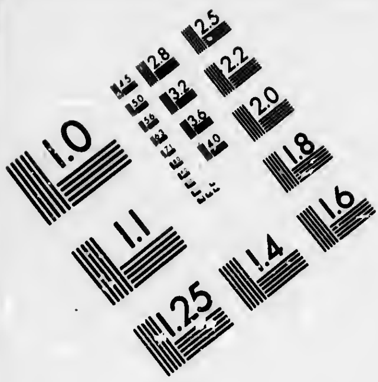
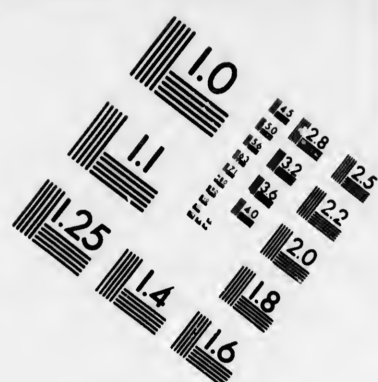

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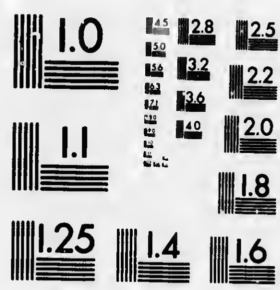
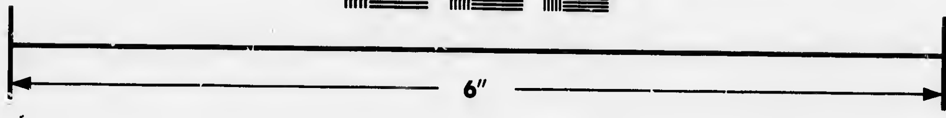

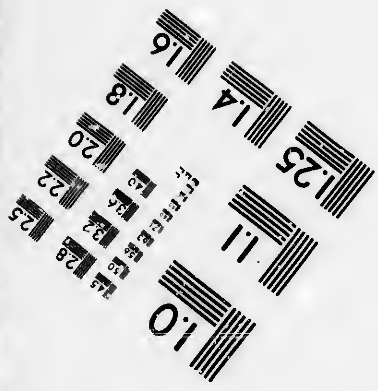
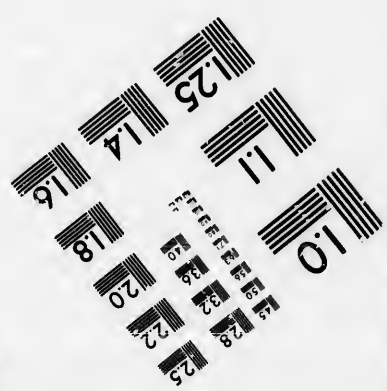

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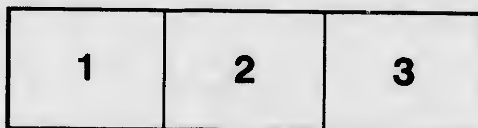

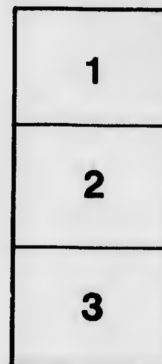

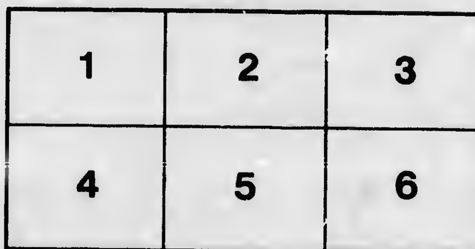

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Resolved, That we recommend the immediate introduction of a suitable Library of Useful Knowledge in every schoolroom in our State; and that we invite the attention of teachers, of school committees, and of every friend of education and of the universal diffusion of knowledge in this and in other States, to "*The American School Library*," now commenced by this Society.

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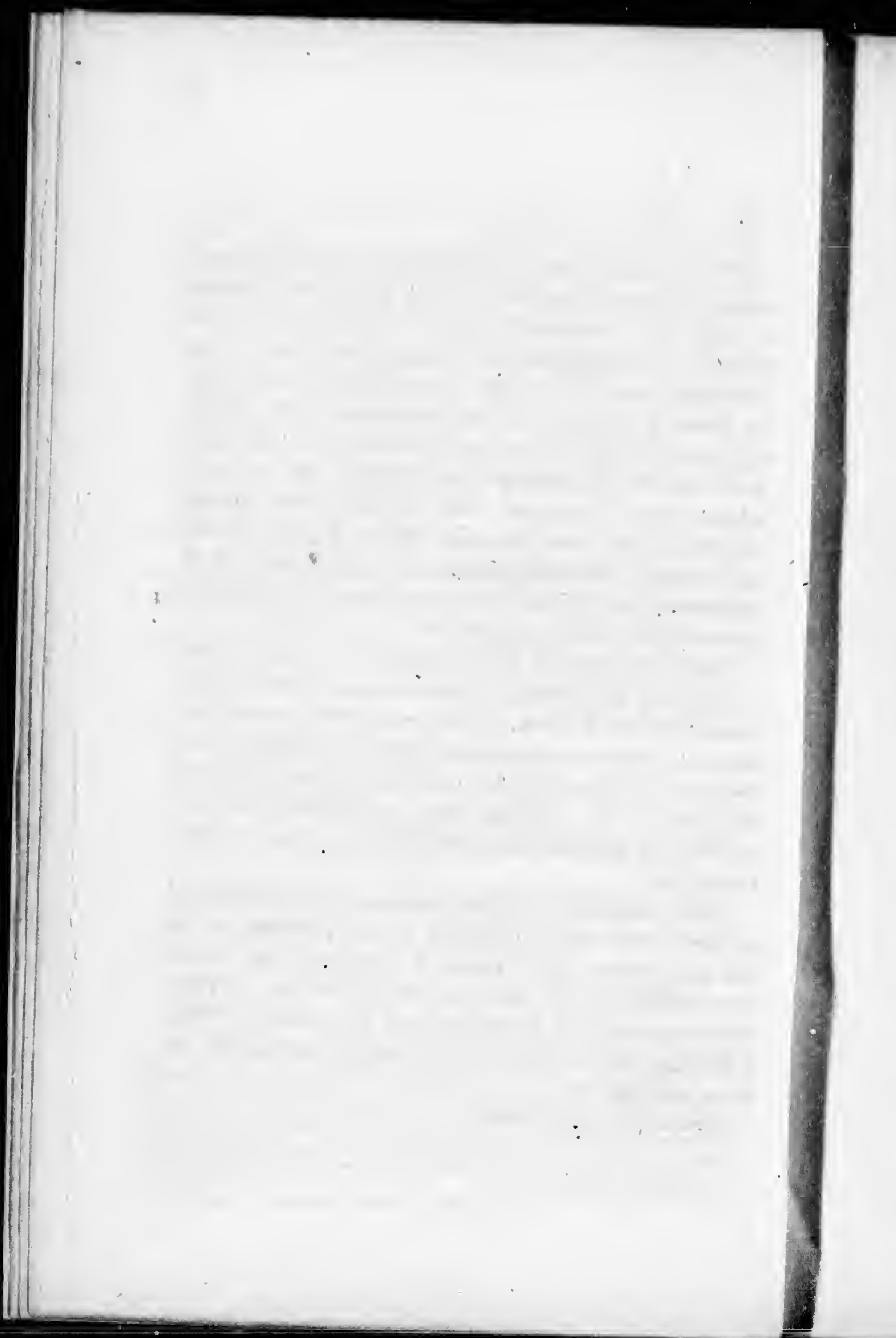

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Two centuries ago, the entire surface of this vast American continent was covered with an Indian population. From the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, and from the broad waters of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, the Red Man roamed in his native wilderness, fearless and free as the deer that fled from the sound of his footstep. The smoke of his wigwam rose peacefully from every hill-side and every river-bank of the sunny South. The green woods of the North echoed to the voice of the hunter. The prairies of the Illinois and the Wabash were

but so many battle-fields for the warrior of the West.

A few particulars respecting the power of the Indians at the date referred to, will place this matter in a strong light. Within the boundaries of what is now called the State of Maine, alone, there are supposed to have been at that time,—not far from the commencement of the seventeenth century, and but a few years before the settlement of Plymouth, — eleven thousand savages of various tribes. Some of them continued so warlike and mighty in numbers, even long after the whites commenced their settlements in that Province (so called,) as not only to give *them* great trouble, but to wage frequent and bloody conflict with the remote Indians of the river St. Lawrence, and with the Mohawks of New York.

In the remaining part of New England, south and west of Maine, there were five large Indian confederacies, each of which consisted of several tribes united under one Chief Sachem, or Sagamore.

Of these, the PAWTUCKET tribes inhabited the southern section of New Hampshire. The MASSACHUSETTS occupied chiefly the shore of that large and beautiful bay which still bears

their name, and were resident at what are now Salem, Charlestown, Saugus, Lynn, the islands in Boston harbor, and many other places.

The POKANOKETS, that confederacy of which the celebrated KING PHILIP, (as the English entitled him) afterwards became the ruler, lived in different parts of Plymouth and Barnstable counties in Massachusetts, and Bristol county in Rhode Island; and they were the original owners of the soil of Plymouth, which the Pilgrims, however, on their arrival upon the coast in 1620, found wholly deserted. There were nine of these Pokanoket tribes.

The NARRAGHANSETTS covered the whole of Rhode Island itself, as well as a number of smaller neighboring islands in and about that fine body of water which is called Narraghansett Bay to this time. They could muster not less than four thousand bowmen for war; and as it is believed that the bowmen of an Indian tribe were generally about three out of ten of their entire population, there must have been at least twelve thousand of the Narraghansetts in all.

There were as many of the PEQUOTS in Connecticut, besides several other tribes not attached to that powerful confederacy, making the total number of about twenty thousand Indians resid-

ing within the limits of that single small state. As late as the year 1633, the tribes living on the banks of the Connecticut river, alone, could bring three thousand warriors into the field. Within the town of Windsor, (now so called,) there were as many as ten different Indian settlements; and nearly forty years afterwards, in 1670, just before Philip's war broke out, there were nineteen savages to one English settler within that territory. A large body of them lived in the centre of the township, and there was at that time a strong Indian fortress a little north of the flat on which the first meeting-house was afterwards erected.

At Milford, which the natives called Wopowege, and especially at the southern part of that township, Milford Point, they resided in immense numbers; and the shells, and tools of various descriptions, which they strewed over the soil in that vicinity, accumulated in such quantities that they have never been dug or ploughed through by the whites even to the present day. This tribe had a stoutly built fortification, with flankers at the four corners, about half a mile north of Stratford ferry. In what is now Huntington, there were, in 1633, about three hundred warriors, although they had

then recently lost a large number of men in the incessant wars which they carried on with the Mohawks, and with other savages of New York as well as Connecticut.

In explanation of this extraordinary degree of populousness in the section last described, it should be observed, in passing, that perhaps no part of the American continent was better adapted to the manner of living adopted by the Indians, or more capable of supporting a numerous savage population in comparative comfort and ease.

The great fertility of the soil, especially on the banks of the rivers, no less than the healthiness of the climate, attracted them in large numbers to this part of New England. The earth produced, spontaneously, a vast variety of wild fruits. In the groves were walnuts, chestnuts, butter-nuts, hazel-nuts and acorns. Wild cherries, currants and plums, were natural productions. Grapes grew in abundance on the low lands, by the borders of brooks and rivers. The fields were full of delicious strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, whortleberries, bill-berries, blueberries, mulberries, cranberries; and not to mention those vegetable productions which were valuable to the Indians for dyes and

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for medicine, ground-nuts, wild pease and leeks, plantain, radish, antichokes, and many other nutritive roots and herbs might be gathered in every direction.

Nor was the country less productive of wild animals, the chase and spoils of which furnished at once the amusement and the wealth of the tawny hunter. In the woods there were plenty of deer, moose, bears, turkeys, herons, partridges and quails. Of pigeons, there were such incredible numbers when the English first began to settle in Connecticut, as to fill them with amazement. Such extensive flocks would be seen, at certain seasons, flying for some hours in the morning, as absolutely to darken the sun. An old historian says,—'It passeth credit, if but the truth were written.'

The finest furs were taken from the otter, the beaver, the black, gray and red fox, the racoon, mink, musk-rat and other animals of the same class. The wolf and wild-cat were so numerous here, as well as in other parts of New England, after the English settlements commenced, as to prove exceedingly troublesome to the farmers.

To all these circumstances in the situation of the Connecticut natives, let it be added, that

they found the most delightful haunts for their humble but favorite navigation in the innumerable bays, creeks, rivers and ponds of the interior and the coast; that these beautiful bodies of water swarmed with an exhaustless abundance of wild geese, ducks, wigeons, sheldrapes, broad-bills, teal, and other fine water-fowl; and finally, that almost every excellent species of fish and shell-fish which the savage appetite might riot upon,—not the least esteemed of which was the salmon,—rewarded the slightest labor of the indolent native with an ample store of palatable and wholesome food.

The remarks we have made upon the natural advantages of Connecticut, as a residence for the Indians, apply, in many respects, to all the Middle and Southern States, as they are now called, along the Atlantic Coast, and to an immense interior territory beside. Hence there was found in Pennsylvania, New-Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, by the first colonists from Europe, a dense Indian population, living, for the most part, on the shores of the large bays and beautiful rivers of that section of the country, in all the luxury of wild abundance.

The Mohawks and four other tribes of New York, constituting the celebrated confederacy

entitled the FIVE NATIONS, had arrived to such a degree of power by their numbers and their political and warlike qualities, as at length to hold all the other tribes from Canada to Virginia in perpetual dread of their inroads. A Mohawk warrior, it is said, could not appear for a moment on the hills of Connecticut, but the villages of that populous district would be instantly filled with confusion and uproar; and the boldest warrior oftentimes did not hesitate to seek safety in breathless flight. All the tribes which resided along the banks of the St. Lawrence and the Northern Lakes, stood in fear of the Five Nations. They once conquered even the Virginian Indians, west of the Alleghanies; and they warred against the Cherokees, Catawbas, and other formidable nations of the far South.

In Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia, were still other tribes, and some of them even more populous than any yet described. Eastern Virginia was so thickly populated when the first settlement was made at Jamestown by the English, that within sixty miles of that place there were five thousand savages, of whom one thousand and five hundred were warriors. The Creeks in Georgia, and the Yamassees in Caro-

lina, also mustered a large fighting force. The Cherokees originally occupied for their hunting-grounds, and defended by their arms, more than thirty-six millions of acres, including either the whole or a greater part of several of what are now Southern and Western States. So late as only a century since, (when the first settlements were made in Georgia,) they could bring six thousand bowmen into the field; and they had quite a number of tolerably well built and strongly fortified towns.

Such, two centuries ago, was the condition of the Indian population along the Atlantic shore. They were, indeed, often at war with each other, and with the savages of the West; and they were sometimes exposed to the ravages of pestilence. But generally they lived in circumstances of health, security and ease. The woods and the waters supplied them with their abundant livelihood, almost without effort. The hunter's game was all around him, and above him, in the streams, forests and skies of his native land. And, above all, he was not only hardy, patient and brave, able to encounter the elements, and fearless to meet his foe in the field of battle; but he was *a free man*. The mountain eagle that screamed over the slow-

soaring smoke of his wigwam, was not freer than him who dwelt beneath that humble roof.

And now let us briefly consider the condition of this same people at the present day. The same people, we say; but in too many instances are they as different as adverse circumstances could render them. In many others, they have been driven back before the advance of civilized population into the far-off wilds of the remote West and the frozen North. In others still, they have ceased to be known as a people at all; and their very name itself has nearly passed from the memory of the white men.

We find the cellars of their wigwams in our old pastures, moss-grown and yawning. We decipher their rude inscriptions on the rocks of the forest. The farmer's plough, perhaps, turns up the mouldering relics of their ancient dead,—

> That remnant of a martial brow,
> Those ribs that held the mighty heart,'
> That strong arm—Ah! 'tis strengthless now:*

The Penobscot, the Kennebec, the Connecticut, the Susquehannah, the Potomac, the Missouri and Illinois, the Wabash and Ohio,

* Bryant. And well might the poet add,—
Spare them!—Each mouldering fragment spare,
Of God's own image—let them rest,
Till not a trace shall speak of where
The awful likeness was impressed!

the great 'Father of the Western Waters,'—all the noblest rivers of the country bear to this hour the titles given them by the primeval lords of the land. The bright waves of Massachusetts Bay, and the currents of the broad Chesapeake,

> "Still roll as they rolled that day,—"
> *But the* RED MEN, *where are they?*

In the whole compass of the immense territory belonging to the United States, extending from one side of the continent to the other, there are computed to be about 300,000 remaining of at least two millions who inhabited the same region at the date of the settlement of Jamestown and Plymouth, and for unknown centuries before. The following are the names and supposed numbers of the principal tribes which make up this total amount, as they were carefully computed a few years since:—

Choctaws,	20,000	Assineboins,	8,000
Snakes,	20,000	Potawatamies,	5,500
Creeks,	20,000	Winnebagoes,	6,800
Cherokees,	15,000	Sacs,	6,800
Black Feet,	15,000	Osages,	5,000
Chippewas,	15,000	Menominies,	4,200
Sioux,	15,000	Crows,	4,500
Pawnees,	12,000	Arripahas,	4,000

Seminoles,	4,000	Ottawas,	4,000
Chickasaws,	3,600	Algonquins,	3,000
Crees,	5,000	36 small tribes,	41,600
West of the Rocky Mountains,			80,000

In Vermont, New Hampshire, and several other States, none are left. In all Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Virginia together, there are less than 2,500. The celebrated Five Nations of New York are reduced to about the same number. Even of those who *are* left, a large proportion are not only so much debased by the force of circumstances (which will appear hereafter) as to bear little moral resemblance to their brave and hardy ancestors; but they are in many instances actually but half-breed, or less than half,—the result of an abandoned intercourse between their degraded savage parents and the basest of the whites who live around and among them.

Such were the American Indians in the days of their prosperity, and such are they now. It is this extraordinary but unfortunate people to the description of whose manners, customs, institutions and genius, the following chapters will be chiefly devoted. The sad fact that the race has degenerated and disappeared in the deplorable manner we have just shown,—and

yet more, the fact that the scanty remnants of their tribes which still linger on the frontiers are becoming fewer and feebler from day to day—ought by no means to make them an object of indifferent or contemptuous regard. On the contrary, they should add to the interest, as they will undoubtedly add to the value, of all the faithful information which can be collected concerning them. The time will come but too soon, we fear, when the history of the Indians will be the history of a people of which no living specimen shall exist upon the earth;—too soon will the places that now know them know them never again. Their council-fires will have gone out upon the green hills of the South. Their canoes shall plough no more the bosom of the Northern Lakes. Even the prairies and mountains of the far West will cease to be their refuge from the rushing march of civilization. Their forests will be felled: their game will disappear: and then,—if indeed no portion of them can be rescued by benevolence from the grave of heathenism,—if no blessed ray of the knowledge of man or the saving truth of Heaven shall lighten the gloom of the wilderness,—then will the last Indian stand upon the verge of the Pacific seas, and his sun will have gone down forever.

CHAPTER II.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDIANS—Stature—Complexion—Hair—Features—Beard—Peculiarities of gait—Comparison of the male and female—Constitution—Acuteness of the senses—Anecdotes—Skill in tracing footsteps—Fleetness and hardihood of the Indians—Story of Old Scrany—Story of a Catawba made prisoner by the Senecas—Of a young Chickasaw Warrior—Of PISKARET—Of a modern Indian runner.

IN the following pages we shall frequently speak of the Indians in a past tense,—as if they were altogether an extinct people. Such is indeed the fact, as we have already stated, in regard to the vast majority of those who formerly lived within the limits of the United States. And these also were the Indians, who, of the whole race, have been best known to the whites. A description of their character and mode of living, therefore, will be the most accurate description of the race. It will also be a description of the genuine savage in his native state,—which could not be said generally of those feeble and degraded tribes, and parts of tribes, that are still to be seen on the frontiers of the country, or in the midst of our white

population, and with which alone we of the present day are chiefly acquainted.

