

ARTICLE XXXII.—*An account of the Animals useful in an economic point of view to the various Chipewyan Tribes.* By B. R. Ross, H. B. C. S.

While collecting and arranging a series of specimens of the industrial arts of the natives of McKenzie's River District, for the Royal Industrial Museum of Edinburgh, I was struck, not only with their number, but also with their importance to the domestic comfort of these races.

Though doubtless much of the skill of the Chipewyan tribes has been lost since the period of Sir Alexander McKenzie's visit, by the introduction of European manufactures, enough yet remains to prove interesting as exhibiting the arts and manufactures of a people still in the first stages of social existence and civilization; and the following notices may form a sequel to my paper "On the aboriginal tribes of McKenzie's River District," already printed in the *Canadian Naturalist*. The manufactures are in themselves rude, and, with the exception of porcupine work, I know of none that would obtain the name of art, or win in a Museum, the meed of more than a passing glance from any one, save an ethnologist. To the unreflecting, or to those who for mere pleasure visit these "repositories of science," they must indeed be *caviare*, but to the philosophic mind they would speak volumes, as showing the human intellect, though in its lowest stages, attempting, not unsuccessfully, to break through the surrounding crust of animalism, and struggling to emerge into a sphere of higher intelligence.

In the present sketch, I entirely exclude the Eskimos and Loucheux—though recent researches almost confirm me in the opinion that the latter tribe is a branch of the Chipewyan family—as it would swell the paper much beyond the limits to which I have restricted myself, to pass their handicrafts also in review.

The Chipewyan tribes—including the Montaignais, Yellowknives, Beavers, Dog-ribs, Slaves, Sickannies, Nehaunies, and Hare Indians—draw their resources from the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms; but I must at present restrict myself to the first of these great sections, hoping, at some future period, to have the pleasure of noticing the others.

In the manufactures of the Indians, no articles hold a more important or more conspicuous position, than those drawn from animals; but this must naturally be expected in a people who