⁵ *Pinus divaricata* (Ait.). Thompson evidently had in mind other species found farther west. [E. A. P.]