As for those more distant and less degenerated savages, who reside in the neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains, and in other sections of the Continent where they have learned little of the white man but perhaps his name, the description we shall give of the Atlantic Indians as they were, will very nearly apply to *them* as they are. So far, however, as there may appear to be any traits of an important difference between the two classes, whether in matters of customs, condition, or character, we shall take occasion hereafter carefully to point them out, on the authority of faithful and intelligent travellers.

The Indians are very generally of either the middling or largest stature of the English, although not only individuals but whole tribes are met with who fall rather below the average height of the whites. The Shawanees and Delawares recently residing in Ohio, and the savages of the Northern Lakes and the Upper Mississippi are among this class. On the other hand, most of those who live in the middle regions of the Missouri, including the warlike Osages, and the Sioux or Dacotahs, are quite tall, as well as finely proportioned in other re-

spects. There is perhaps no Indian, or indeed white man, on the continent, who appears to better advantage than an Osage, mounted on his war-horse.

The New England and other Atlantic Indians were almost universally large, straight and well-proportioned, with limbs which might serve as a model for the sculptor of the human frame in marble. An instance of natural deformity was so rarely to be met with, that most of the old historians declare they never saw an Indian dwarfish, crooked, or bandy-legged.* The corpulence of some of the whites was so strange to them as to be a subject of derision. We have never heard, in modern times, of more than two or three corpulent Indians.

Their complexion, which is one of their most obvious characteristics, is commonly described as *copper*-colored. That term does not, however, convey an exact idea of the fact. The children, when born, are nearly as light as those of the English. The skin gradually grows harder and darker, until at a mature age it is not far from the color of well-smoked bacon. How much this result is owing to their habit of greas-

* See as to this subject, a subsequent chapter on the ***diseases*** of the Indians.

ing the face, their exposure to the sun, and the smoke which never fails to abound in their wigwams, it would be difficult to determine. There are some Indians at the present day, chiefly of the most southern tribes, very nearly as black as an ordinary negro, although the eye of one who is familiar with the two races, will easily distinguish a shade of difference between the complexions of those who in this particular resemble each other most.

The hair of the American savages, still more decidedly than their color, distinguishes them from all other people. It is uniformly, in each of the sexes, black, until changed by age, when it not unfrequently becomes gray, like the hair of the whites. It is often described also as *lank*,—in reference to a peculiar appearance which it is easier to remember, after once seeing it, than to describe. It hangs in knots, which look as though greased, as indeed they generally are. It is much finer than the hair of a horse's mane, but in other respects resembles it.

The forehead is broad, and almost invariably retreating in some degree; the nose prominent, and in the male Indian, commonly aquiline; the nostrils at the base remarkably expanded; the lips intermediate between the thinness of the

whites and the thickness of the negroes. The cheek bones are high and strongly marked, making the face, in a line below the eyes, uncommonly wide. The eyes are black with very

rare exceptions; but of a shade of blackness more like what we call such in the black eye of an Italian or a Spaniard, than in that of the Indian.

It has been said, that the American savages are naturally beardless, and without hair on the bodies; but this undoubtedly is a mistake. They are almost universally in the habit of

plucking out the beard with a kind of tweezers made for the purpose. Before the Europeans came among them, this apparatus was simply a pair of muscle-shells, sharpened on a gritty stone, and made to operate tolerably well in the fashion of a pair of pincers. In modern times they frequently use wire. Tweezers are made of this, and often carried about with them in their tobacco-pouch, to be used as necessity or leisure may suggest. They perform the operation in a very quick manner, much like a cook's plucking of a fowl; and the oftener they pluck out the hair, the finer it grows afterwards, so that at last there appears scarcely any. The reasons of this custom are stated differently by themselves, as well as by travellers; but no doubt the chief object in view is to have a clean skin to paint on when they dress themselves for festivals and for war. Most of them also consider it unmanly to wear hair; and some of them go so far as to say it would liken them too much to hogs.

In the gait of the Indians there is something so peculiar as to enable a person who is in the habit of seeing them to distinguish one of them, at a considerable distance, from a white man. The legs, both of the male and female, have a

remarkable curve, still more obvious than that of the negro. In walking they scarcely ever fail to place one foot in a right line before the other, and seldom turn their toes aside from that line; and in this way they readily distinguish the track of their own people from that of the whites. They walk, too, the one directly behind the other, in what is called '*Indian file.*' Mr. Flint says, in his Geography and History of the Western States, "We have frequently seen the husband and wife, the mother and daughter, the father and son, and even two equal aged young men, walking together, apparently engaged in earnest conversation; *but never advancing abreast.*"

Some writers have asserted, that the frailer form of the female sex, in whatever country, is owing, not to a difference of organization, but to their being less exposed to the elements and to hardship and rough exercise than the male. The case of the Indians does not confirm this theory. The squaw, (as the women among them are commonly called,) as we shall show hereafter, is the drudge and slave of the men; and yet she has a delicacy of limb, and especially a slenderness of hand and foot, as distinguished from the brawny form of the male,

even more strongly marked than among Europeans. The face is broad and oval; the nose flattened, scarcely ever aquiline, and for the most part resembling that of the negro. They have a greater uniformity in this respect than the male. [See cut on p. 26.]

Owing partly to his organization, doubtless, as well as to his mode of living from his childhood up, the senses of the Indian are extremely acute. It is related, in modern times, that a hunter, belonging to one of the western tribes, on his return home to his hut one day, discovered that his venison, which had been hung up to dry, had been stolen. After taking observations upon the spot, he set off in pursuit of the thief, whom he tracked through the woods. Having gone a little distance, he met some persons of whom he inquired, if they had seen *a little old white man*, with a *short gun*, accompanied by a *small dog* with a *short tail?* They replied in the affirmative; and upon the Indian assuring them that the man thus described had stolen his venison, they desired to be informed how he was able to give such a minute description of a person he had not seen? The Indian replied thus:—'the thief I know is a *little* man, by his having made a pile of stones to stand upon

in order to reach the venison from the height I hung it, standing on the ground: that he is an *old* man I know by his short steps, which I have traced over the dead leaves in the woods: and that he is a *white* man I know by his turning *out* his toes when he walks, which an Indian never does. His gun I know to be *short*, by the mark the muzzle made in rubbing the bark of the tree on which it leaned; that his dog is *small*, I know by his tracks; and that he has a *short tail*, I discovered by the mark it made in the dust where he was sitting at the time his master was taking down the meat.'

We shall have occasion to observe hereafter, how serviceable this keenness of the senses becomes to the Indian in time of war, as well as in ordinary travelling and hunting in the woods. The old French writer, Charlevoix, who had excellent opportunities of studying the character of the Canadian and other tribes, says,—'This people have a wonderful talent, I might say an instinct, to know if any person has passed through any place. On the shortest grass, on the hardest ground, even upon stones, they discover some *traces;* and by the way they are turned, by the shape of the feet, or by the manner in which they are separated from each

other, they even distinguish, as they say, the footsteps of different nations, and those of men from those of women. I thought a long time,' adds this faithful historian, 'that there was some exaggeration in this matter; but the reports of those who have lived among the savages are so unanimous, that I see no room to doubt of their sincerity.'

The Indians are much more remarkable for fleetness than for strength. Their frames and limbs are never unwieldy in their size; and they are accustomed from early life to a great deal of free and healthy exercise of all kinds in the open air, and particularly to hunting and running races. There is an old book, written a century and a half since by the celebrated Rev. Roger Williams, of Rhode Island, (and the first settler of Providence in that State,) in which he states, as from his own observation, that the legs of the Indian (New England) children are in infancy 'stretcht and bound up in a strange way on their cradle backward, as also anointed.' He then adds that he had known them sometimes to run between eighty and one hundred miles in a long summer's day, and back again by the same route in two days. 'And commonly in the summer they delight to goe

without shoes, though they have them hanging at their backs. They are so exquisitely skilled in all the travelling of the countrey (by reason of their hunting) that I have often been guided twentie, thirtie, yea, sometimes fortie miles through the woods, a streight course, out of any path.' An Indian thinks but little of travelling in this manner through the woods, a week in succession, with perhaps no clothing but a blanket, and no food but a pouch of parched corn at his girdle, a small quantity of which he eats once in twenty-four hours.

Two or three historical anecdotes, will serve to confirm what has been said of the fleetness and activity of the Indians, as well as some other qualities of which more will be said hereafter.

During the last century, and before the Revolutionary War, a party of warriors of one of the most powerful tribes of the South, made prisoner of a fighter belonging to a neighboring nation with which they had long been engaged in active hostilities. The captive was famous for his achievements, and was well known to his enemies by the title of 'Old Scrany.' They condemned him to be tortured by fire. Being tied to a pile of fagots, and the flames kindled,

he endured it for a long time without moving a muscle, or uttering any sort of complaint. He even challenged his exulting foes, who were spectators of his anguish, to try him still more severely. Finally he told them, they made such miserable business of it in their attempts to torment him, that, out of compassion for their ignorance, he would teach them how to manage it better, if they would but untie him and hand him a hot gun-barrel which lay glowing in the fire at his side.

The proposal was so extraordinary as to excite the curiosity of his enemies, and they granted his request so far as to unloose him. Then suddenly seizing the gun-barrel, and brandishing it furiously from side to side, he forced his way through the astonished multitude, leaped down a steep and high bank into the branch of a river which ran beneath, dived through it, ran over a small island, and passed the other branch; and although numbers of his disappointed enemies were in eager pursuit, and a shower of bullets fell all around him, he succeeded in gaining a bramble-swamp, where he concealed himself until the danger was nearly over. He reached his own country, naked and bruised, as well as scorched; but he lived

many years afterwards, and was none the less 'Old Scrany'—a terrible thorn in the side of his enemies,—than he had been for twenty or thirty years before.

The Senecas of New York, and the Catawbas, a powerful southern tribe, were at war with each other early in the last century. A scalping-party of the former, having travelled several days' journey through the woods towards the territories of the latter, discovered a solitary Catawba, hunting, and clothed only in a light summer-dress proper for that amusement. They had already intercepted his running towards home, and he therefore sprang off for a large hollow rock, four or five miles distant, in the hope of secreting himself under its shelter. He was so swift, and so skilful in the use of the gun which he carried with him, that he shot down seven of his pursuers in the running fight, before they were able to surround and take him.

They carried him captive to their own country in melancholy triumph; but, although he had filled them with shame and grief for the loss of so many of their comrades, they admired his courage and prowess still more than they hated him for the havoc he had made among the Senecas. Still, they could not prevent his being

treated according to the customs of the nation. As they advanced homeward, the women and children at the different villages which they passed through, came out to exult over and beat him. At last, having reached his destination, he was condemned, by a council of the Seneca warriors, to die by the torture of fire.

But the captive was not yet disheartened. He had travelled a long and wearisome route, scantily fed, lying at night on the naked ground, exposed to the changes of the weather, and with his arms and legs extended in a pair of rough wooden stocks; but his spirits were still light, his limbs supple and firm, and his eye as keen as the eagle's. The place of torture was chosen, as it frequently was in similar cases, upon the bank of a river. At the appointed hour, a multitude of the Senecas led him out to be sacrificed. But they were heedless, and in high glee, and they suffered their prisoner to walk unpinioned. All at once, he collected his whole strength, dashed down those of his enemies who were nearest about him, sprang away to the edge of the water, plunged in, and swam rapidly underneath,—only rising to take breath, until he gained the opposite shore.

He now mounted the steep and rocky bank.

Several of the Senecas were already in the water, and others were running in various directions, to surround or overtake him. Their bullets, too, began to whiz in the air over his head, and to strike the ledges beneath his feet. Still, he could not bear to leave his enemies without some testimony of his scorn and defiance. He stopped, to make very deliberately the most contemptuous gestures, in their sight, which his ingenuity could suggest; and then raising a shrill war-whoop as a last salute, he commenced his flight into the forest with the furious speed of a tiger escaped from his cage.

He continued his course in such a manner as to run, by about midnight of the same day, as far as his eager pursuers were two days in following. He then lay still, concealed under logs and bushes, until five of the enemy came up, kindled their fire not far from the spot where he lay watching them, refreshed themselves with a slight repast, and stretched themselves out on the bare earth to sleep. He now crawled up towards the fire, with a wary step, seized one of their tomahawks, and killed them all on the spot. Stripping off their scalps for a trophy,*

* See, as to this custom, a subsequent chapter on the *wars* of the Indians.

he clothed himself with articles of their dress, took the best of their guns, with as much ammunition and provision as he could well carry in a running march, and started off afresh with a light heart.

Finding himself at length clear of his pursuers, he made his way through the woods, as if by instinct, to the very spot where he had shot down the seven Senecas. He digged them up from their fresh-made graves, scalped* them, burned their bodies to ashes, and completed his journey homeward in triumph. A party of the Senecas soon afterwards discovered the mangled bodies of their five countrymen tomahawked by the young Catawba. The pursuit was then abandoned as hopeless. They returned home; a war-council was called; and the Senecas determined that a man who could do such things as this Catawba had done, naked and wounded, 'must surely be beyond the reach of the Senecas. And it was of no use to fire muskets at such a person, if they could overtake him. He was a wizzard!"

A shorter story may be told to the same effect, relating to a Chickasaw. When this for-

[* See note on page 36.]

midable nation, (who inhabited a wide and fertile territory between the upper branches of the Yazoo river, in the State of Mississippi,) were at war a long time since with the Creeks, or Muskogees, (who lived, as they still do, a little farther eastward) one of the young Chickasaws set off alone into the territory of the Creeks, with the view of revenging the death of a near relation slain in the war. He traversed the thickest and most unfrequented parts of the wilderness, until he arrived opposite to a considerable town of the Creeks, called Koosah. It was situated high on the eastern side of a rapid river, about two hundred and fifty yards broad, which empties into the Gulf of Mexico.

Here he concealed himself under cover of the top of a fallen pine-tree, in view of a shallow part of the river, where the Creeks were now and then to be seen crossing over in their light and swift canoes. All his store of provisions consisted of a small quantity of dried venison; but satisfied with this scanty fare, he waited with patient watchfulness nearly three whole days and nights. At length, about an hour before sunset, he saw a man, a woman, and a girl, crossing within an easy gunshot. He shot down the man, rushed out and tomahawked the

other two, and scalped them all in full view of the town. As a farther bravado, he even shook the scalps exultingly over his head; and then, sounding the terrible death-whoop of a warrior, he betook himself to a speedy flight, with about a dozen of the Creeks close behind him.

At the distance of seven miles, he entered a great ridge of the Apalachian Mountains. About an hour before day, he had run seventy miles of that hilly and rugged tract. He now refreshed himself by sleeping two hours in a sitting posture, with his gun in his hand, leaning his back against a tree; and then renewed his journey with increased celerity. Having, when he started, thrown away his venison, to lighten himself, he was obliged to sustain nature with such roots and nuts as his sharp eyes, with a running glance, directed him to snatch up in his course. Thus he ran the whole distance to his own country, reaching home about eleven o'clock of the third day,—so that he was only two nights and one day and a half in going over what is computed to be three hundred miles. The historian who furnishes the anecdote, states that he repeatedly travelled that route on horseback, but never made it less than a five-days' journey.

An anecdote somewhat similar to this, is told of PISKARET, a celebrated northern Indian, who lived about two centuries ago. He was a chieftain, of the tribe of Adirondacks, who resided on the banks of the great river St. Lawrence. They were almost continually at war with the Five Nations of New York, who then lived, as the remnant of them still do, in the northern section of that State. Being determined to distinguish himself, and to encourage his countrymen in the contest, Piskaret boldly set out, alone, for the country of the Five Nations, (with which he was well acquainted,) about that period of the spring when the snow was beginning to melt. Accustomed, as an Indian must be, to all emergencies of travelling as well as warfare, he took the precaution of putting the hinder part of his snow-shoes forward, so that if his footsteps should happen to be observed by his vigilant enemy, it might be supposed he was gone the contrary way. For further security he went along the ridges and high grounds, where the snow was melted, that his track might be lost.

On coming near one of the villages of the Five Nations, he concealed himself until night, and then entered a cabin, while the inmates

were fast asleep, murdered the whole family, and carried the scalps to his lurking-place. The next day, the people of the village sought for the murderer, but in vain. He came out again at midnight, and repeated his deed of blood. The third night, a watch was kept in every house, and Piskaret was compelled to exercise more caution. But his purpose was not abandoned. He bundled up the scalps he had already taken, to carry home with him as a proof of his victory, and then stole warily from house to house, until he at last discovered an Indian nodding at his post. This man he despatched at a blow, but that blow alarmed the neighborhood, and he was forced immediately to fly for his life. Being, however, the fleetest Indian then alive, he was under no apprehension of danger from the chase. He suffered his pursuers to approach him from time to time, and then suddenly darted away from them, hoping in this manner to discourage as well as escape them. When the evening came on, he hid himself, and his enemies stopped to rest. Feeling no danger from a single enemy, and he a fugitive, they even indulged themselves in sleep. Piskaret, who watched every movement, turned about, knocked every man of them

on the head, added their scalps to his bundle, and leisurely resumed his way home.*

As one more instance in point, we may mention the well-known fact that, during the recent campaign conducted by General Atkinson against the Indians of the upper Mississippi, intelligence of some importance was in one instance brought in to the American camp by a friendly Indian who ran, for that purpose, more than one hundred miles in the course of twenty-four hours.

Of the fortitude of the American savage in enduring pain and torture, we may have occasion to speak again in describing their moral character; for although much of his astonishing endurance may be owing to hardihood of the frame, still more must be attributed to a stern and inflexible resolution of mind.

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* Colden's History of the Five Nations. See LIVES OF THE INDIANS, Nos. 45 and 46 of the FAMILY LIBRARY.

CHAPTER III.

Ancient DRESS of the Atlantic and other Indians—At the North and the South—In summer and winter—For male and female—Modern style of dress—DECORATION—Greasing—Painting—Tattooing—Anecdotes of Indian vanity and skill in matters of decoration—Anecdote of a celebrated Delaware Warrior.

Previous to the arrival of the Europeans in this country, the clothing of the Indians, in all the northerly sections of the continent, was the skins of wild beasts. The women dressed themselves with more regard to modesty than the men. *They* wore a coat of skins, girt about the loins, and reaching down nearly to the knees; and this they never put off in company. If the husband took the liberty to sell or gamble away the beaver petticoat of his squaw, she nevertheless refused to part with it until another of some sort was provided.

In the summer, their skin blanket, or mantle, hung loosely about them, and was often thrown aside; in winter it was wrapped closely around the waist. The old men, in the severe seasons, also wore a kind of trowsers, made of skins, and fastened to their girdles. They wore (as they

still do,) shoes without heels, which they called *mocassins*. These were generally made of moose-hide or buck-skin. They were shaped entirely to the foot, gathered at the toes and round the ankles, and made fast with strings. Roger Williams says of this article, that 'being excellently tanned by them, it is excellent for to travell in wet and snow; for it is so well tempered with oyle, that the water cleane wrings out; and being hanged up in their chimney, they presently drie without hurt, as myselfe hath often proved.'

The same writer states, that when the New England Indians were first induced to put on English clothes, they felt so little at ease in them, that in case of a sudden shower coming up, they would strip them off as fast as possible. They preferred wetting their own bodies, and keeping their clothes dry. Though they wore these garments, too, while among the English, because they were presents from the latter, they always took them off the moment they returned to their own wigwams.

The Virginian and other Southern Indians attired themselves much in the same manner with those of the North, excepting that, the climate being less severe, their dress was adapt-

ed to it accordingly. In summer they used very little clothing of any sort. [See p. 45.]

In modern times, fur and skins are not so much worn as formerly, but enough to show sufficiently how they used to be fashioned, by savage ingenuity, into very comfortable and sometimes very handsome apparel. They can still dress any skin, even a buffalo's, so as to make it quite soft and pliant; and a good one will serve a man several years without wearing out. Beaver and racoon blankets are still better. These are made by sewing together as many of the skins as are necessary, carefully setting the hair or fur all in one way, so as to expose a smooth surface to the rain, which thus runs off instead of penetrating. In cold weather they are worn with the fur inside. Formerly the hair or fur was shaved off from those skins which the Indians used to dress, with the large rib-bones of the elk or buffalo. Even now, the Western Indians say they can clean a skin as well with a well-prepared rib-bone as with an English knife.

