

although there is no doubt that the varieties are in reality one and the same species; the difference in temperature, and other local causes, readily accounting for the better quality of the Russian fur. In fact the difference between the two is not always discernible, the lighter-colored skins being usually dyed and sold as Russian sable. The winter fur is the most valuable, and the Indian trappers say the first fall of rain, after the snow disappears, spoils the marten. When caught the animal is skinned like a rabbit, the peltry being inverted as it is removed, then drawn over a flat board, and dried in the sun. The animals haunt the pine forests, especially where fallen or dead timber abounds, and are mostly caught in the style of trap known as the dead-fall. A good marten skin is worth in trade from two and a half to three dollars. The best skins come from the far North, being darker and finer furred than others.

The fisher is much like the pine marten, but larger. Just why he is called a fisher we cannot imagine, as he does not catch fish, or go near the water except when compelled to swim a stream. He climbs readily, but is trapped like the marten. The tail is very long and bushy, and at one time a large trade was carried on in them, only the tails being worn by the Polish Jew merchants. About twelve thousand are annually exported from the territory. The average trade price is from two and a half to three dollars. The fisher in full winter coat makes a finer suit of furs than the sable.

The mink is vastly inferior to either fisher or marten in the quality of fur, and its habits are entirely different. It