

knives, in order to slide along with facility. Close-grained wood is, on that account, the best; but theirs are made of the red or swamp spruce-fir tree."

Hearne writes: "In winter, the Northern Indians tie together skins of cariboo legs, which, in this condition, present the form of long portmanteaus. Stripped of their hair by being dragged over the snow, they become smooth as kid, and serve to transport the baggage of the Indians when they traverse the barren lands; but, in the first wood they meet, they make genuine sledges with planks of spruce. These sledges are of different sizes according to the strength of the persons meant to draw them. I have seen some that were no less than from twelve to fourteen feet long by fifteen to twenty inches broad; but, generally, they are from eight to nine feet long and from twelve to fourteen inches wide. The boards of which they are made are not more than a quarter of an inch thick, and their width rarely exceeds five or six inches. Larger dimensions would not suit the implements of these Indians, which consist of ordinary knives, a little turned at the point, whence the Northern Indians give them the name *base-hoth*, and the Southern *mo-co-toggan*. These boards are bound to each other by parchment bands of cariboo skin, and crossed above by several bars of wood which serve to strengthen the sledge, and, at the same time, keep the baggage in place, which is fastened to them by smaller leathern thongs. The front of the sledge forms a semi-circle of from, at least, fifteen to twenty inches in diameter. This kind of front has for its object to hinder the sledge sinking in the snow, and, at the same time, to break down the hillocks produced by it on the plains and barren lands. The traces of these vehicles consist of a band of leather, the two ends of which are united and tied firmly together. The person charged with the drawing of the sledge passes it round his shoulders so that it adheres to his breast. Simple as this harness may be, I defy all the saddlers in the world to make a better." Finally, Father Morice says: "Another mode of travelling, proper to the cold season, is by means of light toboggans or sleds drawn by three or four dogs, trotting along in Indian file. These animals (which are now of different breeds), are very serviceable to the natives; for, even during the summer, when families are en route for their hunting grounds, their canine companions are compelled to assist the women in packing part of their master's baggage, firmly secured with lines to their sides."

The Tungus make extensive use of birch bark for covering their houses, for making various kinds of vessels, and for enwrapping the bodies of their dead. They also employ it in the manufacture of canoes