Warm and durable blankets, or mantles, were also made of feathers, generally those of the wild turkey or goose. This was done chiefly by the women, who, with great patience and

care, interwove the feathers together in a most curious manner, with a thread made of the bark of the wild hemp and nettle. The same kind of workmanship is to be seen in the *bands* with which the modern Indians often pack up and carry their bags and other burdens.

The present dress of most of the tribes known to the white people, is of articles of *their* manufacture. A figured cotton shirt is a common garment of the men; a cloth petticoat for the women. Blankets are worn by both sexes and all ages. Leggins, of blue, green or red cloth, are in ordinary use; and are generally more or less ornamented, as well as tied with a garter of colored worsted below the knee. The small apron, in front, is also ornamented around the edges. Additional to these articles, the males carry a knife in a scabbard confined to the string or narrow belt which girds the waist: also a pipe, and a skin tobacco-pouch, containing, beside tobacco and smoking weed, a fire-steel, flint, and some kind of tinder.

There is less uniformity in the head-dress, as there was also in ancient times, than in any other part of the personal decoration. Sometimes the head is ornamented with a band of skins, dressed with the *felt* or hair on, surmount-

ed with feathers; but in many cases no such article is used.

The ornamental part of the dress is and has been equally various,—depending not so much on the rank or business of the wearer, as upon his ambition to wear and his ability to procure. When the hair is kept long, as is often the case, it is frequently braided, and decked with silver broaches. At other times, it is cut in various whimsical and fantastic forms, and perhaps stuck with long feathers.

Around the neck a necklace of beads or small shells is suspended; or a silver crescent. Arm-bands, and wrist-bands, and broaches or buckles for the garters, are common. So, in some tribes, for holiday purposes, are little bells and brass thimbles fixed round the ankles, which make a tinkling noise as they walk, and so serve to draw the attention of spectators to the finery of the wearer. The petticoat of the squaw is frequently decorated with abundance of ribands of gaudy colors. The leggins are furnished in the same style with flaring ornamental work; and the mocassins, especially of women, are very neatly embroidered with porcupine-quills, beautifully stained with brilliant dyes. Ear-rings, of some metal, are in gener-

al use. Formerly, these were made of bone, sea-shells and stone; and pendants were also worn in the nose, which is not now a common practice. They were carved rudely in the shape of birds, beasts, and fishes, according to the taste and mechanical skill of the person who wore them.

Painting, as well as greasing, has always been a favorite custom, and as a preparation for this we have noticed the practice of plucking out the hair of the face and body. This mixture of grease or oil and paints, might indeed be considered as much a part of the Indian's dress as of his ornament; for it generally formed a permanent coat of thick varnish over the whole skin. No doubt a principal object of it was to defend the body from moisture and cold, and from numerous tribes of insects which swarm in a summer forest. It also served to preserve the strength of the warrior and hunter, by checking the profuse perspiration to which they were subject in the campaign and the chase.

For all sorts of dances and festivals, the Indians of both sexes take particular pains to lay on the red-ochre, vermillion, or whatever else the paint may be, in quantities and modes suited to the occasion. The Chiefs (or *Sachems*)

of the New England tribes performed this part of their toilet in such a manner, that, added to a mantle of moose or deer-skin, painted and embroidered with white shells or beads, a necklace of fish-bones, and a large wild-cat or bear skin with the jaws and ears left entire, hanging over the shoulders and dangling down to the knees, it gave them truly a most ferocious and frightful appearance. This art was the more cultivated, because those warriors who made themselves look most terrific, especially for a war-dance* or a scalping-party, were admired by all spectators as the best men.

One of their common customs of decoration, still practised, remains to be described. This is the practice sometimes called *tattooing*.† It consists in making incisions, with some pointed instrument, into the skin, and then filling them with some black, blue or other permanent dye or ink, in such a manner as to make images that lasted during life. The figures of moose, deer, bears, otters, wolves, hawks, or whatever object might strike a man's fancy agreeably, was thus imprinted on his face or limbs. In modern times, gunpowder is often used, instead of

* See a subsequent chapter on Indian dancing.

† See a subsequent sketch of Virginian Indians, armed.

a liquid substance, to color the outline. Some tribes have one figure in common, which they call their *totem*, and by which they may always be known.

The Indians have perhaps as much vanity in respect to their dress and decoration as any other people in the world. Of the Western tribes of the present day, an accurate observer remarks, that from the time the squaw often occupies in clubbing her hair behind, arranging her calico jacket, (a common garment in that quarter,) and painting her round cheeks with glaring circles of vermillion, he infers that personal ornament occupies as much of her thoughts as of most fashionable women in civilized society. A young Indian warrior is notoriously the most thorough-going *beau* in the world. He will employ himself with his paints and his pocket-glass for hours, laying on his colors, arranging his hair, and, gazing at his reflection in the mirror, from time to time, with very obvious satisfaction.*

The Western warriors, in full dress, as for a great dance, wear two or three clasps of silver about their arms, generally jewels in their ears,

* Flint's Geography and History.

and often in the nose. In fact, it is as common among these tribes to see a thin circular piece of silver, of the size of a dollar, hanging an inch or two from the nose, as it was among the ancient Indians to see a piece of carved bone or stone in the same situation. Then the painted porcupine-quills are twisted in the hair. Tails of animals swing from the ears behind. A necklace of bears' or alligators' teeth, or claws of the eagle, or red beads—or, if nothing better can be had, perhaps a string of red thorn-plums —hangs from the neck. The brass bells, already mentioned, are laid thick on the lower part of the dress. Add to all this finery, an American hat, and a soldier's blue coat faced with red, and your modern Indian *dandy*, stepping firmly on the ground to give his tinklers a fair chance to sound together, apparently regards his attractions with as much complacency as the human bosom can be supposed to feel.*

A Moravian clergyman who travelled as a missionary, during the last century, among the Indians in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and other States, gives an account of a visit which he made to one of his savage acquaintances at his own

* Flint's Geography and History.

wigwam. He found him engaged in plucking out his beard, preparatory to painting himself for a dance which was to take place the ensuing evening. The missionary, not liking to intrude on the gentleman under these circumstances, went home to his lodgings in the same village. He had not been there long, when the Indian, having finished his head-dress, came 'to see him,' as he said, though more probably to be seen. To his utter astonishment, the missionary saw three different expressions, or countenances, on his friend's face. By great ingenuity and judgment in laying on and shading the different colors, he had made his nose appear, to a person standing directly in front of him, as if it were very long and narrow, with a round knob at the end, much resembling the upper part of a pair of tongs. On one cheek there was a red round spot, about the size of an apple; and the other was painted in the same manner with black. The eye-lids, both the upper and lower ones, had the appearance of being twisted altogether out of place by the coloring.

Again, the matter was so arranged, that when the spectator took a side-view of him, his nose represented the beak of an eagle, with the bill

rounded and brought to a point precisely as those birds have it, though the mouth was somewhat open. The eye was astonishingly well done. On looking at the other side, the same nose now turned to the snout of a pike, with the mouth so open that the teeth could not be seen.

The fellow seemed much pleased with his own workmanship, and having his small looking-glass with him, gazed at it with great exultation. 'How do you like it?'—at length he said to the missionary. The latter answered, that 'if he had done the work on a piece of board, bark, or any thing else, he should like it very well.' 'And why not as it is?' added the savage.—'Because I cannot see who you are, under all these colors.'—'Well!' was the reply, 'I will call again, then, tomorrow morning, before you leave the village.' He did so; and when he came back, he had washed himself perfectly clean. Thus was a whole day devoted to preparing for an evening's frolic.*

The same writer describes the appearance of a celebrated veteran warrior, of the Delaware nation. He had quite a number of scars on his face and body, where he had been severely

* Heckewelder's Historical account of the Indian nations.

wounded by the arrows of his enemies; and this gave him a not very amiable aspect. But, what was worse, whether from a disposition to make his person still more striking, or a determination to make known his history, he had *tattooed* himself all over, so that not one unmarked spot was to be seen from head to foot. On his whole face, neck, shoulders, arms, thighs and legs, as well as on his breast and back, were represented scenes of the various engagements and adventures he had been in; in short, his skin furnished, in these figures and symbols, the whole history of the man.

In this instance, the tattooing was executed in the following manner. A quantity of wild poplar bark being in readiness, burnt and reduced to powder, the various figures were marked out in the skin with a small stick, rather larger than a common match, with several fine needles fastened at the end. These drawing blood, a coat of the powder was laid on, and left to dry. This operation, before the whites came to this country, was performed with sharp flint-stones, or the small teeth of a fish.

CHAPTER IV.

Ancient HABITATIONS of the Indians—Northern and Southern—Mode of building, and habit of moving—Modern lodges and wigwams—Household FURNITURE described—Various kinds of FOOD—Hominy—Barbacuing—Anecdotes of Indian cookery—The white-fish of the Lakes—Mode of taking it—Salmon—Catching fish beyond the Rocky Mountains—Indian notions of delicacy and daintiness—Cannibalism—Anecdotes.

The habitations of the American Indians, under various names, have always been much

alike in all parts of the continent. In New England, and generally throughout the country, when the Europeans first arrived, they were mostly constructed, arbour-wise, of small young trees, bent and twisted together. A fire was made in the centre of the house, and there was an opening at the top, intended to let out the smoke. This purpose, however, was not very thoroughly effected. The wigwam was but a smoky cell at best; and in rainy and windy weather, when the occupant was obliged to cover his chimney-hole in the roof with a mat, or with boughs of trees, to keep out the moisture, it was still less agreeable, though tolerably warm and dry. A place of entrance, made on one side as a door, was generally left open, but furnished with a hanging mat or piece of bark, which could be easily dropt and fastened over it, in the night-time or in storms. These wigwams were sometimes built of dry poles instead of young trees, so that when a family wished to move, they had only to bundle up their poles, strap them upon their shoulders, and march off to some other part of the country, where a new habitation could be set up in a few hours. They were governed in their choice of a residence, by the opportunities they met

with of finding abundance of fuel and food. Fresh water and fresh fish were great objects, among the rest; and therefore, a cluster of wigwams was always to be seen in the neighborhood of good springs, brooks or rivers.

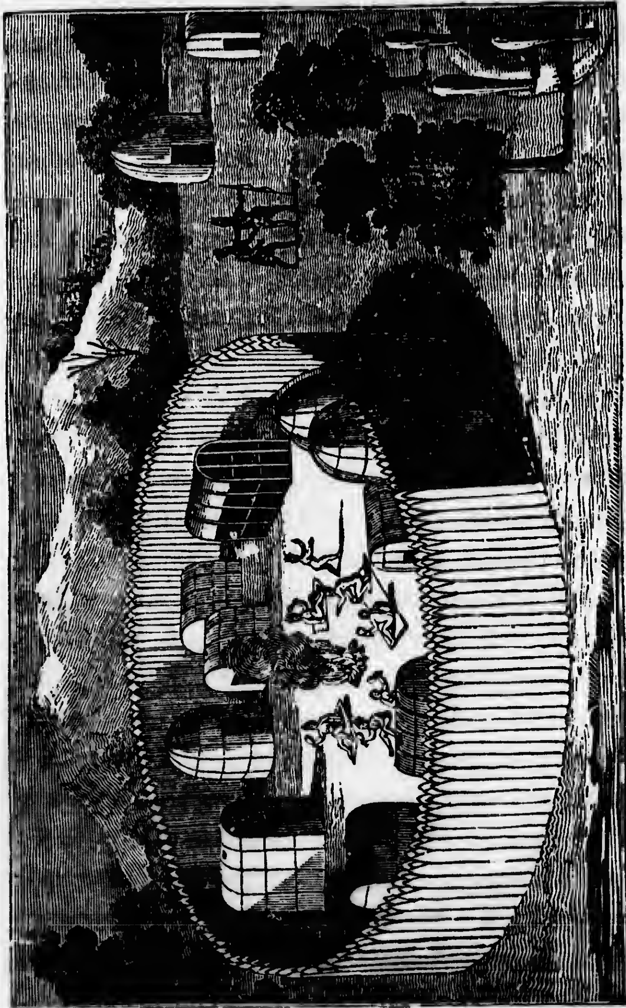
In one of these rude habitations, some fifteen feet long and ten wide, two or three families often lived very peacefully together, with no other separation but mats and boughs. In other cases, still greater numbers were associated in the same manner, and the wigwam was made large enough to accommodate them all. The smoke we have spoken of was rendered rather less troublesome by burning pine-knots, or other such dry and light woods as were least offensive to the eyes, and at the same time most easily kindled.

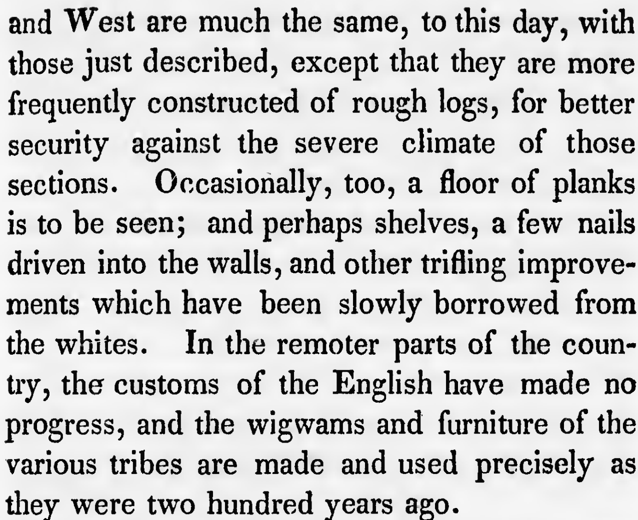
The Indians of Virginia and other southern sections of the country, built their habitations very much in the same style as the New England tribes, but generally with rather more regard to regularity and beauty; one reason of which was that the climate being warmer, and the soil and streams more fertile and full of their favorite food, they could live longer in the same place, and had more leisure to consult appearances. They therefore trimmed their

poles carefully, and set them in some order. The builder also consulted his convenience and taste in the variety which he gave to the covering of his house, whether of mats, bark or boughs; and in the shape and size, whether oblong, square, or in the more ordinary form of a bee-hive. The Cherokees and other remote Southern tribes were still farther advanced in this particular, towards the art of the white men.

It was common also at the South, to surround a whole village with a fortification against enemies, which consisted in a palisado about ten or twelve feet high; and to render it the more secure against a sudden attack, they made the wall of two or three thicknesses. More frequently they thus enclosed only the house of the Werowance or king, their religious idols and sacred relics, and perhaps so many other ordinary houses as might be sufficient to accommodate the whole tribe or settlement in case of a *sicge*. They took care not to neglect having a supply of water within the walls, and a place for a common fire in the centre, around which they often assembled to perform the war-dance.

The wigwams of the Indians of the North





and West are much the same, to this day, with those just described, except that they are more frequently constructed of rough logs, for better security against the severe climate of those sections. Occasionally, too, a floor of planks is to be seen; and perhaps shelves, a few nails driven into the walls, and other trifling improvements which have been slowly borrowed from the whites. In the remoter parts of the country, the customs of the English have made no progress, and the wigwams and furniture of the various tribes are made and used precisely as they were two hundred years ago.

The household furniture was always very simple, and of small value. Their best bed was a mat, a skin, or a heap of boughs. 'Their Fire,' says Roger Williams, 'is instead of our bed-cloathes. And so, themselves and any that have occasion to lodge with them, must be content to turne often to the fire, if the night be cold, and they who first wake must repaire the fire.' Very often, the same ancient historian tells us, they would leave their wigwams to make room for a friend, and would sleep under a tree in the open air. Well might he add,—'Sweet rest is not confined to soft beds, for nature and custom give sleep to

these Americans on the earth, or on a board.' Again—

> 'God gives them sleep on Ground, on straw,
> On sedgie mats or boord,
> When English softest beds of downe
> Sometimes no sleep afford.'

They had no such thing as a chair or stool. Their bed, such as it was, or the ground alone, was all the seat they required. They commonly sat with their elbows upon their knees; and this is the custom of their great warriors and councillors, even now, at their public treaties and conferences with the whites and with each other.

A few wooden and stone vessels and instruments, with neatly-woven baskets of osier or birch-bark, answered all the purposes of domestic life. They had no steel nor iron instrument. Their knife was a sharp stone, bone, shell, or kind of reed, which they contrived to sharpen in such a manner as to cut their hair, make their bows and arrows, and perform all the other offices of a knife. They had also mortars, and stone pestles, and chisels, and other instruments of various shapes, used for purposes not now known. These things are frequently found buried in the soil to this day, in almost every part of the country.

They dressed their corn with a clam-shell, or with a stick flattened and sharpened at one end. A large cockle, holding perhaps half a pint, sometimes answered the purpose of a spoon. A gourd, or a squash-shell, was the water-jug. The Indians of our times, living in the vicinity of the whites, have given up the use of most of these imperfect instruments, for better ones borrowed from their example.

The food of the savages was every where coarse and simple, altogether without seasoning; though in some sections more abundant and more palatable, as well as more easily obtained than in others, according to the soil, climate, water-privileges, abundance of game, and other circumstances. They had no spice, salt, butter, cheese, nor milk. They drank nothing better than the pure water, fresh and cold, as it flowed in the brook, or gushed up from the spring. They fed on the flesh and entrails of moose, deer, racoons, geese, turkeys, ducks, eels, and all kinds of fish, flesh and fowl which the woods and waters afforded. Of these there were enough in the hunting and fishing seasons. In the summer, they had also green corn, beans, squashes, and the various fruits which the country naturally produced. In the winter they

were compelled to subsist mostly, without meat of any kind, upon such of their summer vegetables as they kept for that season, together with nuts, ground-nuts, acorns and lily-roots.

They had no set meals; but, like other wild creatures, ate when they were hungry, and could find any thing to satisfy the cravings of nature. Sometimes they had little or nothing for several days,—especially if engaged in war,—but when they had provisions, they feasted heartily enough to counter-balance all they had lost by their previous fasting.

The Southern Indians suffered less from scarcity of food than the Northern, for they could obtain fish and game in greater abundance, and the forests furnished them with more fruits. In Virginia and the Carolinas, and other tracts in that latitude, were plenty of wild cherries, plums, currants, and berries. There were chestnuts, hazel-nuts, hickory-nuts and walnuts. There were luscious wild grapes, pease, cucumbers, melons, potatoes and pumpkins.

Most of these grew in New England, but not in such quantities, nor always so ripe and rich. There was no want, indeed, of acorns. 'These akornes also they drie,' says Mr. Williams, 'and in case of want of corne, by much

boyling they make a good dish of them: yea, sometimes in plentie of corne doe they eat these akornes for a Noveltie.'

Chestnuts were preserved in the same way. So were walnuts, which also furnished an oil used in anointing the hair. But as for strawberries, we are told, 'This Berry is the wonder of all the Fruits growing naturally in these parts. It is of itselfe excellent. In some Parts where the Natives have planted, I have many times seene as many as would fill a good ship within a few miles' compasse.' The Indians used to bruise the strawberry in a mortar and mix it with meal, making a sort of bread. Dried currants, treated in the same way, made about as delicate a dish. The Southern Indians used to boil their corn, ten or twelve hours, into a sort of pudding which they called *hominy*. The name is commonly applied to a similar dish cooked by the whites in that section to this day.

