

rat skins have been collected in a single year. The beaver and musk-rat are both "good eating" and figure prominently in the Indian dietary. The ermine, a very beautiful and easily tamed creature, is also a familiar acquaintance of the Indian and settler. The ermine is of a brown colour in summer, but in winter becomes perfectly white, with a black tip on its tail, in which condition it is most valuable for marketable purposes. The opossum is a native of the territory and in the southern part the porcupine is occasionally found. His flesh is a delicacy. The common red-squirrel abounds and there are a great many large squirrels both of a brown and grey colour. An unpretending but very prolific creature is the deer-mouse, looking, as it poises itself on its hind legs, like a diminutive kangaroo. It is of a hibernating disposition and, like the squirrel, provides an ample winter store, a colony of deer-mice having been known to carry off half a barrel of peas that had been left unprotected. Of the odorous skunk and every other American representative of the weasel tribe there are varieties enough to gratify the most passionate student of that branch of natural history. Many of the feathered inhabitants of the territory have been referred to already. The partridge, fantail grouse and water fowl of all kinds, are extremely plentiful. The feathers of the wild goose and the down of the wild swan have long been articles of trade by the Hudson's Bay Company.

#### INDIANS OF JAMES BAY.

The Indians of James Bay and western shore of Hudson's Bay are like those of the Rainy River district, members of the great Algonquin family. A large area of country, lying between Nelson River on the north and Lake Superior, has not yet been the subject of treaty arrangements with its aboriginal possessors. The Indians subsist largely by the chase, and the sale of its produce to the Hudson's Bay Company. At Moose River Post, York Factory, and on the English River, the Church Missionary Society has maintained stations, and, according to the testimony of the Right Rev. Dr. Anderson, already mentioned in connection with the Parliamentary Committee in London in 1857, the results have been satisfactory.\* The Bishop, as previously noticed, took an unfavourable view of the agricultural capabilities of the country and, according to his evidence, some such views must have more or less affected the policy he directed. The difficulty of producing permanently serious impressions on men leading a purely roving life, or inducing them to conform to habits of settled industry, is almost insuperable. But, in addition to the direct benefits, in a religious sense, conferred by missionary efforts, the influence on the relations of the two races exercised by the presence of such an organization as that of the society referred to can be but advantageous in elevating the tone of a population in its primitive state, and giving the Indians a sense of having in their midst disinterested advisers or protectors.

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\* Report of Committee, p. 236.