

Garry. The lynx is frequently met with, and so too is the thievish and mischievous wolverine.

The rabbit, or rather hare—for it is of the character of the latter animal the Canadian representative of the genus partakes—is ubiquitous here as elsewhere. The rabbit is the chief food of most of the smaller carnivora and their numbers largely depend on his fecundity. In times past too, the Indians found in the rabbit their staff of life. His flesh was their meat, his skin, worked up into every form of robe and garment, was their chief covering. But there came trouble to rabbits and to their human, as well as brute, destroyers. In 1868 a pestilence attacked the rabbits of the whole northern part of the continent. They died in millions, and, in Quebec, local authority had to be invoked to prevent the diseased bodies of rabbits picked-up in the woods being sold in the markets. The Indians, who had most depended on rabbits for their supply of food, were terribly distressed and but for the progress of the Dawson road, and works connected therewith, many would have starved. As it was, some 200 were engaged by Mr. Dawson and thus temporarily supported. It is to be mentioned to their honour, that they showed the utmost anxiety to send to their suffering families all they could earn and spare from their own necessities. The rabbits are now again multiplying as only rabbits do multiply. There is a sort of tradition that they are cut off, or fail to increase, periodically about once in seven years, but this is probably only a local belief. It is not a small allowance of rabbit, however, that will satisfy the needs of a hungry man, white or Indian. The flesh contains but a small proportion of nourishment, and three or four rabbits per diem are not too many for an ordinary backwoods or pioneer appetite. The common brown, and the more rare and very beautiful silver fox, are among the denizens of North Western Ontario. The black fox, a beautiful creature with silky hair, and whose skin sells for as much as forty pounds sterling, while an ordinary fox skin is not worth more than a dollar, is now and then seen and captured, but, as the price paid for his coat would imply, is regarded as a very extraordinary spoil by the hunter.

Beaver abound on the streams and creeks. It is satisfactory to learn, too, that they are increasing instead of diminishing. In the early days of settlement the Indians and white trappers took pains to preserve the beaver from extinction. But, with the invention of beaver hats and other demands upon the beaver's coat, the price of beaver skins rose, and cupidity got the better of prudence. For some years, however, furs have been low in price and the use of beaver for hats has all but ceased, so the beaver is recuperating his numerical strength. The otter, fisher, and mink, are plentiful; while, in the more northern regions, the marten attains a high degree of beauty and corresponding value. The musk-rat builds whole cities of his dwellings on the banks of the rivers and seems to defy the destructive operations of his enemies, for he flourishes and even increases, although, in the Rainy River District alone, no less than 90,000 musk-