Of the *cookery* of the Indians an old writer has very properly said,— 'It has nothing commendable in it, but that it is performed with little trouble; they have no other sauce but a good stomach, which they seldom want.'*

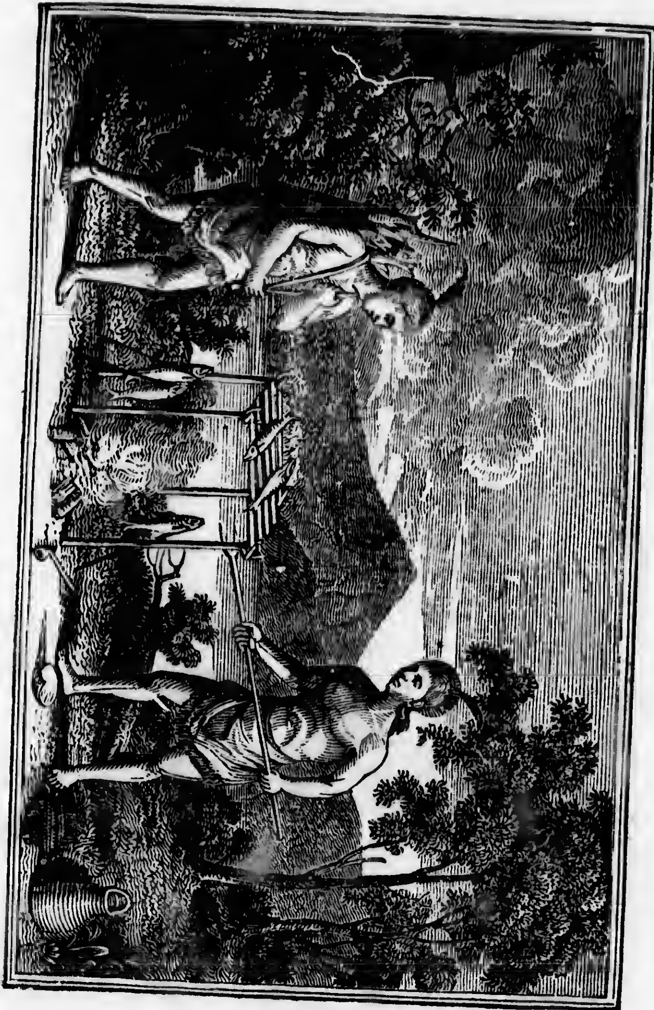
Quite a number of palatable dishes beside

* Beverly's History of Virginia.

those mentioned already, were made of the Indian corn. If ripe and dry, it was pounded as fine as possible in the mortar, kneaded into dough, and made up into flat cakes, which they were careful to bake on hot and clean ashes. With this dough they frequently mixed boiled pumpkins, green or dried, beans, chestnuts, dried venison pounded to a powder, berries, and other things. Sugar, made from the juice of the maple-tree, was in many sections used to sweeten the rest. Corn, parched, and sometimes ground afterwards, was often taken by the hunter on his long chases; and a small quantity sustained him for several days.

They had three modes of cooking their flesh and fish. Boiling was effected in vessels of bark or clay, stoutly constructed, by putting into the water stones heated red-hot for the purpose. They broiled on the naked coals; and roasted, either by covering up with hot ashes and coals, or upon sticks placed at a little distance from the fire and answering the purpose of a spit. The Southern Indians called this *barbacuing;* and the name is applied to a similar process in modern times.

The Western and Northern tribes still continue most of these modes of cookery, more or



less, although in many instances they have adopted the use of various cooking utensils, borrowed from the whites, which their ancestors had no knowledge of. In some sections, they collect, at certain seasons, large quantities of wild rice, growing abundantly around the lakes; and many other kinds of vegetable food, as well as some kinds of fish and wild game, are peculiar to different regions of the country.

The Chippewas, Ottawas, and other tribes living in the neighborhood of the great Lakes, subsist almost exclusively, at some seasons, on the *white fish*. There is perhaps no more delicious food of the fish kind in the world. It is even better than the trout, and those who live on it for months together continue to relish it at the end of that time as a dainty. It weighs from a pound or two to fifteen pounds. In

shape it resembles the shad, found in the rivers of the Atlantic coast; but the head is smaller and more pointed, and the bones larger and less

numerous. The meat is as white as the breast of a partridge. It loses some of its flavor by being salted, and in that respect only is a less valuable fish than the shad and salmon. The Indians have a way of curing white-fish by drying in the smoke of their wigwams. In this state they are laid up in large quantities, during the autumn, for the winter's provision.

They are generally taken from canoes. Each canoe carries two men; one of whom steers with a paddle, and the other has a pole, ten feet in length, furnished with a scoop-net at the end. The steersman manages the boat. The fisherman, at the prow, watches his opportunity to dip his net, and often brings up as many as it can well contain. At the best season and hour for fishing, a person who is skilled in the business will take five hundred in two hours.

When they are wanted in the winter season, which is often the case, the matter is managed thus. Several holes are made in the ice; each at such a distance from the next, that one may be reached from the other, under the ice, by the end of a pole. A line, of some hundred feet in length, is thus conveyed from hole to hole, till it is extended to the length desired. The pole is drawn out, with one end of the

line, which is fastened to it. It is then drawn back by one of the party; the net is brought under; a large stone is made fast to the sinking line at each end, and let down to the bottom; and the net is spread in the water by *sinkers* attached to different parts of it. The fish, running against it, entangle their gills among the meshes, and are thus detained till they are taken up.*

There are said to be certain tribes, resident beyond the Rocky Mountains, on the banks of the rivers flowing into the Pacific Ocean, who subsist altogether upon fish. A celebrated traveller, who explored that region several years since, gives the following account of the mode of taking salmon practised in several places.

'With great labor, they formed an embankment or weir across the river, for the purpose of placing their fishing machines, which they disposed both above and below it. I expressed my wish to visit this extraordinary work, but these people are so superstitious, that they would not allow me a nearer examination than I could obtain by viewing it from the bank. The river is about fifty yards in breadth, and by observing a man fish with a dipping-net, I

* Henry.

judged it to be about ten feet deep at the foot of the fall. The weir is a work of great labor, and contrived with considerable ingenuity. It was near four feet above the level of the water, at the time I saw it, and nearly the height of the bank on which I stood to examine it. The stream is stopped nearly two thirds by it. It is constructed by fixing small trees in the bed of the river, in a slanting position (which could be practicable only when the water is much lower than when I saw it) with the thick part downwards; over these is laid a bed of gravel, on which is placed a range of lesser trees, and so on alternately till the work is brought to its proper height. Beneath it the machines are placed, into which the salmon fall when they attempt to leap over. On either side there is a large frame of timber-work, six feet above the level of the upper water, in which passages are left for the salmon leading directly into the machines, which are taken up at pleasure. At the foot of the fall, dipping-nets are also successfully employed.' *

These people not only ate no flesh, but for some reason or other regarded every thing of the meat kind with a superstitious fear. One

* Mackenzie.

of our traveller's party having thrown the bone of a deer into the river, a native, who observed the circumstance, immediately dived and brought it up. Having then consigned it to the flames, he proceeded to wash his hands as if they were polluted. A dog belonging to another native was also severely beaten for gnawing a bone.

Salmon were taken in such abundance by these people, that, in one place, four heaps were seen lying before the door of a chief, each of which consisted of three or four hundred. Sixteen women were employed in cleaning and preparing them to be roasted. Some of them requested the white men not to fire off their muskets, for fear of frightening the fish in the river.

In another place some women were seen employed in boiling sorrel, and different kinds of berries, with salmon-roes, in large square kettles of cedar wood. This pottage, when it attained a certain consistency, they took out with ladles, and poured it into frames of about twelve inches square and one deep, the bottom being covered with a large leaf, which were then exposed to the sun till their contents became so many dried cakes. The roes that are mixed up with the bitter berries are prepared in the same way. From the quantity of this kind of

provision, it must be a principal article of food, and probably of traffic. These people have also portable chests of cedar, in which they pack the cakes, as well as their salmon, both dried and roasted.

Thus is it, throughout America, that the red man has always subsisted himself on the simplest food which nature furnished at his hands:—

> ——————The forests here,
> Rivers and stiller waters, paid
> A tribute to the net and spear
> Of the red ruler of the shade.*

It should be remarked of the Indians, in relation to the subject we have been discussing in this chapter, that there is a great difference among the various tribes in their choice of meats, even where meats are eaten. The Five Nations are said to have never been at all scrupulous in their selection of food. The Chippewas eat indiscriminately, and without hesitation, the flesh of not only the wild-cat, panther, fox, musk-rat and wolf, but also of the horse, dog, and many such animals, which the Delawares, Shawanees and other Southern tribes, would at all events suffer much from hunger before eating. Some savages do not hesitate to cut up and boil

*Bryant.

their birds and other game, without the least preparation of any kind, except to pluck out hastily a part of the feathers. Oil and fat, which no white man could endure, are common articles of food.

Speaking of the taste of the Delawares of Ohio, the Missionary Heckewelder relates the following anecdote. In the spring of 1773, he was travelling across the woods from the Muskinghum river to the Big Beaver. More than twenty Indians were in company with him. Five of them were old men. The rest were women and children,—all strangers to that part of the country, excepting one only, who undertook to act as guide to the rest of the party. A powerful rain came up while they were upon this journey, and they found themselves hemmed in by two large creeks which were now overflowing their banks. Their provisions were soon exhausted; and every man who had a gun, was called upon to scour the surrounding woods, in search of game. But their exertions were to no purpose. The day passed off, and the hunters returned to camp at night,—all but a well known Chief, whose name was POPUNHANK,—bringing nothing with them but a single wild-cat.

Indians are never discouraged; or at least, never confess that they are. One of the old men gravely pronounced the wild-cat '*good! very good!*' and it was immediately ordered to be put on a wooden spit, and roasted by the women for supper. While this was going on, the old Indian endeavored to keep up the spirits of the party by jesting about the fine country they were now in, where such choice food was to be had; to all which some other one of the old men would reply—'*all true! very true!*'—and thus the evening wore away.

At length, about nine o'clock, the cook came to tell them that the meat was done, and they might commence eating it. The Missionary, who was very hungry, heard the summons with great pleasure; but much to his surprise, nobody rose to obey it. The whole night passed away without any one attempting to partake of the wild-cat. In the morning the women prepared a large kettle full of some kind of herb tea, and all the company eagerly went forward for a share of it; but the wild-cat, though well roasted, still lay untouched. One of the old men indeed asserted that he thought it as good eating as a bear or a hog, which the white people liked very much; but he seemed not to be

in earnest, and made no movement, himself, towards either consuming or carving the wild-cat.

At last Popunhank, who was supposed to be lost, came in, together with the guide, who had gone out to look for him. He had found the Chief at the distance of five or six miles from the camp, where he had succeeded in killing a fine deer; and this animal they were now dragging in. The Indians were delighted. They made no boisterous rejoicing, which Indians never do; but called out with one voice,—'Anischi!' 'Anischi!'—('We are thankful.') The wild-cat was now taken by the tail and thrown away, and a meal of venison soon cooked, which restored the whole to their usual strength and spirits.

It has been said of the Indians generally, and especially of particular tribes more ferocious than the rest, that they ate human flesh; in other words, that they are cannibals. This is believed to be unsupported by fact. No doubt the opinion has arisen from the circumstance, that an instance of the kind has now and then been known to occur. This was under circumstances of extreme suffering from famine, where the life of one has been sacrificed, perhaps in a fit

of frenzy, to save that of another. Similar cases have occurred among civilized people in all countries; but it by no means follows that all civilized people are cannibals.

Nearly a hundred years ago, there was, in certain parts of this country, a remarkably severe winter, known for a long time afterwards as 'the hard winter,' when the ground was covered with a deep snow early in the season. About this time an Indian woman, of the Delaware tribe in Ohio, imprudently undertook to travel across the Alleghany mountains, to visit some of her relations residing near the west branch of the Susquehannah. What was still worse, she had three children with her.

After she had with much difficulty reached a point in the river which is called Chingle-Clamoose, the snow began falling again in greater quantities than ever. In fine, she was compelled to stop, and make herself as good a camp as she was able. Having very little provisions, she began with putting herself and the children on short allowance, still hoping that the weather would become more moderate, or the snow so crusted over that they might walk over the surface of it with ease. Her little store of food was eked out by using the withered

grass found on the river's edge; and also with certain barks which she boiled, to make them eatable and digestible.

But the snow continued falling, till at length it reached the height of six feet, so that even the wretched species of sustenance just mentioned was no longer to be found. The wolves, too, more ferocious than usual with hunger like her own, hovered thick about her little encampment, both night and day; and it required her whole time and strength to preserve fire enough to prevent her children being frozen to death, while the wolves could only be kept at a distance by throwing out fire-brands among them.

Her situation soon became intolerable. Having no alternative but that of sacrificing one of her children, she resolved on destroying the youngest, in order to preserve the rest. After much hesitation, she turned away her eyes, and with a trembling hand and a loud cry of despair, gave to one of the innocent little sufferers a stroke which deprived him of his life.

She now thought she had obtained a temporary relief, and that she might be able to support herself and her remaining children until such a change should take place in the weather

as would enable them to proceed on their journey. But the wolves had now got scent of the slaughtered child, and they became more furious than before, howling continually around the encampment in a most frightful manner. She wept, and prayed to the Great Spirit; but still no relief came. Her horrid food itself was again exhausted.

She had determined, in fine, to sacrifice another child, and her hand was lifted to give the fatal blow, when she suddenly heard the yell of two approaching savages, and the murderous weapon fell to the ground. They soon came up, furnished with a kind of snow-shoes which enable the Indians to travel with ease in the depth of the winter. They immediately made a similar pair for her own use; and taking the children in their arms, set off all together for the place of her destination, which they soon reached in safety.

The spot where this awful event took place was long pointed out by all the Indians in that section of the country as 'the place where human flesh was eaten'—in their own language, *Enda Mahatink*.

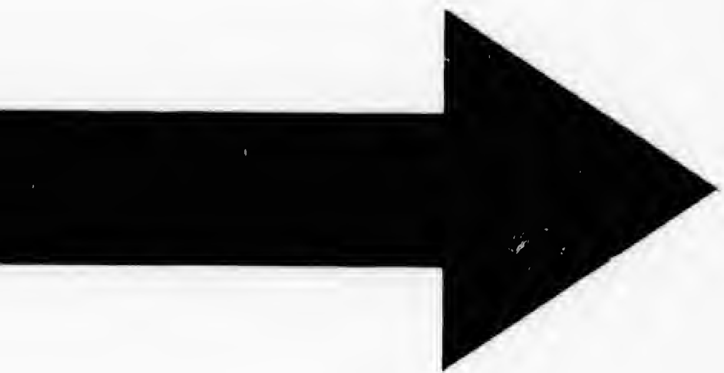
The celebrated traveller, Alexander Henry, gives a striking description of a scene which

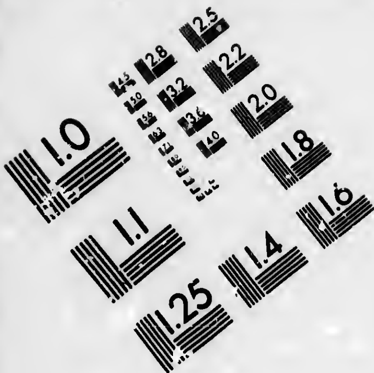
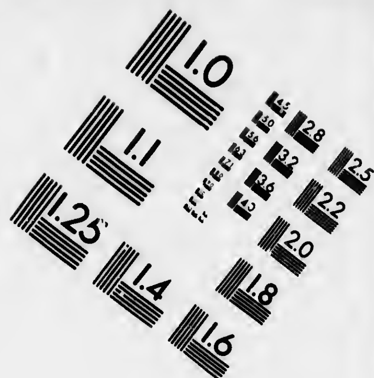
occurred at Oak Bay, on the north side of Lake Superior, in the winter of 1767. He went to that place, for the purpose of taking fish in the Lake, in company with several other white men, each of whom had with him but a single pint of corn. After being at Oak Bay a fortnight,—sometimes meeting with good success in their fishing, but at other times suffering much from hunger,—they were joined by a party of Indians, flying, like themselves, from famine. Two days after, there came a young Indian out of the woods, alone. He reported that he had left the family to which he belonged, behind, in a starving condition, and unable, from their sickly and exhausted state, to pursue their intended journey to the Bay. The appearance of the man was frightful; and his breath was so intolerable that none of the other Indians would venture near him. Indeed, the camp was thrown into an uproar by his arrival.

Before long, some of the Indians came to Henry, and told him they suspected the new comer of having consumed human flesh, and even of having devoured the family which he pretended to have left behind. These charges, upon being questioned by Henry, he denied, but in such a manner as rather to increase the

suspicion against him; in consequence of which the Indians resolved to set out and travel a day's journey on his track. They did so, and the next day returned, bringing with them a human hand and skull. The hand had been left roasting before a fire, and some other parts of the body were seen hanging upon the bushes in the vicinity of the same place.

The young man, being informed of these discoveries, and more closely questioned, confessed the crime of which he was accused. From the account he now proceeded to give, it appeared that the family had consisted of his uncle and aunt, their four children and himself. One of the children was a boy of fifteen years of age. His uncle, after firing at several beasts of the chase, all of which he missed, fell into despondence, and persuaded himself that it was the will of the Great Spirit that he should perish. In this state of mind, he requested his wife to kill him. The woman refused to comply; but the two lads, one of them, as has been said, the nephew, and the other the son of the unhappy man, agreed between themselves to murder him, to prevent, as the informant wished to insinuate, his murdering them. Accomplishing their detestable purpose, they devoured



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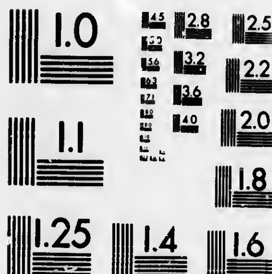
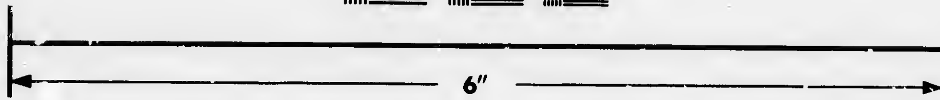

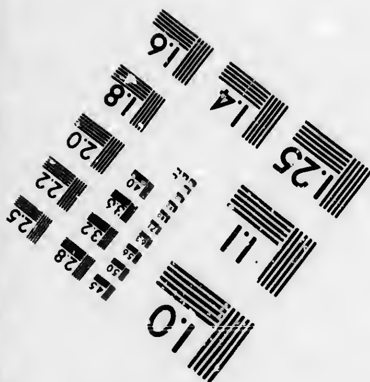
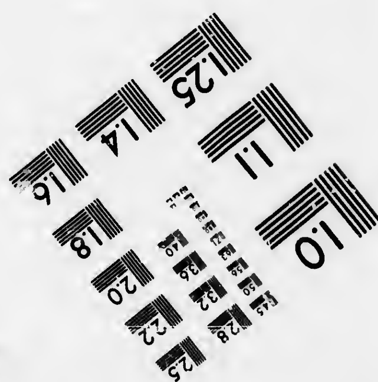

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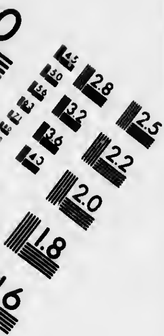

the body; and famine pressing upon them still closer, they successively killed the three younger children, upon whose flesh they subsisted for some time, and with a part of which the parricides at length set out for the Lake, leaving the woman, who was too feeble to travel, to her fate. On their way, their foul victuals failed; the informant killed his companion; and it was a part of the remains of this last victim that had been discovered at the fire.*

So far are the Indians from regarding the practice of cannibalism with any sort of indulgence, that owing to the prejudice against it, it is a common belief among them that the horrid wretch, who had once made human flesh his food, must suffer the punishment of being never afterwards satisfied with any other. Mr. Henry states, that the young man at Oak Bay appeared to verify this opinion. We are told, that he ate with relish nothing that was given him; but, indifferent to the food prepared, fixed his eyes continually on the children which were in the Indian lodge, and frequently exclaimed, 'How fat they are!'—It was perhaps not unnatural, that after long acquaintance with no

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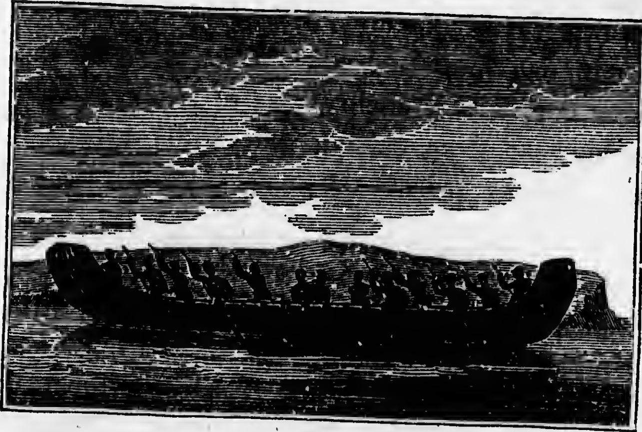
* Henry's Travels and Adventures.

human form but such as was gaunt and pale from want of food, a man's eyes should be almost riveted upon any thing, where misery had not made such inroads, and still more upon the bloom and plumpness of childhood; and the exclamation might be the most innocent, and might proceed from an involuntary and unconquerable sentiment of admiration.—Be this as it may, his behavior was considered, and not less naturally, as marked with the most alarming symptoms; and the Indians, apprehensive that he would prey upon their children, resolved on putting him to death. They did this the next day, with a single stroke of an axe, aimed at his head from behind, and of the approach of which he had not the smallest intimation.*

* Henry's Travels and Adventures.

