

essentially a race of hunters and warriors. Like most Indian tribes, they despised agriculture, and considered it a pursuit only fit for women and slaves. Some of the northern Indians cultivated the ground to a small extent, and it is certain that the Indians of Acadie did during the French occupation, but their operations in tilling the ground were on a very limited scale; and to this day, our Indians are averse to the steady labor of the field. They had no domestic animals except the dog, and he was useful only in the chase.

During the summer, the Micmacs drew a large portion of their subsistence from the sea. Every bay and islet swarmed with fish, and there they might reap an almost unfailing harvest. The Malicetes, although living inland, were not without their share of the same kind of food. Fish were abundant in every stream and river, and the salmon was pursued with torch and spear over the shallows by the savage denizens of the St. John. In this way, from one to two hundred salmon would be sometimes taken at a time. The Indians also used hooks of bone or shells, and lines and nets made of a coarse kind of hemp. They had also weirs, in which they at times captured great quantities of fish; but the torch and spear were the favorite implements of fishing with them.

Notwithstanding the allowance of fish at certain seasons, the savages were at all times principally dependent on the forest for their food. Game is believed to have been much more abundant in former times than it is now, and about the time when Latour and D'Aulnay were fighting with each other for the possession of Acadie, as many as three thousand moose skins were collected on the St. John river each year. Wild fowl of all kinds gathered in incredible numbers along the shores, in the marsh lands, and up the rivers. Charlevoix states that near St. John, geese laid their eggs so abundantly that they alone might have sustained the whole population; and the same, according to L'Escarbot, was true with regard to the St. Croix. Denys speaks of immense flocks of wild pigeons passing his camp on the Miramichi every morning and evening for eight days together; and he adds, that it was hardly possible to sleep for the noise made by the salmon going over the shoals and the immense flocks of geese and ducks. At Bathurst and all along the northern shore of the Province their number was such as almost to exceed belief.

The habitations of the Indians were generally huts or wigwams