

steaks or for roasting in an oven. For themselves, the hams are either fed to the dogs, which must have their share, or cut up for drying. The white man's "choice cuts" are not the Eskimo's or the Indian's favorites, and as a rule are not the first choice of the out-door men who is cooking in the field with primitive appliances.

The caribou (or sheep) heads are cooked very early in the game—split, quartered and boiled with the brains in place, or roasted suspended on a rotating string before the fire. The long leg bones are cracked for their long sticks of sweet marrow (which tastes much like unsalted butter); the ribs, while not carrying very much flesh, are boiled or roasted, and when fat are a luxury; the neck and backbone are boiled, the latter after the long, thick slabs of "back-sinew" meat are removed to make sewing thread, and the tender, stringless meat which remains is fried, frozen solid for eating raw, or dried to make "pounded meat" or pemmican. The solid meat of hams or shoulders is cut up into strips for drying, or in cool weather is cached entire.

In skinning the caribou the back-fat is removed in a great slab (sometimes weighing 40 to 50 pounds) and the kidney and mesenteric fat removed in masses, it being considered the most precious part of the animal. The back-fat of the bull caribou, which may be as much as three inches thick in the fall, may be kept through the winter and sliced up and used for practically all purposes where bacon is useful. Personally I prefer it to bacon.

Under normal conditions, when not spoiled by civilization or market-hunting for white men, the Eskimo methods of hunting and handling food animals would delight the hearts of a Food Conservation board, for practically nothing is wasted. The skin of the caribou is highly prized, and is saved for clothing and bedding. In the field the paunch or stomach is made into a little bag, and the blood saved to thicken the bouillon when the meat is boiled, the sledge-dogs and pack-dogs are fed the offal, and of the remainder of the carcass, little is unused for food except the hoofs. Even the young antlers, when in the "velvet" are eaten after removing the soft skin. In my opinion the conservation methods are carried a trifle too far when they pick out the large grubs of the warble-fly from the skin of the caribou in the spring, and eat them like cherries. The grubs are very watery and absolutely tasteless, but for some reason the Eskimo seems to relish them.

Whenever possible the bones, cast aside after the boiled meat has been scraped or cut off, are saved until a large pile is accumulated. When a sufficiently large pile is collected, or two or three days

before camp is to be moved, a heavy stone hammer is made by lashing a handle to a rock of suitable shape and size, and the women of the camp break up all the bones into small fragments—the vertebrae, ends and joints of the long bones, ribs, and tarsals, metatarsals, carpals, and metacarpals. These bone fragments are placed in a large pot over an open fire, and slowly boiled, stirred, and the grease skimmed off the top, poured into kettles, allowed to harden, and kept in blocks. This bone grease (puinyirk) forms a pure white, hard tallow. The North Alaskan and Mackenzie Eskimo claim that the bones of seven caribou will yield enough tallow to fill one caribou-paunch bag, possibly 25 to 30 pounds. The war-time conservation of grease from stripped and discarded bones is not an entirely new idea of "Teutonic efficiency."

The Eskimo domestic economy is directed rather to utilizing everything, rather than stinting or economizing in amount used. Nothing can be worse than being called stingy, and the best form is to eat everything cooked or set forth for a meal, and when food is plenty meals are not very far apart. The first winter I spent with the Eskimo, I still held an old prejudice, the idea that three meals a day at stated times, were enough for a normal adult under any conditions. On Sundays and stormy days in camp, the Eskimo delighted in eating half a dozen times or more. My refusal to join in all of these fixed and movable feasts caused genuine concern to my good-hearted guide and interpreter. His dietic theory, which he followed religiously, was this: "Spouse we got plenty grub, more better you plenty eat. You plenty eat, bimeby you plenty fat. Maybe winter time, not too much grub, you no fat, plenty hungry, quick mukki (die)." Not being trained to this method of sub-cutaneous hoarding of fats, I was not always able to put away my full share, although as the winter wore on, my aptitude at meals seemed to improve.

The Eskimo is popularly supposed to gorge tremendously, but except in a few individual cases, his enormous eating capacity is more apparent than real. Any man, red, white, or brown, living on meat or fish "straight" will consume a much greater weight and bulk than one living on a mixed civilized diet, a more properly balanced ration. An average soldier's ration is not much over 3½ pounds daily (approximately one pound of meat, one of bread, and the other pound and a half vegetables, beans, sugar, etc.) The Hudson Bay Company's ration for a labourer on straight meat was eight or ten pounds per day. Sir John Franklin speaks of his men suffering hardship on account of short rations at Fort Enterprise with only five pounds of fresh meat (caribou or moose) per day per man.