CHAPTER V.

Account of the state of Manufactures and other Arts among the Indians—Their weapons of war—Their instruments of navigation—The log and the bark canoe, of ancient and modern times, and mode of building each—Clearing land of trees—Kindling fire—Anecdotes of Indian Navigation of the Northern Lakes—Skill of Indian women in the use of the paddle—Poetical description of the birch canoe—The snow-shoe—The sledge—The dog-train—Agricultural implements—Anecdotes from Mc'Kenzie's Travels in the West.



The specimens which have been preserved of the mechanical skill of the ancient Indians, still more than those of a more modern date, abundantly show the natural ingenuity of the race. Since the use of the metals, and various

arts have been introduced among them to some extent by the whites, they have relied more on the superiority of the latter, and less on the resources of their own industry and invention.

For example, they had in the first instance no iron. Their spear and arrow-heads were made of the very hardest kind of rock which could be found; and yet shaped into exact and regular forms, in a manner which no white man would think of effecting without the aid of tools which the Indians did not possess. The arrow-head was three-sided, varying in length from three-fourths of an inch to two and a half inches. The spear-heads were larger. Both were furnished with a notch in the broadest part, to receive the thong by which they were fastened to the wood of the arrow.

The tomahawk, gouge, pestle and knife, (which we have mentioned before) were usually made of a softer kind of rock. They were fashioned into handsome proportion, and their surface made smooth by rubbing against other stones. The stone part of the tomahawk was from four to six inches in length, two in width, and the greatest thickness an inch or little more. The gouges were made like the tomahawks, except that they were hollowing on one, instead

of being rounded on both sides.* The pestles were cylindrical in form, and from six to twelve inches in diameter.—Many of these are now in use, and are preferred to those made of iron or wood. The knives resembled the segment of a circle, or one of the outside pieces of a barrel-head, the curved side being used for the edge. Their axes, which were larger, were wedge-shaped, and had a groove around them, for a *withe* handle.

The wooden part of the arrow was a young elder-stick, or some other straight slim stick or reed. That of the tomahawk was stouter, and two or three feet in length. Sometimes, a knot or knob at the end of it, answered the

purpose of a stone head; at other times a piece of deer's horn. The spear also was often furnished in the same manner, or perhaps merely hardened at one end in the fire. The bow-string was made of the sinews of deer, or of the Indian hemp.

With respect to navigation, the Atlantic In-

* See the plate which represents *canoe-making*, p. 89.

dians had made no improvement beyond the construction and management of the canoe. This was commonly made, not of bark, as among modern tribes, but of a large log of pine, or other long and straight trunk of easily wrought wood. The canoe was in fact a great trough. The largest would carry more than fifty men; but they were not often more than twenty feet long and three wide.

The construction of them, with such wretched tools as the gouges and knives described above, was a singular performance. The tree was brought down by making a small fire round the root, together with the use of the hatchet; and when the trunk was prostrate, it was burnt off at the length desired. The bark, at the season when sap runs in the wood, could be easily stripped off, and the heat of a fire loosened it at any season. The log was then raised, upon stones or stakes, to a convenient height for working, when the process of hollowing was effected by burning with gentle fires, and by scraping with the gouge. The ends were properly shaped, and the work was completed.

When the object was to clear a considerable piece of land of its woods, instead of burning and chopping the trees down one by one, the

Indians cut a notch round the trunks, quite through the bark, with their hatchets. That deadened the trees, and as they withered immediately, the ground might be planted at once. If otherwise, in a course of a year at two, a high wind generally laid them all prostrate. The fire spoken of above was kindled, as in modern times, by rubbing particular kinds of wood violently against each other,—generally a piece of hard wood against one more soft and dry; pine, for instance, against oak. Rotten-wood and dry leaves answered the purpose of tinder.

Canoes were also made,—chiefly in New England,—as they are by the modern Indians, of bark, particularly that of the birch-tree. The tribes of the Northern Lakes make them wholly of this material, with a little soft wood and pine-gum, or boiled pitch, without a nail or a bit of metal of any kind to confine the parts. The entire outside is bark. Where the edges of it come together at the bottom or along the sides, they are sewed very closely with a sort of vegetable thread called *wattap*,—made of roots, —and the seam is then plastered over with gum. Next to the bark, are pieces of cedar, shaven flat and thin, not thicker than the blade of a knife. These run lengthwise, and are pressed

against the bark by means of cedar ribs fitted to the bottom and sides of the canoe, in the opposite direction, and which, at the upper end, are pointed, and run into a rim of cedar. This rim, being about an inch thick and an inch and a half wide, forms the gun-wale, (as the whites call it,) to which the bark and ribs are all sewed with wattap. Across the boat are several bars, which keep it in shape, and are also fastened to the gunwale. The seats of those who paddle are alongside of, but below the bars,—made of plank or board, a few inches wide, and hung by a cord or withe at each end to the gunwale. In small bark canoes, however, no seats are used. The Indian adjusts himself on the bottom. They are sometimes thirty feet long, and of course capable of accommodating quite a party, like a log canoe;* but more frequently they are made for the use of two or three people, and are so light and small as to be very easily carried a long distance on a man's head. This makes them convenient for travelling in the winter, when the streams and lakes are frozen, as well as for navigating shallow or rapid streams.

The bark-canoes, of whatever size, indeed,

* See the plate prefixed to this Chapter.

are so fragile as to be easily damaged and destroyed by overloading, or by running against obstacles in the water. The larger ones, used on the Lakes, are made to carry a weight of stores, tents and baggage, to the amount of from four to eight thousand pounds; but in this case the bottom is defended by a layer of long poles, which cause the burden to press equally on all points. The paddles are of red-cedar, and very light. The blade is about three inches wide, except the steersman's, behind, which is five inches. One of the crew looks out in front, to prevent running upon rocks. In mounting a rapid current, a stout pole is used instead of the paddle; and those who use it are obliged to stand erect. This makes the navigation exceedingly difficult, and sometimes dangerous, even for those most accustomed to it. Of the whites, perhaps not one out of ten could safely for the first time navigate a small birch canoe, even in smooth water, without oversetting it.

An advantage in most of these boats, which should not be forgotten, is, that the two ends being generally fashioned and shaped much alike, both answer equally well for the prow or stern, so that there is no necessity of turning them round. When they are so constructed,

as to admit of a sail being hoisted, the Indians will accomplish sixty miles with them in a day; without it, about half that distance.

It is but two or three years since a member of the Penobscot tribe, residing at Old Town, in Maine, paddled one of the smallest kind of birch canoes all the way along the Atlantic Coast from the mouth of his own river to the harbor of New York.

Not only the women, but even the little girls, paddle these canoes with great skill. They sit in the bottom of the boat. The woman at the stern strikes her paddle into the water,—reaching well forward, both with her arms and body. Bringing up the handle to a line with her shoulder, she turns its edge quick to the current, and inclines the blade in and out, slow or fast, as the direction of the canoe may require. If a wrong direction is given to it, the paddle is turned backward, and the right course instantly regained. In a word, the wild-duck does not float more buoyantly or move more lightly on the waves, to all appearances, than this curious vessel under the management of the women. On reaching the shore, which is always approached cautiously, the whole company rise together from the bottom, and leave it together

with the same activity. The boat rises like a feather; and the last who steps out, takes it by one of the bars that cross it about midway, slings it over one shoulder, and walks off with it as if it were a hand-basket.

On the whole, no more than justice is done to this remarkable specimen of savage ingenuity,---which the whites have never been able to improve upon, or even equal,—in the poetical description of a traveller who has himself had occasion to put its excellent qualities to the test.*

In the region of lakes, where the blue waters sleep,
  Our beautiful fabric was built ;
Light cedar supported its weight on the deep,
  And its sides with the sun-beams were gilt.

The bright leafy bark of the betula* tree,
  A flexible sheathing provides ;
And the fir's thready roots drew the parts to agree,
  And bound down its high-swelling sides.

No compass or gavel was used on the bark,
  No art but the simplest degree ;
But the structure was finished, and trim to remark,
  And as light as a Sylph's could be.

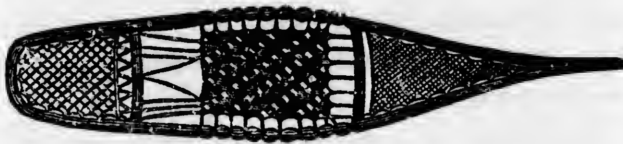
Its rim was with tender young roots woven round,
  Like a pattern of wicker-work rare;
And it pressed on the waves with as lightsome a bound,
  As a basket suspended in air.

* Mr. Schoolcraft. See Mc'Kenney's Tour to the Lakes.
† Betula papyracæ.

And still as we floated by rock and by shell,
Our bark raised a murmur aloud;
And it danced on the waves, as they rose, as they fell,
Like a Fay on a bright summer cloud.

We said, as we passed o'er the liquid expanse,
With the landscape in smiling array;
How blest should we be, if our lives should advance,
Thus smoothly and sweetly away.

The *Snow-Shoe* is another of the ingenious mechanical contrivances of the Indians, and one without which they would be much at a loss, especially in the Northern regions. They



are about three feet long, and a foot wide in the broadest part. Little sticks placed across at five or six inches from each end, serve to strengthen them. A net-work of twisted deer-skin, cut into strips, is fastened to the frame, and to this the foot is confined by means of strings of the same material. The snow-shoe used for travelling over a hilly country, is turned up at the end, and pointed. To walk well upon these long and broad bottoms, requires as much practice as it does to navigate a canoe. The knees must be turned a little inward, and

the legs kept wide asunder; and the strain of the strings is such, that a white man never puts them on to wear for a day, without suffering what is called the 'snow-shoe evil.' An Indian will travel with them forty miles a day, and sometimes more.

The sledge is of frequent utility in the winter season; and this, too, though of very simple manufacture, is managed with much more skill by an Indian than by a white man. This carriage, in its simplest fashion, consists merely of a thin board, a foot wide,—or of two narrow ones, made to answer the same purpose,—six or seven feet long. The fore-part is generally a little bent up; and the sides are bordered with little bands, to which straps are fastened for binding on baggage. However laden these little vehicles may be, the owner draws them over the snow-crust, with perfect ease and great rapidity, by means of a long band of leather, or skin, which he puts over his breast. They are often of use, also, for carrying the wounded and the sick.

Several of the modern tribes, chiefly resident beyond the Mississippi,—such as the Osages, Sioux and Pawnees,—are in the habit of constant riding on horse-back; and the greater part

of their hunting, as well as their warfare, is carried on in this manner. But in the more northern latitudes the *dog-train* is equally serviceable, though more used by the whites than the Indians. It is a light frame of wood, covered round with a dressed skin. The part in which the feet go, is lined with furs, and is covered in, like the fore-part of a shoe. The bottom is of plank, about half an inch thick; and some six inches longer than the train, and an inch or two wider. In this carriage a woman may sit quite comfortably, and can take a child in her arms, while her driver, standing on the part of the frame which runs out behind, gives the word to his dogs. These, when well-trained, will trot off forty miles a day, over the snow crust.

When to the implements and arts we have now described, we add a scanty cultivation of corn, squashes, beans and pumpkins, on a patch of weedy ground, not at all enclosed, formerly with scarce any other tools than shells;—together with a few contrivances for hunting and fishing,* such as snares made of skins, nets of wild hemp, and hooks of fish-bones;—we have given an almost complete account of Indian mechanics.

* See Chapters on Hunting and Fishing.

Mr. Hearne gives, in his Travels, an anecdote curiously illustrating the ingenuity, (as well as hardihood,) to which even the female savage becomes accustomed by the force of necessity. When he and the Indians in his company were returning South from the Copper-Mine River, they found, in the midst of the wilderness, a young Indian woman, inhabiting, alone, a hut of her own construction. She had been captured in war, and had run away from her master, but, winter coming on, found herself unable to reach her own country. When discovered, she had lived in this solitude nearly eight months. She was, in the opinion of Hearne, one of the finest Indian women he had ever seen.—Five or six inches of hoop made into a knife, and the iron shank of an arrowhead which served as an awl, were the only implements she possessed; and with these she made snow-shoes and other useful articles. For subsistence she snared partridges, rabbits and squirrels, and had killed two or three beavers, and some porcupines. After the few deer-sinews she had brought with her were expended in making snares and sewing her clothing, she supplied their place with the sinews of rabbits' legs, which she twisted together with

great dexterity. Thus occupied, she not only became reconciled to her desolate situation, but had found time to amuse herself by manufacturing little pieces of personal ornament. Her clothing was formed of rabbit-skins sewed together; the materials, though rude, being tastefully disposed, so as to make her garb assume a pleasing, though desert-bred appearance. The singular circumstances under which she was found, her beauty and useful accomplishments, occasioned a contest among the Indians as to who should have her for a wife; and the matter being decided, she accompanied them in their journey.

In regard to the various instruments and machines mentioned in this chapter, to describe all the minute differences in them would be an endless task. We will give, however, a single passage from the description, furnished by a faithful traveller, of one of the remote North-Western tribes, who have had no communication with any civilized people except occasionally with sailors and fur-traders, perhaps, on the Western shores of the Continent.

Their arms, says our traveller, consist of bows made of cedar, six feet in length, with a short iron spike at one end, and serve occasionally as

a spear. Their arrows are well made, barbed, and pointed with iron, flint, stone, or bone; they are feathered, and from two to two and a half feet in length. They have two kinds of spears, both which are double-edged, and of well polished iron: one of them is about twelve inches long, and two wide; the other about half the width, and two thirds of the length; the shafts of the first are eight feet in length, and the latter six. They have also spears, made of bone. Their knives consist of pieces of iron, shaped and handled by themselves. Their axes are something like our adze, and they use them in the same manner as we employ that instrument. They were, indeed, furnished with iron in a manner, says our traveller, 'which most plainly proved to me that their communication with tribes, who communicate with the inhabitants of the sea coast, cannot be very difficult, and from their ample provision of iron weapons, the means of procuring it must be of a more distant origin than I had at first conjectured.'

They have snares made of green skin, which they cut to the size of sturgeon twine, and twist a certain number of them together; and though when completed they do not exceed the

thickness of a cod-line, their strength is sufficient to hold a moose deer: they are from one and a half to two fathoms in length. Their nets and fishing-lines are made of willow-bark and nettles; those made of the latter being finer and smoother than if made with hempen thread. Their hooks are small bones, fixed in pieces of wood split for that purpose, and tied round with fine wattape,—the same article elsewhere used in building birch canoes. Their kettles are also made of wattape, which is so closely woven that they never leak; and they heat water in them, by putting red-hot stones into it. There is one kind of them, made of spruce-bark, which they hang over the fire, but at such a distance as to receive the heat without being within reach of the blaze,—a very tedious operation. They have various dishes of wood and bark; spoons of horn and wood, and buckets; bags of leather and net-work, and baskets of bark, some of which hold their fishing-tackle, while others are contrived to be carried on the back. They have a brown kind of earth in great abundance, with which they rub their clothes, not only for ornament but utility, as it prevents the leather from becoming hard after it has been wetted. They have spruce bark in

great plenty, with which they make their canoes.* The mode of making these is similar to that practised by the Lake Indians, already described.

The most ingenious of the tribes, in the manufacture of useful furniture and utensils, as in the construction of buildings, were those who lived farthest South. These were in the habit of making the best bows and arrows, and the handsomest stone pipes. They also manufactured good saddles of a rude kind, and wove a handsome coarse cloth of the wild hemp, as indeed some of the remote Western tribes at the present day do of a kind of bark.

* Mc'Kenzie. See his 'Voyages from Montreal, through the Continent of North America.'

CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC LIFE of the Indians—Variety in their modes of courtship and marriage—Customs of different tribes—The Knistenaux—The Chippewas—Account of Mr. Tanner's courtship and matrimony—Anecdotes of Indian girls—The LEGEND of WAWANOSH.

There is no custom or ceremony in the domestic life of the Indians, which is practised with more variations than their courtship and marriage.

Among many tribes, the negotiation is carried on altogether by the parents of the parties, though not often without their having previously noticed some attachment between the persons for whom they act. The mother of the bridegroom more frequently, in these cases, commences the movement by taking a present to the wigwam where the young woman resides, —such as a leg of venison, or a piece of fat bear's-meat,—never forgetting to mention that her son was the successful hunter of the game. In return, if the mother of the bride elect approves of the match which she now understands to be proposed, she prepares a savory dish of victuals, the produce of the labor of *woman*,—perhaps beans, or Indian corn,—and

then taking it to the bridegroom's wigwam, gives it to the mother, and says—'This is the produce of my daughter's field.'

If afterwards, the old ladies are able to tell the good news to each other, that the young people have pronounced the articles sent to them 'very good,' the bargain is concluded:—it being as much as if the young man had said to the girl —'I can at all times provide you with good meat like this!' and she had replied,—'And such good victuals from the field you shall have from me!' A few other presents are exchanged; the parties soon grow intimate with each other; the young man raises a wigwam; the parents perhaps supply him with a kettle, a few bowls and baskets, axes and hoes,—and the match is made up: The parties live together as man and wife.

When there are no parents in the case, the matter is managed in various ways. The simplest is a direct application of the young man to the object of his choice, in the fewest words possible: If she answer his proposal favorably, she either goes to live with him immediately, or meets him at an appointed time and place.* In some cases, he is content,

* Heckewelder.

instead of expressing his disposition in words, to go and sit by the side of the young woman in her cabin; and if she suffers this, and continues in her place, her assent is understood to be given, and the marriage is concluded.* Other presents than those we have named, are in use among many tribes,—frequently bracelets, belts and beads. Among the Atlantic Indians quite generally, as with some tribes at this day, it was necessary to obtain the chief's consent to the marriage, or at least his attendance at the conclusion of the contract.

Mc'Kenzie also relates that, among the Knistenaux, who inhabit an extensive territory beyond Lake Winipeg,—when a young man marries, he immediately goes to live with the father and mother of his wife, who treat him, nevertheless, as a perfect stranger, till after the birth of his first child: he then attaches himself more to them than his own parents; and his wife no longer gives him any other denomination than that of the father of her child.

The same traveller states, that among another quite numerous North-Western people, the Chippewas, the girls are betrothed at a very early period to those whom the parents think

* Charlevoix.

the best able to support them; nor is the inclination of the woman considered.

Mr. Tanner, who was taken prisoner by an Indian party in war-time, at a very early age, and who lived among various tribes of the North-West about thirty years, gives a number of amusing anecdotes on the subject of this chapter. Nothing can better illustrate the manner in which these things are generally managed among the Indians of the present day.

For a long time after being established in his occupation as a hunter, Tanner thought but little of marrying; for he never gave up the expectation of one day returning to civilized society, and endeavoring to find the friends of his childhood. For this reason several proposals were made to him which he did not accept. One day, at a time when he was living with his tribe in the neighborhood of Lake Winipeg, Net-no-kwa, the Indian woman who had adopted him as her son, took him aside, and began to talk in this strain:—'My Son! you see I have grown old. I am scarce able to make your mocassins, and to dress and preserve your skins. You are now a man, and a hunter. It is right you should have some one who is young and strong, to look after your property, and

take charge of your wigwam. Wa-ge-tote, who is a good man, will give you his daughter; and in this way, too, you will gain the advantage of his friendship and protection.'

From all this, and much more of the same description which the good woman advanced, it plainly appeared that she had talked the matter over with Wa-ge-tote, and perhaps given him to understand that Tanner was well-disposed to the match. Indeed, she told the latter, that it would not be possible, now, to break it off,—the agreement was made. He however refused his consent, and although the advice of his mother was often afterwards urged upon him, and Wa-ge-tote himself took pains to make himself particularly agreeable (in order to recommend his daughter to Tanner), he still remained unwilling to accede to their wishes. At length, the young woman found a husband in some other hunter, and Tanner was no longer molested.

