

On the other hand, Dr. Dall's classification is incomplete, since it omits the Tsékenné, a tribe whose habitat is on both sides of the Rocky Mountains, whilst, of eight clearly distinct eastern tribes, he notes only two and that under aboriginal names, the genuineness of which is to me of more than doubtful character.

Some ethnographers, for reasons known to themselves, regard the T'simpsons, who lately migrated from this (North Pacific) coast to an Alaskan Island, as an offshoot of the Déné or Athabaskan stock. But even a slight knowledge of their language and physical characteristics ought to convince any one of the fact that they are altogether heterogeneous thereto.

This being admitted, it remains with me to state which tribes are to the subject of this paper, and conformably with the Canadian Institute's Sociological Circular to give some account of their social condition, customs, ceremonies, etc. The subject is rather comprehensive, and even without attempting to treat it exhaustively I fear I will have to give its exposition perhaps unexpected extension.

## I.

Let me, however, premise that I shall content myself with speaking of the Western Dénés, excluding from my subject those tribes which have their fishing grounds on the north coast of British Columbia and which form by themselves a group apart. Our Dénés belong to a race of aborigines occupying a vast territory. Without mentioning the Navajoes who, advanced sentinels of a delayed army, wait in New Mexico for their kinsmen of the north to rejoin them under more favored climes, one can hardly travel from Fort Macpherson within the Arctic Circle to the plains of the South Saskatchewan without meeting with representatives of that great family. On our (west) side of the Rockies they are divided into four tribes speaking as many dialects. They are :

1st. The Chilxotins<sup>1</sup> actually about 460 in number, occupying the valley of the river called after them, and the bunch-grass covered plateaus that skirt it on either side between 51° 10' and 52° 40' north latitude, and from the western banks of the Fraser to the Coast Range of mountains.

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<sup>1</sup>"Inhabitants of Young Man's River."