About a year after this, when he was now twenty-one years old, an old Indian, called O-zhusk-koo-koon (or, the *musk-rat's-liver*,) came to Tanner's wigwam, bringing with him a young woman, his granddaughter. She was a handsome girl, not more than fifteen years of age.

Tanner himself liked her appearance, but Net-no-kwa was dissatisfied this time. 'My Son!'—she whispered to him—'This man will never cease to trouble you, if you remain here; and as the girl is by no means fit to become your wife, I advise you to take up your gun, and move off. Make a hunting-camp at some distance, and do not return till they have time to see that you do not fancy the match.' Tanner followed his mother's advise; and O-zhusk-koo-koon at length relinquished the hope of marrying him to his granddaughter.

But his adventures in search of a wife,—or rather of a wife in search of him,—did not end here. Soon after he returned from his hunting-cruise, he one day saw a good-looking young woman walking about, and smoking a pipe,—a practice common with both sexes. She noticed him from time to time, and at last slowly walked up and asked him to smoke with her. He answered, that he never smoked. 'Ah!'—she replied quickly,—'you do not wish to touch my pipe. That is the reason you will not smoke with me.' This was too much for Tanner's gallantry. He really was not fond of smoking, but he took the pipe and whiffed away with great vigor for some minutes. She remain-

ed a considerable time with him, conversing with him, and Tanner began to be pleased with her. After this they saw each other frequently, and by dint of this better acquaintance the attachment became a strong one.

Tanner observes, that this was not the mode in which an acquaintance of the kind usually commenced among the Indians with whom he lived. It happens more frequently that a man marries without any courtship at all,—the match being agreed upon by the old people, while no objection is made on the part of the young.

The name of Tanner's female friend was Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa, (the '*Red Sky of the Morning*.') Their habit of associating together was soon noised about the little village, and Tanner became the frequent subject of conversation among all the old men and women who were looking out after matches for their daughters. Even O-zhusk-koo-koon concluded to renew his negotiation,—not indeed for the same young woman whose hand he had offered before, but for another of his granddaughters. He entered the lodge of Tanner one day, leading her by the hand. 'This,' said he to Net-no-kwa, 'is the handsomest and best of all my descendants; I come to offer her to your son.' So saying,

he left her in the lodge, and went away, without waiting for an answer.

The young woman was one whom Net-no-kwa had always treated with kindness; and every body in fact considered her the most desirable, for a wife, in the whole band. This embarrassed the old lady. She hardly knew what to do or say; but she finally found an opportunity to hint to Tanner aside,—'My Son! This girl whom O-zhusk-koo-koon offers you, is handsome. She is also good. But you must not marry her, for she has a disease which will surely destroy her within a year. You must marry a strong healthy woman. Let us then make the girl a handsome present,—for she deserves well at our hands,—and send her back to her friends.' This advice was accepted. They gave the young woman various articles of considerable value, and she quietly took the hint and went home. Less than a year afterwards, according to Net-no-kwa's prediction, she died.

In the mean time, Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa and Tanner were becoming more and more intimate. Net-no-kwa observed their conduct, but made no remarks upon it. One night Tanner came home late, from a visit to the young woman, crept slily into his lodge, and threw himself

down to sleep. A smart rapping on his naked feet waked him in the morning, at the first break of day. He roused himself, and saw Net-no-kwa standing before him, with a stick in her hand. 'Up! Up!'—She said to him,—'you who are about taking to yourself a wife, up, and start after *game*. It will raise you more in the opinion of the woman you would marry, to see you bring home a load of meat early in the morning, than to see you dressed ever so gaily, standing about the village after the hunters are all gone out.'

Tanner could make no reply to this. He put on his mocassins, and took his gun and went off. Returning, before noon, with as heavy a load of fat moose-meat as he could well carry, he threw it down before Net-no-kwa, saying, in rather a harsh tone,—'Here, old woman, is what you called for in the morning.' She was much pleased, and praised him for his exertions; and from this time he had no doubt of her being favorable to his match.

He now redoubled his diligence in hunting, and commonly came home with meat in the early part of the day. He then dressed himself as handsomely as he could, and walked about the village,—occasionally blowing the *pebegwun*,

(a rude Indian fife or flute.) For some time Mis-kwa-bun-o-kwa now pretended an unwillingness to marry him. But her coyness failed of its intended effect, and Tanner himself grew cool. He even made several attempts to break off the acquaintance altogether; but a lingering attachment proved too strong for him. Besides, when the 'Red Sky of the Morning' grew more affectionate as Tanner grew more shy, she sometimes reproached him for his coldness, and endeavored to move him by her entreaties and tears. But nothing was said of marrying.

At length, Tanner had occasion to go a long journey. When he returned, as he approached his wigwam, he saw the fair Red Sky sitting in his own place. As he stopped at the door-way, and hesitated to enter, she hung down her head. Net-no-kwa greeted him in a tone somewhat harsher than was usual with her. 'Ha!'—she now cried,—'Will you turn back from your door, and put this young woman to shame. The affair has been of your seeking, and not mine or hers. You have been following her about the village: now you would turn aside from her, and make her appear like one who has attempted to thrust herself in your way.'

Tanner felt the justice of the reproach, nor had he yet overcome his own secret affections for the 'Red Sky.' He went in and sat by her; '*and thus they became man and wife.*'* It appeared, on consultation, that Net-no-kwa, during his absence, had made a bargain with the young woman's parents, and brought her home, rightly supposing that it would be no very difficult thing to reconcile him to the measure.

But it is not always the case that the Indian lover is so cold-hearted as Tanner shewed himself in this case; or that the belle of the tribe is thus under the necessity of paying her addresses to him, in order to make herself agreeable. Instances do occur, though not very frequently perhaps, of that ardent attachment which induces the young hunter not only to tender proposals in his own behalf, but to make considerable sacrifices and exertions to recommend himself to the admiration or gratitude of his fair one.

We find a beautiful illustration of these remarks in a romantic Indian tradition which has been preserved by a northern traveller, who gathered the particulars, personally, from the mouths of a party of Chippewas at Sault de St.

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* Tanner's Narrative of his Captivity and Adventures: New York, 1830.

Marie near Lake Superior. The language is his own, but the incidents and descriptions are strongly characteristic of the character and fancy of the red men.

More than two hundred winters have passed away,—says the legend we refer to,*—since the fame of *Wawanosh* was sounded along the shores of Lake Superior. He was a chief of an ancient line, who had preserved the chieftainship in their family from the remotest times, and he cherished a lofty pride of ancestry. To the reputation of his birth, he added the advantages of a tall and commanding person, and the dazzling qualities of great personal strength, courage, and activity. His heavy bow was renowned for its dimensions throughout the surrounding tribes; and he was known to have shot one of his flint-headed arrows through the body of a deer. His council was as much sought as his prowess was feared; so that he came, in time, to be equally famed as a hunter, a warrior, and a sage. But he had now passed the meridian of his days, and the term Akkeewaizee, 'one who has been long above the earth,' was familiarly applied to him. Such was Wawanosh, to whom the united voice

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* See Schoolcraft's Travels.

of the nation awarded the first place in their esteem, and the highest seat in authority. But pride was his ruling passion.

Wawanosh had an only daughter, who had now lived to witness the budding of the leaves for the eighteenth spring. Her father was not more celebrated for his deeds of strength, than she for her gentle virtues, her slender form, her beaming eyes, and her dark and flowing hair.

> 'And through her cheek
> The blush would make its way, and all but speak;
> The sun-born blood suffused her neck, and threw
> O'er her clear nut-brown skin a lucid hue,
> Like coral reddening through the darkened wave,
> Which draws the diver to the crimson cave.'

Her hand was sought by a youth of humble parentage, who had no other merits to recommend him, but such as might arise from a tall and graceful person, a manly step, and an eye beaming with the tropical fires of youth and love. These were sufficient to attract the favorable notice of the daughter; but were by no means satisfactory to the father, who sought an alliance more suitable to his rank and the high pretensions of his family.

'Listen to me, young man,' he replied to the trembling hunter, who had sought the interview, 'and be attentive to what you hear. You ask me to bestow upon you my daughter, the chief

solace of my age, and my choicest gift from the Master of Life. Others have asked of me this boon, who were as young, as active, and as ardent as yourself. Some of these persons have had better claims to become my son-in-law. Young man, have you considered well who it is that you would choose for a father-in-law? Have you reflected upon the deeds which have raised me in authority, and made my name known to the enemies of my nation. Where is there a chief who is not proud to be considered the friend of Wawanosh? Where is there a hunter who can bend the bow of Wawanosh? Where is there a warrior who does not wish he may some day be equal in bravery to Wawanosh? Have you not also heard that my fathers came from the far east, decked with plumes and clothed with aut[illegible]

And what, y[illegible]an, have you to boast, that you should clai[illegible] alliance with my warlike line? Have you ever met your enemies on the field of battle? Have you ever brought home a trophy of victory? Have you ever proved your fortitude by suffering protracted pain, enduring continued hunger, or sustaining great fatigue? Is your name known beyond the humble limits of your native village? Go then,

young man, and earn a name for yourself. It is none but the brave that can ever hope to claim an alliance with the house of Wawanosh. Think not my ancient blood shall mingle with the humble mark of the Awausees,* fit *totem* for fishermen.'

The intimidated lover departed; but he resolved to do a deed that should render him worthy of the daughter of Wawanosh, or die in the attempt. He called together several of his young companions and equals in years, and imparted to them his design of conducting an expedition against the enemy, and requested their assistance. Several embraced the proposal immediately; others were soon brought to acquiesce, and before ten suns had set he saw himself at the head of a formidable party of young warriors, all eager, like himself, to distinguish themselves in battle. Each warrior was armed, according to the custom of the period, with a bow and a quiver of arrows, tipped with flint or jasper. He carried a 'mushkeemoot' upon his back, provided with a small quantity of parched and pounded corn, mixed with a little pemmican, or pounded meat. He was furnished with a 'puggamaugun,' or war club, of hard wood, fas-

* A kind of fish.

tened to a girth of deer-skin, and a kind of stone knife. In addition to this some carried the ancient 'sheemaugun,' or Indian lance, consisting of a smooth pole about one fathom in length, with a spear of flint firmly tied on with splints of hard wood, bound down with deer's sinews. Thus equipped, and each warrior painted in a manner to suit his fancy, and ornamented with appropriate feathers, they repaired to the spot appointed for the war-dance.

A level grassy plain extended for nearly a mile from the lodge of Wawanosh towards the point of land called Shogwoimakoong. Lodges of bark were promiscuously interspersed over this green, with here and there a cluster of trees, or a solitary pine which had escaped the fury of tempests for uncounted years. A belt of yellow sand skirted the lake shore in front, and a tall forest of oaks, pines and poplars, formed the back ground. In the centre of this green stood a large shattered pine, with a clear space around, renowned as the scene of the war-dance time out of mind. Here the youths assembled, with their tall and graceful leader, distinguished by the feathers of the white eagle which he wore on his head. A bright fire of pine wood blazed upon the green. He led his men twice or

thrice in a circular manner around this fire, with a measured step and solemn chant. Then suddenly halting, the war-hoop was raised, and the dance immediately begun. An old man, sitting at the head of the ring, beat time upon the drum, while several of the warriors shook their sheesheegwuns, and ever and anon made the woods re-echo with their yells. Each warrior chanted alternately the verse of a song, all the rest joining in chorus:

> The eagles scream on high,
> They whet their forked beaks;
> Raise—raise the battle cry,
> 'T is fame our leader seeks.

Thus they continued the dance for two days and nights, with short intermissions; when dropping off, one by one, from the fire, each sought his several way to the place appointed for the rendezvous on the confines of the enemy's country. Their leader was not among the last to depart; but he did not quit the village without bidding a tender adieu to the daughter of Wawanosh. He imparted to her his firm determination to perform an act that should establish his name as a warrior, or die in the attempt. He told her of the bitter pangs he had felt at her father's taunts,—and that his soul spurned the imputations of effeminacy and cowardice

implied by his language. He declared that he never could be happy, either with or without her, until he had proved to the whole tribe the strength of his heart, which is the Indian term for courage. He said his dreams had not been so propitious as he could wish; but that he should not cease to invoke the favor of the Great Spirit in his behalf. He repeated his protestations of inviolable attachment, which she returned, and they separated pledging vows of mutual fidelity.

All she ever heard of her lover after this interview, was that he had received an arrow in his breast, after having distinguished himself by the most heroic bravery. The enemy fled, leaving many of their warriors dead on the field. On examining his wound, it was perceived to be beyond their power to cure. He languished a short time, and expired in the arms of his friends. From that hour no smile was ever seen in the once happy lodge of Wawanosh. His daughter pined away by day and by night. Tears and sighs, sorrow and lamentation were heard continually. No efforts to amuse were capable of restoring her lost serenity of mind. Persuasives and reproofs were alternately employed, but employed in vain.

It became her favorite custom to fly to a sequestered spot in the woods, where she would sit under a shady tree, and sing her mournful laments for whole hours together. The following fragment of one of her songs is yet repeated.

'Oh how can I sing the praise of my love! His spirit still lingers around me. The grass that is growing over his bed of earth is yet too low; its sighs cannot be heard upon the wind.

Oh he was beautiful!
Oh he was brave!

I must not break the silence of this still retreat; nor waste the time in song, when his spirit still whispers to mine. I hear it in the sounds of the newly budded leaves. It tells me that he yet lingers near me, and that he loves me the same in death, though the yellow sand lies over him.

Whisper, spirit,
Whisper to me.

I shall sing when the grass will answer to my plaint; when its sighs will respond to my moan. Then my voice shall be heard in his praise.

Linger, lover! linger,
Stay, spirit! stay!

The spirit of my love will soon leave me. He goes to the land of joyful repose, to pre-

pare my bridal bower. Sorrowing must I wait, until he comes to conduct me there.

Hasten, lover; hasten!
Come, spirit, come!' *

Thus she daily repeated her pensive song. It was not long before a small bird of beautiful plumage flew upon the tree beneath which she usually sat, and with its sweet and artless notes, seemed to respond to her voice. It was a bird of a strange character, such as she had never before seen. It came every day and sang to her, remaining until it became dark. Her fond imagination soon led her to suppose it was the spirit of her lover, and her visits were repeated with greater frequency. She did nothing but sing and fast. Thus she pined away, until that death she had so frequently desired came to her relief. After her decease, the bird was never more seen; and it became a popular opinion that this mysterious bird had flown away with her spirit to the land of bliss. But the bitter tears of remorse fell in the tent of Wawanosh; and he lived many years to regret his false pride, and his harsh treatment of the noble youth.

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* We are indebted for this fragment of Indian poetry, to the polite attainments and literary taste of Miss Jane Johnston, of Johnston Hall, Sault Ste. Marie. [an Indian.] *Schoolcraft.*

CHAPTER VII.

DOMESTIC LIFE, continued—Divorce or separation—Polygamy—Anecdote of a Delaware—Division of duties between husband and wife—Domestic festivals—Maple-sugar making—Education of children—Anecdotes of Tanner and the Indians with whom he lived—Names of children.

Notwithstanding the variety of customs which attends the courtship and matrimony of the Indian tribes, there are several circumstances

relating to this part of their domestic life, as well as to the education of their children, in which they very generally agree.

Divorce is of universal use. In some cases, indeed, the parties are not understood to be married at all, in the Indian sense of the word, until they had lived together several weeks or months by way of experiment!—so lax are their notions of that principle esteemed by all civilized nations the strongest tie which can bind together the hands and hearts of the human race. But, in all cases, the husband is at liberty to put away his wife when he pleases, and the woman may in like manner abandon her husband,—though it rarely happens that she dares to take this step without his assent, or is so situated as to do so to advantage. The marriage-ceremony,—if it can be called such,—is always performed without any vows or promises on either side. It is the understanding, simply, that the parties live together as long as they can do so to their mutual satisfaction.

It should not be supposed, however, that a separation often takes place, nor, especially, an unfeeling desertion of the wife by the husband. On the contrary, she, knowing that it is her in-

terest to satisfy him, exerts herself proportionately, and almost always with success, to be at least useful, if not agreeable. The husband is also under some restraints. It is considered highly dishonorable to forsake a wife upon trifling cause; and particularly, if she has already made him the father of a family. Not a little inconvenience, and perhaps injury, will be endured by either party, before resorting to the rite of divorce. When that event does take place, the children are commonly permitted to choose which of the parents they will continue to live with.

There are very few exceptions to the prevalence of this custom of free separation. Charlevoix mentions one in his account of the ancient Miamies,—among whom, he says, if a wife ran away from her husband, he had a right to cut off her nose, in satisfaction of his wounded honor! The majority of tribes allow him to punish her very severely for those irregularities which it is in her power to commit without deserting his wigwam.

The liberty of marrying any number of wives, according to fancy, and ability to maintain them, is universal, and always has been. This circumstance also tends to make the

woman dependent on the husband, and desirous to please him; for she is well aware that he can always provide himself with a substitute for her own services. He will not, perhaps, even take the trouble to give her notice of his discontent; but, without saying a word, will take his gun, and move off to some other part of the country. This is often his practice, for a week or two, when she has said or done something to offend him, which he will not deign to mention. But in these cases, he very seldom fails to return sooner or later,—especially if he has children at home. The wife, on the other hand, as rarely fails to be, subsequently, more careful than ever to satisfy him. Among some tribes there is a distinction of rank observed among the wives, according to the time of their marriage, and other circumstances; but it is more common for them to treat each other as equals, and to live in tolerable harmony and comfort together in the same lodge.

In reference to some of the customs just mentioned, an aged Indian once said to Mr. Heckewelder, that *his* countrymen not only had a much easier way of getting a wife than the white people, but were much more sure of a good one. 'For,' said he in his broken Eng-

lish,—' White man court,—court,—may be one whole year,—may be two year before he marry! well!—may be he then got *very good* wife—but —may be *not!*—may be *very* cross!—Well now, suppose cross! scold so soon as get awake in the morning! scold until sleep! —all one; he must keep *him!* * White people have law forbidding throwing away wife, be *he* ever so cross! must keep *him* always! Well! how does Indian do?—Indian, when he see industrious Squaw, which he like, he go to *him*, place his two fore-fingers close aside each other, make two look like one—look Squaw in the face—see *him* smile—which all one *he* say, *Yes!* so he take *him* home—no danger *he* be cross! no! no! Squaw know too well what Indian do if *he* cross!—throw *him* away and take another! Squaw love to eat meat! no husband! no meat! Squaw do every thing to please husband! he do the same to please Squaw! live happy!'

The division of the labor of domestic life is another point of very general agreement among the tribes. In the outset, the husband commonly provides a house to live in; a canoe,

* The pronouns in the Indian language have no feminine gender.

axes, hoes and other rude implements of agriculture; and an assortment, greater or less, of dishes, bowls, and other vessels necessary for house-keeping. The woman perhaps has a kettle or two, and some other similar articles of wigwam furniture.

From this time the great duty of the husband is to supply the family with sufficient food and clothing—whether by trapping, fishing, or hunting at large, which is much the most usual mode. His labors to this end are constant and severe. Whether game be abundant or scarce, the lives of all within his wigwam often depend from day to day,—and particularly in the winter season,—on the success of his efforts. Neither river nor swamp, whether shallow or deep, frozen or free from ice, must be an obstacle to his pursuit of the fleet moose or the ferocious bear. When newly married, he takes more than ordinary pains to please his young wife, and convince her of his ability to support her in good style. He rises at break of day, and traverses the forest with his gun in hand, that he may return with a wild turkey or a deer for an early breakfast. This he throws down on the floor of the wigwam, and his duties are discharged for the day.

The women of course have charge of the wigwam itself, where, however, their labor is trifling. There is no scrubbing of the house to be done. Not much is to be washed, and that not often. Nothing requires attention, in the way of cookery, but a single pot or kettle, or perhaps the grinding of a small quantity of corn in a mortar, and baking a cake in the hot ashes.

But in addition to these duties, she always takes upon herself the drudgery of the field, which consists chiefly in a little hoeing, sowing and reaping, and occupies her more or less during about six weeks of the year. In the more southern climates of the continent, this business is not unfrequently made an occasion for a female party and frolic,—somewhat after the fashion of a husking or quilting, as practised among the whites in certain parts of the United States. The labor is thus quickly and easily performed. When it is over, a rude feast is furnished by the person or family for whom the work has been done,—which the husband has taken care beforehand to provide from the woods. After the harvest is gathered, of whatever description it may be, the women have little to do, but get fire-wood and

prepare the daily victuals, until perhaps late in the winter, or early in the spring.

At the latter season, in many sections of the country, commences an important part of their duties, the business of making sugar from the maple-tree. This substance is not only made by some of them, very rich, and as white as Havanna sugar, but is extensively used as a principal article of food. Henry says that he often knew the Lake Indians 'to grow fat' on maple-sugar alone. The following is the description of the mode of manufacture, given by that traveller from his own observation.

A certain part of the maple-woods having been chosen, and which was distant about three miles from the fort, a house, twenty feet long, and fourteen broad, was begun in the morning, and before night made fit for the comfortable reception of eight persons, and their baggage. It was open at top, and had a door at each end, and a fire-place in the middle, running the whole length.

The next day was employed in gathering the bark of white-birch trees, with which to make vessels to catch the wine or sap. The trees were now cut or tapped, and spouts or ducts introduced into the wound. The bark vessels

were placed under the ducts; and, as they filled, the liquor was taken out in buckets and conveyed into reservoirs or vats of moose-skin, each vat containing a hundred gallons. From these they supplied the boilers, of which they had twelve, of from twelve to twenty gal lons each, with fires constantly under them, day and night. While the women collected the sap, boiled it, and completed the sugar, the men were not less busy in cutting wood, making fires, and in hunting and fishing for a general supply of food.

The earlier part of the spring is that best adapted to making maple-sugar. The sap runs only in the day; and it will not run, unless there has been a frost the night before. When, in the morning, there is a clear sun, and the night has left ice of the thickness of a dollar, the greatest quanity is produced.

On the twenty-fifth of April, the labor ended, Henry returned to the fort, carrying with him, as he found by the scales, sixteen hundred weight of sugar. He had, besides, thirty-six gallons of sirup; although during his stay in the woods, the party had consumed three hundred weight.*

* Travels and Adventures.

Mr. Mc'Kenney mentions three families living at Sault de St. Marie, who were in the habit of making together about four tons of sugar during the season, in that vicinity. When considerable pains are taken to make it saleable and ornamental, as well as palatable, it is manufactured into what are called *mococks*.

A mocock is a little receptacle of a basket form, and oval, though without a handle, made of birch bark, with a top sewed on with *wattap*, (the fine roots of the red cedar, split.) The smaller ones are ornamented with porcupines' quills, died red, yellow, and green. These ornamented mococks hold from two to a dozen table spoonfuls of sugar, and are made for presents, or for sale, to the curious. The larger ones, also of birch bark, are not ornamented, and contain from ten to thirty pounds of sugar. This is an article of exchange with those who make it. They give it for labor, for goods, &c., and generally at about ten cents per pound.*

The women frequently have another duty to perform in the event of travelling on a journey, or to hunting-camps with their husbands. In some sections, and at some seasons, horses are

* Tour to the Lakes.

used; and in others, dog-trains; but in the absence of both, the baggage, done up in packs, is invariably carried by the women. It perhaps consists of a blanket; a dressed deer-skin for making mocassins; and a few articles of food and furniture, such as a kettle, a bowl, spoons and a little bread and salt. A common practice is to suspend this burden by a strap or band which passes round the forehead. The women never complain of such drudgery; they know too well that, after wounding a deer, the hunter may be obliged to pursue it for several miles, and that he ought not therefore to be encumbered with a load upon his shoulders. The hunting-camp once set up, she makes herself and her husband as much at home in it as though they had no intention of quitting it finally at the end of a fortnight, and perhaps much sooner. He engages immediately in the chase. She employs herself in drying the meat he brings in, to preserve it,—putting up the tallow,—collecting roots for dyeing or food,—and gathering wild hemp, to be woven into carrying-bands, bags, and strings.

Speaking of the Delawares, and other Indians of Ohio and the Middle States, Mr. Heckewelder, who lived many years among

them, observes,—'There is nothing in an Indian's house or family without its particular owner. Every individual knows what belongs to him, from the horse or cow down to the dog, cat, kitten and little chicken. Parents make presents to their children, and they in return to their parents. A father will sometimes ask his wife or one of his children for the loan of his horse to go out a-hunting. For a litter of kittens or brood of chickens, there are often as many different owners as there are individual animals. In purchasing a hen with her brood, one frequently has to deal for it with several children.' Thus, while the principle of community of goods prevails in the state, the rights of property are acknowledged among the members of a family. This is attended with a very good effect; for by this means every living creature is properly taken care of. It also promotes liberality among the children, which becomes a habit with them by the time they are grown up.

The same author,—speaking of the frequent kindness of the husband to his wife,—says of the same tribes, that an Indian loves to see his wife well clothed, which is a proof that he is fond of her; at least, it is so considered.

While his wife is bartering the skins and peltry he has taken in his hunt, he will seat himself at some distance, to observe her choice, and how she and the traders agree together. When she finds an article which she thinks will suit or please her husband, she never fails to purchase it for him; she tells him that it is *her* choice, and he is never dissatisfied.*

He further states that, when the wife is sick, the husband will frequently undertake a long journey for the purpose of procuring her some trifling article of nourishment which either he or she fancies may be of some benefit. A Delaware, in one instance, went forty or fifty miles for a mess of cranberries.

In the year 1762, there was a scarcity of food at one season among many tribes, which finally resulted in a severe famine. During its prevalence, a sick woman expressed a great desire for a mess of Indian corn. Her husband, learning that an English trader, at a place called Lower Sandusky, had a small quantity in his possession, set off on horseback in that direction. The distance was a hundred miles. Having reached his destination, he gave his horse in exchange for a hat-full of corn; and this, with his

* Historical Account, p. 148.

saddle, he brought home all the way on foot. Generally the hunter can gratify his wife more readily by procuring her ducks, squirrels, and similar dainties; and this, in case of her serious sickness, he seldom hesitates to do.

On the return of an Indian from a journey, or long absence, he will, on entering the house, say, 'I am returned!' to which his wife will answer, 'I rejoice!' and having cast his eyes around, he will inquire whether all the children are well. This being answered in the affirmative, he replies, 'I am glad!' which for the present is all the conversation that passes between them; nor does he relate any thing at this present time that occurred on his journey, but holds himself in readiness to partake of the nourishment which his wife is preparing for him. After a while, when the men of the village have assembled at his house, his wife, with the rest, hears his story at full length.*

Of the domestic treatment of aged people among the Indians, it is sufficient at present to observe, that the tribes differ much from each other in this particular,—as do individuals in the same tribe,—very much, in fact, after the manner of more civilized nations of the earth. In

* Historical Account.

many instances, their respect for the old amounts to a degree of veneration and tenderness which would do no discredit to the most enlightened people; in others, they are too much in the habit of neglecting them.

Their civility to each other, in ordinary intercourse, and especially in the entertainment of strangers, is equally commendable. This frequently escapes the observation of travellers, from a want of familiarity with their language, as well as their manners and customs. 'In more than a hundred instances,'—Mr. Heckewelder says,—'I have with astonishment and delight witnessed the attention paid to a person entering the house of another, where, in the first instance, he is desired to seat himself, with the words, 'sit down my friend!' if he is a stranger, or no relation; but if a relation, the proper title is added. A person is never left standing; there are seats for all; and if a dozen should follow each other in succession, all are provided with seats, and the stranger, if a white person, with the best. The tobacco-pouch next is handed round; it is the first treat, as with us a glass of wine or cider. Without a single word passing between the man and his wife, she will go about preparing some victuals

for the company, and having served the visiters, will retire to a neighbor's house, to inform the family of the visit with which her husband is honored. She never grumbles on account of their eating up the provisions, even if it were what she had cooked for her own family,—considering the friendly visit well worth this small trouble and expense.

It would be impossible to give a very particular account of the Indian mode of educating children, which should apply to any considerable number of tribes. It is, however, generally true, that the parents use little or no bodily punishment. Beating with a stick, especially, is a practice which they rarely adopt but in those cases of violent passion, by no means frequent, when they would be likely to take the same course in respect to a person over whom they had no right of control.

A child learns almost every thing which relates to the duties of a warrior and a hunter from the example of his elders, and from their conversations with each other. Sometimes, however, his parents or other friends take pains to accompany him into the forest, on the occasion of his first attempts in the chase, and to teach him the mysteries of that laborious and

hazardous pursuit. Mr. Tanner, in his Narrative, furnishes an amusing account of his own experience in this department.

At an age when he began to feel something of the common ambition to be a great hunter, he accompanied a party of Ottawas on a winter journey to the Strait between Lake Huron and Michigan. On their return, by water, contrary winds detained them at a point of land running out into one of those Lakes, called Me-nau-ko-king; and here they encamped. Pigeons were found in great numbers in the woods round about; and the young Indians, as well as several white traders who were in company, busied themselves in shooting them. At this time Tanner had not only never killed any game, but never discharged a gun. His Indian mother, Net-no-kwa, however, having in her possession, a keg of powder which she had purchased at Mackinac,—and his father, Taw-ga-we-ninne, an old horseman's pistol,—the little fellow ventured to ask permission to try his luck among the other boys.

The request was seconded by Net-no-kwa, who always treated him with kindness. 'It is time indeed,' she said, 'that our son should begin learning to be a hunter.' Taw-ga-we-ninne

loaded the pistol, and put it into Tanner's hand: —'Go, my Son!'—he observed—'and if you kill any thing with this, you shall immediately have a gun of your own, and learn to hunt.'

Tanner was delighted with this unexpected favor, and he set off for the woods, with all possible diligence, carrying his heavy horse-pistol in his hand. He had gone but a short distance from the camp, when he met with pigeons, and some of them alighted on the bushes very near him. He resolutely cocked his pistol, and raised it to his face, where the breech came almost in contact with his nose. Having brought the sight to bear on the pigeon at which he aimed, he pulled the trigger, and was at the next instant sensible of a humming noise, like that of a stone sent swiftly through the air. He looked around, and found the pistol at the distance of some paces behind him; the pigeon lay under the tree on which it had been sitting. His face was much bruised, and covered with blood; but he ran home in high spirits, carrying his game in his hand. His face was speedily bound up; his pistol exchanged for a fowling-piece; and being then provided with a powder-horn and some shot, he was allowed to go out again after birds. One of the young Indians went

with him, to observe his manner of shooting. He killed three more pigeons in the course of the day, and did not discharge his gun once without killing. 'From this time,' says Tanner, 'I began to be treated with more consideration, and was allowed to hunt often, that I might become expert.' Such is the Indian system of drilling a young hunter.

During the winter succeeding this earliest adventure of Tanner, he was sent to make traps for martens. The first morning he went out early, and spent the whole day. He returned late at night, having made only three traps, although a good hunter would have made twenty-five or thirty. The next morning he visited his three traps, and found but one marten. Thus he continued to do for several days, but his want of success and his awkwardness exposed him to the ridicule of the young men. At length his father began to pity him. 'Come, my son,' he said to him one day, 'I must go and help you to make traps.' They went into the woods together, and the whole day was spent in making a large number of traps. These were given to Tanner, and the little fellow was then able to take as many martens as any boy in the band. His companions, indeed, did not

forget to tell him, now and then, of the assistance he received from his father; but this he cared little for, since he soon became so expert and successful in hunting and trapping, that he was no longer called upon by his mother at home, as he had been, to do the drudgery of a woman about the lodge.

Still, he had something to learn. The next winter after this, when he was now about fourteen years of age, his father having meanwhile deceased, it became his duty to provide food for his mother. He set beaver-traps on the banks of one of those creeks frequented constantly by that cunning animal, in the neighborhood of Red-River, where the Assineboin Indians reside. In his three first traps he found two beavers. Not yet knowing how to take them out alive, he carried home beavers, traps and all upon his shoulders, one at a time. His Indian mother was highly gratified with his success; and she now took part with him, on all occasions, against all who were disposed to annoy him.

When they had remained about three months in this place, the game seemed to be exhausted, and it was proposed to move off farther to the North. The day for moving was fixed upon :

but before it arrived the necessities of the party to which Tanner and his mother were attached, became extreme, and they suffered no little distress from absolute hunger. In this emergency the young hunter undertook to find and kill a bear, which he had never before done. He set off into the woods, alone, taking his gun in his hand, and observing all the precautions which he had noticed in the elder hunters. At length he found a tract of land which had the appearance of having been once covered with a pond. It was a small, round, open place in the woods, now grown up with grass and bushes. As he was crossing it through the snow, he suddenly fell several feet into a cavity, the nature of which he was not able to guess. He crawled out hastily; and it occurred to him, at this moment, that it might be one of those winter-retreats for the bear of which he had heard much said among the hunters. He looked back into the hole which his legs had made, and saw the head of a bear lying close at the bottom of it. He placed the muzzle of his gun nearly between the eyes of the animal, and discharged it. As soon as the smoke cleared away, he eagerly ascertained, by feeling with a stick, that the bear was dead.

He now endeavored to drag him from his hole by the ears; but not finding his strength equal to that task, he returned home by the track he had just travelled. As he approached the camp, an old squaw began to ridicule him. 'Have you killed a bear,' she asked, 'that you come back so soon, and walk so fast?' Tanner thought to himself,—'How does she know that I have killed a bear?'—but he said nothing, and passed on till he entered his mother's lodge, where he sat down, as if to rest himself after a fruitless chase. Presently, seeing her alone, he stepped up to her and whispered,—'Mother, I have killed a bear!'—'What do you say, my son?' she inquired eagerly. 'I have killed a bear,' he repeated. 'Are you sure you have killed him?'—Yes!'—'Quite dead?'—'Dead as can be!'—Here the old woman looked him in the face for a moment very keenly, and then caught him in her arms, hugging and kissing him with great earnestness and for a long time. The bear was sent for, and as being the first which Tanner had killed, was cooked all together; and a feast, according to common custom in similar cases, was provided from it for the hunters of the whole band.

Tanner killed his first elk also in the vicinity

of Assineboin river. He was bringing in, from the woods to the camp, a quantity of dead game, but with his gun at the same time in his hand. Seeing the elk thick about him, he stopped to load it, concealed himself in a thicket of bushes, and began imitating, in the Indian way, the cry of the female elk. Presently a large buck came prancing up so directly to the spot where he was, and with such violence, that Tanner was alarmed for his own safety, and fled, leaving his load behind him. The animal, seeing him, was frightened as much, and turning about, bounded off in another direction. Reflecting that his companions would ridicule him for his cowardice, the young hunter now resolved on another attempt. He hid himself again, in a more secure situation. Here he repeated the elk-cry, till at length another buck came up; and him he succeeded in shooting down. He reached home before night, bearing his game along with him in triumph.

These anecdotes are introduced for the purpose of showing, in the simplest manner, the mode of education generally adopted among the Indians. Whatever the child learns, he learns for the most part from observation of his elders and his comrades. His *pride* is the

spur of his exertions. He soon finds, that success as a hunter will make him respected by his tribe, while ignorance or awkwardness subject him to intolerable ridicule. He listens to every thing that is said of hunting and trapping at home, and eagerly goes abroad with the view of earning some praise for himself. Thus it takes him but few years to acquire a considerable degree of experience; and his reputation always corresponds to his merit.

The same feeling just mentioned is appealed to with equal success in regard to most other branches of an Indian education. It is true, to a great extent, of numerous tribes, as Heckewelder observes respecting the Delawares, that a father needs only to say in the presence of his children: 'I want such a thing done; I want one of my children to go upon such an errand; let me see who is the *good* child that will do it!' This word *good* operates, as it were, by magic, and the children immediately vie with each other to comply with the wishes of their parent. If a father sees an old decrepit man or woman pass by, led along by a child, he will draw the attention of his own children to the object by saying: 'What a *good* child that must be, which pays such attention to

the aged! That child, indeed, looks forward to the time when he will himself be old!' or he will say, 'May the great Spirit, who looks upon him, grant this *good* child a long life!'

In this manner of bringing up children, the parents, adds Heckewelder, are seconded by the whole community. If a child is sent from his father's dwelling to carry a dish of victuals to an aged person, all in the house will join in calling him a *good* child. They will ask whose child he is, and on being told, will exclaim: 'What! has the *Tortoise*, or the *Little Bear* (as the father's name may be) so excellent a child?' If a child is seen passing through the streets leading an old decrepit person, the villagers will, in his hearing, and to encourage all the other children who may be present to take example from him, call on one another to look on and see what a *good* child that must be. And so, in most instances, this method is resorted to for the purpose of instructing children in things that are good, proper, or honorable in themselves; while, on the other hand, when a child has committed a *bad* act, the parent will say to him: 'O! how grieved I am that my child has done this *bad* act! I hope he will never do so again.' This is generally effectual, particularly if said in the

presence of others. The whole of the Indian plan of education tends to elevate rather than depress the mind, and by that means to make determined hunters and fearless warriors.

The engraving represents the manner in which the Indian women of Virginia, and other parts of the Atlantic coast, were accustomed to carry their children in travelling; as also the mode of confining them to a kind of broad frame which answered the purpose of a cradle. Wool, fur, or some other soft material was always put between the child and the board. In this posture it was sometimes kept several months, until the bones began to harden, the joints to knit, and the limbs to grow strong. Of course, it could either be laid flat on its back, set leaning on one end against a wall, or hung up to a tree or peg by a strap fastened to one extremity for that purpose. It will be seen, that the manner of carrying the child in summer compelled him to exercise his limbs in holding on. Something very nearly corresponding to all the customs indicated here, is common at this day among the Indians of the remote North and West. The sketch prefixed to this chapter represents a modern Chippewa woman, carrying her child in the winter season.

The *names* of Indian children are in general given to them after animals of various kinds, and even fishes and reptiles. Thus they are called the *Beaver*, *Otter*, *Sun-fish*, *Black-fish*, *Rattle-snake*, *Black-snake*, &c. They give other descriptive titles, from the personal qualities of the child, or from mere fancy and caprice. In after life others are frequently added on the happening of extraordinary events. Thus a great warrior, who had been impatiently waiting for day-light to engage the enemy, was afterwards called *Cause day-light*, or *Make day-light appear*. So one who had come in with a heavy load of turkeys on his back, was called *The Carrier of Turkeys;* and another whose shoes were generally torn or patched, was called *Bad-Shoes*. All those names are generally expressed in one single word, in compounding which the Indians are very ingenious. Thus, the name they had for the place where Philadelphia now stands, and which they have preserved notwithstanding the great change which has taken place, is *Kúequenáku*,* which means, *The grove of the long pine-trees*.†

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* According to the powers of the English alphabet, it should be written Koo-ek-wen-aw-koo.

† Heckewelder.

In regard to titles, it may be observed in this connexion, that the Indians have proper names, not only for all towns, villages, mountains, valleys, rivers, and streams, but for all remarkable spots, as, for instance, those which are particularly infested with gnats or musquitoes, where snakes have their dens, &c. Those names always contain an allusion to such particular circumstance, so that foreigners, even though acquainted with their language, will often be at a loss to understand their discourse.

To strangers, white men for example, they will give names derived from some remarkable quality which they have observed in them, or from some circumstance which remarkably strikes *them*. When they were told the meaning of the name of William Penn, they translated it into their own language by *Miquon*, which means a feather or quill. The Iroquois called him *Onas*, which in their idiom means the same thing.

The first name given by the Indians to the Europeans who landed in Virginia was *Wapsid Lenape* (white people;) when, however, they afterwards began to commit murders on the red men, whom they pierced with swords, they gave to the Virginians the name *Mechanschicau*,

(long-knives,) to distinguish them from others of the same color.

In New England, they at first endeavored to imitate the sound of the national name of the *English*, which they pronounced *Yengees;* and hence the origin of the common word *Yankee*, now generally applied to the people of this section in every other part of the United States.

CHAPTER VIII.

Anecdotes of Indian HUNTING—Modes of hunting the grizzly bear of the North-West—Of the black or brown bear of the North—Of the beaver—Of the otter—Of the porcupine—Of the rattle-snake—Various superstitions in relation to some of these animals—Travellers' anecdotes of Indian hunting.

The Indians train themselves to hunting from their earliest youth; and it is an exercise

which is esteemed no less honorable, than it is necessary to their subsistence. A cunning and courageous hunter stands second, in the opinion of his countrymen, only to a distinguished warrior.

The Indian is generally indolent; but in hunting, as in war, he becomes active and vigilant. The white man can scarcely credit the accounts given by travellers of the celerity and certainty with which the savage follows the scarcely discernible footsteps of a wild beast in the forest, or of the shrewdness with which he contrives to kill or capture, after overtaking the object of his chase.

Mr. Heckewelder speaks of a white man who unfortunately, at his camp in a dark night, shot an Indian dog, mistaking it for a wolf which had the night before entered the encampment and eaten up all the meat. The dog, mortally wounded, having returned to the Indian camp at the distance of a mile, caused much grief and uneasiness to the owner,—the more so as he suspected the act had been committed from malice towards the Indians. He was ordered to inquire into the matter; and the white man, being brought before him, candidly confessed that he had killed the dog, believing it to be a wolf. The Indian asked him whether he could not discern the difference between the 'steps' or trampling of a wolf and that of a dog, let the night be ever so dark? The white answered in the negative, and said he believed

no man alive could do that; on which the whole company burst out into laughter at the ignorance of the whites, and their want of skill in so plain and common a matter, and the delinquent was freely forgiven.

The modes of Indian hunting are as various as the wit of man could devise. When the hunter *pursues* his game, (instead of *trapping* it,) the more common practice is for each man to go by himself, his object being simply his own sustenance, and the support of his family. Hunting-parties are however formed, either for the sake of occasional amusement, as among the whites;—or when the sufferings of a band from hunger become so desperate that a desperate effort must be made for relief;—or lastly, when the game in view is of such a character, in respect to its ferocity or numbers, that a party can accomplish much more, proportionately, in pursuit of it, than a single adventurer.

The grizzly bear* of the North-West belongs to the class last named. This animal is so powerful and so fierce, that for one man to attack him would be considered an act of madness. As he roams at large, indeed, the Indian seldom has the hardihood to pursue him with

* See cut prefixed to this chapter.

the expectation of maintaining a pitched battle. He tracks him to his hiding-place, which is generally in the hollow at the roots of a large tree. He then gives notice to his companions. A considerable party is collected, and equipped with well-prepared arms; and these either lay wait till the enemy again ventures to look forth from his retreat, or perhaps find means to kill him in his den.

So also the common black bear of the North is often hunted by a party, who, having arrived at the place where he is supposed to conceal himself, form themselves into a circle according to their number; and moving onward, endeavor, as they advance towards the centre, to discover the retreat of their prey. Thus, if any lie in the intermediate space, they are sure of arousing them. This kind of bear generally takes to flight on seeing either a man or a dog, but is frightfully ferocious in attack, or after being wounded.

Tanner once killed an old she-bear which was perfectly white, but was in all other respects, like the common black bear. She had four cubs; one white, like herself, with red eyes and red nails; one brown, and two black. The old one being quite 'tame,' as he says,

he killed her without difficulty. He shot two of the cubs also in the hole, while the other two made their escape into a tree.

The next day he chased a black bear into a low poplar-tree. Having a poor gun, he shot at her fifteen times ineffectually, and was finally obliged to climb into the tree, and place the muzzle close to the animal's head, before he could bring her down. Soon afterwards, he started, at the same moment, an elk and three young bears, the latter running into a tree. He shot at the young bears, and two of them fell. Supposing they might be only wounded, he ran forward to despatch them, when, as he had nearly reached the root of the tree, out rushed the old she-bear, jumping along in the opposite direction. She caught up the cub which had fallen nearest to her, and raising it with her paw,—while she stood on her hind feet holding it as a woman holds a child,—she looked at it for a moment, and smelled the ball-hole in its breast. Finding it dead, she dashed it down, and leaped forward towards Tanner, gnashing her teeth, and walking so erect, that her head was as high as his. All this was so sudden that he had scarcely reloaded his gun,—although a well-bred hunter, after discharging

his piece, thinks of nothing else till he has reloaded it. It *was* loaded, however; and, having just time to raise and discharge it as the animal came within reach of the muzzle, he laid her prostrate at his feet.

With this same gun, he killed, in the course of a month, twenty-four bears, besides ten moose, and other small game. One night, when he had made his camp under a grove of trees which stood in the midst of a wide plain, his Indian mother either dreamed of a bear being found close to the camp, or pretended that she did so, for the sake of encouraging Tanner. She told him such a story, at all events; and very likely she had seen some traces of such an animal, which she did not choose to mention. Tanner however searched for him the next morning, and found him in his hole. He shot him; and then waiting a moment for the smoke to clear away, rather rashly, as he saw him lying flat at the bottom, he went down head-foremost to drag him out. As his own body partly filled the hole, and excluded the light, he did not perceive that the animal was alive, until he laid his hand on him. The bear turned up, and sprang towards him. He retreated as fast as possible, while, all the way,

the creature was snapping his teeth so near him that he felt his breath warm on his face. Tanner caught his gun up as he leaped from the mouth of the den; and as soon as he thought he had gained distance enough, he fired behind him, broke the bear's jaw, and then soon succeeded in killing him. After this adventure, he was extremely cautious,—as a practised Indian hunter always is,—about crawling into bears' holes, while the animals were still alive.

The dog was of great service to Tanner, as to the Indians he generally is, in hunting this powerful animal. In one of his rencounters with a stout bear, he had three dogs with him; the youngest and smallest of which, having rather more valor than discretion, passed Tanner and the other dogs, and immediately assailed the enemy's head without ceremony. The enraged bear almost instantly killed him, caught him up in his mouth, and carried him more than a mile, before he was himself overtaken and shot down.

The Nootkas of the North-West coast have the following singular mode of *entrapping* the bear. On the edge of a small stream of water in the mountains, which the salmon ascend, and near the spot where the bear is accustomed to watch for them, which is known by its track, a

trap or box about the height of a man's head is built of posts and planks, with a flat top, on which are laid a number of large stones or rocks. The top and sides are then carefully covered with turf, so as to resemble a little mound, and wholly to exclude the light, a narrow entrance of the height of the building only being left, just sufficient to admit the head and shoulders of the beast. On the inside, to a large plank that covers the top, is suspended by a strong cord a salmon, the plank being left loose so that a forcible pull will bring it down. On coming to its usual haunt, the bear enters the trap, and in endeavoring to pull away the fish, brings down the whole covering with its load of stones upon its head, and is almost always crushed to death on the spot, or so wounded as to be unable to escape.*

This bear is at no time insignificant game, but among some tribes there is a peculiar pride felt, even to this day, in killing him. This is supposed to arise from an ancient tradition which these tribes preserve of a very formidable kind of bear, called the *naked bear*, which they say once existed, but was at length entirely exterminated by their ancestors. Mr. Hecke-

* Jewett's Narrative.

welder relates, that a Delaware hunter once shot a huge bear and broke its back-bone. The animal fell, and set up a most plaintive cry, something like that of the panther when he is hungry. The hunter, instead of giving him another shot, stood up close to him, and addressed him in these words: 'Hark ye! bear; you are a coward, and no warrior, as you pretend to be. Were you a warrior, you would show it by your firmness, and not cry and whimper like an old woman. You know, bear, that our tribes are at war with each other, and that yours was the aggressor.* You have found the Indians too powerful for you, and you have gone sneaking about in the woods, stealing their hogs; perhaps at this very time you have hog's flesh in your den. Had you conquered me, I would have borne it with courage, and died like a brave warrior; but you, bear, sit here and cry, and disgrace your tribe by your cowardly conduct.' Heckewelder heard the delivery of this curious invective. When the hunter had despatched the

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* Probably alluding to a tradition which the Indians have of a very ferocious kind of bear, called the *naked bear*, which they say once existed, but was totally destroyed by their ancestors. The last was killed in the State of New York, at a place they called *Hoosink*, which means the *Basin*, or more properly the *Kettle*.

bear, he asked him how he thought that poor animal could understand what he said to it? 'Oh!' said he in answer, 'the bear understood me very well; did you not observe how *ashamed* he looked while I was upbraiding him?'

At another time the same gentleman witnessed a similar scene between the falls of the Ohio and the river Wabash. A young white man, named *William Wells*,* who had been when a boy taken prisoner by a tribe of the Wabash Indians, by whom he was brought up, and had imbibed all their notions, had so wounded a large bear that he could not move from the spot; and the animal cried as piteously as the one we have just mentioned. The young man went up to him, and with seemingly great earnestness, addressed him in the Wabash language, now and then giving him a slight stroke on the nose with his ram-rod. He was asked, when he had done, what he had been saying to the bear? 'I have,' said he, 'upbraided him for acting the part of a coward; I told him that he knew the fortune of war, that one or the other of us must have fallen; that it was his fate to be conquered,

* The same whom Mr. de Volney speaks of in his excellent 'View of the Soil and Climate of United States.' Supplement, No. VI. Heckewelder.

and he ought to die like a man, like a hero, and not like an old woman; that if the case had been reversed, and I had falled into the power of my *enemy*, I would not have disgraced my nation as he did, but would have died with firmness and courage, as becomes a true warrior.'*

The traveller, Henry, gives a curious anecdote of a bear-hunt in which he took part with some Chippewas. He, and the party to which he belonged, had encamped in the woods, for the purpose of hunting. While here, in the course of the month of January, he happened to observe that the trunk of a very large pine-tree was much torn by the claws of a bear, made both in going up and down. On further examination, he saw that there was a large opening, in the upper part, near which the smaller branches were broken. From these marks, and from the additional circumstance, that there were no tracks on the snow, there was reason to believe that a bear lay concealed in the tree.

On returning to the lodge, he communicated his discovery; and it was agreed that all the family should go together, in the morning, to assist in cutting down the tree, the girth of which was not less than twenty feet. The women,

* Historical Account.

at first, opposed the undertaking, because the axes, being only of a pound and a half weight, were not well adapted to so heavy a labor; but the hope of finding a large bear, and obtaining from its fat a great quantity of oil, an article at the time much wanted, at length prevailed.

'In the morning,' adds Henry, 'we surrounded the tree, both men and women, as many at a time as could conveniently work at it; and here we toiled, like beavers, till the sun went down. This day's work carried us about half way through the trunk; and the next morning we renewed the attack, continuing it till about two o'clock, in the afternoon, when the tree fell to the ground. For a few minutes, every thing remained quiet, and I feared that all our expectations were disappointed; but, as I advanced to the opening, there came out, to the great satisfaction of all our party, a bear of extraordinary size, which, before she had proceeded many yards, I shot.

The bear being dead, all my assistants approached, and all, but more particularly my old mother, (as I was wont to call her,) took his head in their hands, stroking and kissing it several times; begging a thousand pardons for taking away her life; calling her their relation

and grand-mother; and requesting her not to lay the fault upon them, since it was truly an Englishman that had put her to death.

This ceremony was not of long duration; and if it was I that killed their grand-mother, they were not themselves hehind-hand in what remained to be performed. The skin being taken off, we found the fat in several places six inches deep. This, being divided into two parts, loaded two persons; and the flesh-parts were as much as four persons could carry. In all, the carcass must have exceeded five hundred weight.

As soon as we reached the lodge, the bear's head was adorned with all the trinkets in the possession of the family, such as silver arm-bands and waist-bands, and belts of wampum; and then laid upon a scaffold, set up for its reception, within the lodge. Near the nose, was placed a large quantity of tobacco.

The next morning no sooner appeared, than preparations were made for a feast to the *manes*. The lodge was cleaned and swept; and the head of the bear lifted up, and a new stroud blanket, which had never been used before, spread under it. The pipes were now lit; and Wawatam blew tobacco-smoke into the nostrils of the bear,

telling me to do the same, and thus appease the animal's anger, on account of my having killed her. I endeavored to persuade my benefactor and friendly adviser, that she no longer had any life, and assured him that I was under no apprehension from her displeasure; but the first proposition obtained no credit, and the second gave but little satisfaction.

At length, the feast being ready, Wawatam commenced a speech, resembling, in many things, his address to the manes of his relations and departed companions; but, having this peculiarity, that he here deplored the necessity under which men labored, thus to destroy their *friends*. He represented, however, that the misfortune was unavoidable, since without doing so, they could by no means subsist. The speech ended, we all ate heartily of the bear's flesh; and even the head itself, after remaining three days on the scaffold, was put into the kettle.'*

Mr. Henry observes, that it is only the female bear that makes her winter lodging in the upper parts of trees, a practice by which her young are secured from the attacks of wolves and other animals. She brings forth in the

* Travels and Adventures. 1764.

winter-season; and remains in her lodge till the cubs have gained some strength.

The male always lodges in the ground, under the roots of trees. He chooses this habitation as soon at the snow falls, and remains there till it has disappeared. The Indians remark, that the bear comes out in the spring with the same fat which he carried in, in the autumn; but, after exercise of only a few days, becomes lean. Excepting for a short part of the season, the male lives constantly alone.

The fat of Henry's bear was melted down, and the oil filled six porcupine-skins.* A part of the meat was cut into strips, and fire-dried, after which it was put into the vessels containing the oil, where it remained in perfect preservation until the middle of summer.

At the present day there is not much regard paid by the Indians to that idea of relationship with some of the wild animals to which both Heckewelder and Henry refer. Not many of them take pains even to apologize for killing their old friend, the bear. The same is true as to the rabit and the tortoise.

Henry found that the Indians, for some

* See some account of this animal at the close of this chapter.

reason, paid great respect to the rattle-snake, (whom they called their *grandfather*) and would on no account destroy it. 'One day,' he says, 'as I was walking with an Indian on the banks of the Muskingum, I saw a large rattle-snake lying across the path, which I was going to kill. The Indian immediately forbade my doing so; for, said he, the rattle-snake is grandfather to the Indians, and is placed here on purpose to guard us, and to give us notice of impending danger by his rattle, which is the same as if he were to tell us "look about!" Now, added he, if we were to kill one of those, the others would soon know it, and the whole race would rise upon us and bite us. I observed to him that the white people were not afraid of this; for they killed all the rattle-snakes that they met with. On this he inquired whether any white man had been bitten by those animals, and of course I answered in the affirmative. "No wonder, then;" replied he, "you have to blame yourselves for that! you did as much as declaring war against them, and you will find them in *your* country, where they will not fail to make frequent incursions. They are a very dangerous enemy; take care you do not irritate them in *our* country; they and their grandchildren

are on good terms, and neither will hurt the other."

This superstition also extended to the Northern Indians. Henry relates that, on one occasion, when he was gathering wood for a fire, while the Indians in company with him were setting up a camp, he heard an unusual sound. As it presently ceased, and he saw nothing which could give rise to it, he continued his employment, until, advancing farther into the bushes, he was startled by a repetition of the same noise. He imagined that it came from over his head, but saw nothing in that direction. He then cast his eyes about him on the ground, and soon discovered a rattle-snake, not more than two feet distant from his own naked legs,—coiled, and with its head raised in a threatening attitude considerably above its body. Had he advanced another step before his discovery, he must have trodden upon the reptile.

He instantly ran back to procure a gun from his canoe, but the Indians now observing what he was doing, inquired the occasion. He told them, and they begged him to desist. At the same time they followed him to the spot, with their pipes and tobacco-pouches in their hands, and the snake was found there, still coiled.

They surrounded it, and addressed it by turns, calling it their '*Grand-Father;*' but yet keeping at a prudent distance. Having meanwhile filled their pipes, each one now blew his smoke towards the snake, which, as Henry thought, really seemed to be pleased with the attention. After receiving this savory incense for nearly half an hour, it stretched itself along the ground, four or five feet, and moved slowly away. The Indians followed it, still calling it *Grand-Father*, and beseeching it to take care of their families during their absence.

One of the chiefs added a petition, that the snake would take no notice of the insult which had been offered him by the Englishman, who would even have put him to death, but for the interference of the Indians, to whom it was hoped he would impute no part of the offence. They further requested, that he would remain, and inhabit their country, and not return among the English; that is, go eastward.

The traveller's party having embarked on the lake the same evening in their canoes, and being encountered by high winds, were much alarmed. From prayers, the Indians now proceeded to sacrifices, both alike offered to the god-rattlesnake, or *manito-kinibic*. One of

the chiefs took a dog, and after tying its fore legs together, threw it overboard, at the same time calling on the snake to preserve them from being drowned, and desiring him to satisfy his hunger with the carcass of the dog. The snake was unpropitious, and the wind increased. Another chief sacrificed another dog, with the addition of some tobacco. In the prayer which accompanied these gifts, he besought the snake, as before, not to avenge upon the Indians the insult which he had received from Henry, in the conception of a design to put him to death. He assured the snake, Henry was absolutely an Englishman, and of kin neither to him nor to them. The traveller had some apprehension, from hints dropped by several of the company, that they would sacrifice his own life to appease the rattle-snake; but fortunately the storm finally abated, and they reached an island in safety.

That kind of hunting and trapping of which the *beaver* is the object, is perhaps of all other kinds, the most extensively profitable to the Indians, since in exchange for its fur many of them and particularly the Northern tribes procure the most indispensable stores from the whites. All the winter, from November to April, these

animals may be found in the places which they commonly frequent; and at this season, the fur, so much esteemed by all civilized nations, is in its greatest perfection.

They are never taken without extreme caution on the part of the hunter. The eyes of the beaver are remarkably quick and keen, and his hearing equally acute; and their houses being always built close to the side of a river, creek, or lake, or to dams of their own curious construction, upon the slightest alarm they hasten to the deepest part of the water, and dive immediately to the bottom. What makes it worse for the pursuer, each one, as he does this, makes a great noise by beating the water with his tail, which serves, it would seem, to put all his companions on their guard.

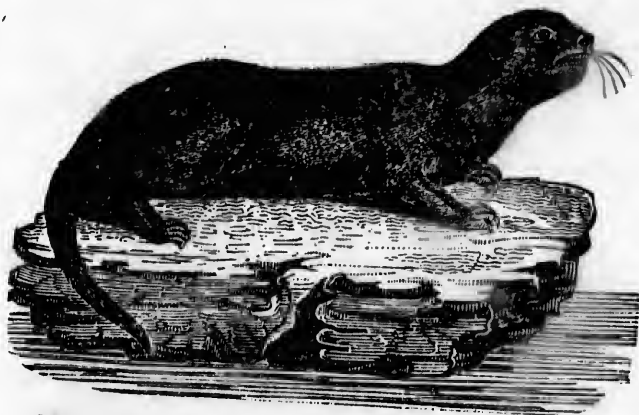
They are, however, taken in snares. They usually lay up a store of provisions, sufficient to subsist them during the winter, but from time to time make excursions into the woods round about their dams, to procure farther supplies. The hunters, knowing this practice, place in their path a rudely-constructed trap, baited with small pieces of bark, or young shoots of trees. These the beaver has no sooner laid hold of, than a large log of wood falls upon him, and cripples him, when his enemies soon appear and complete the victory.

At other times, when the ice on the rivers and lakes is about half a foot thick, the hunter makes an opening through it with his hatchet. To this the beavers will soon hasten, on being disturbed at their houses, for a supply of fresh air. As their breath occasions considerable motion in the water, the hunter has sufficient notice of their approach; and measures are easily taken for knocking them on the head the moment they appear above the surface.

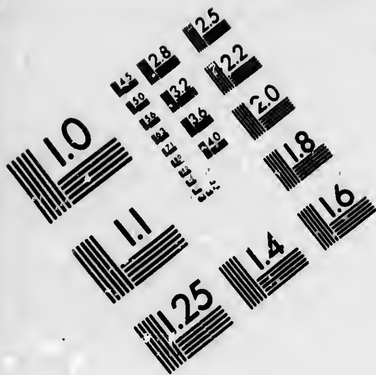
When the beavers' houses happen to be near a rivulet, they are more easily destroyed. The hunter cuts holes in the ice, and spreads a strong net under it. He then breaks down the cabins of the animal, who never fails to make

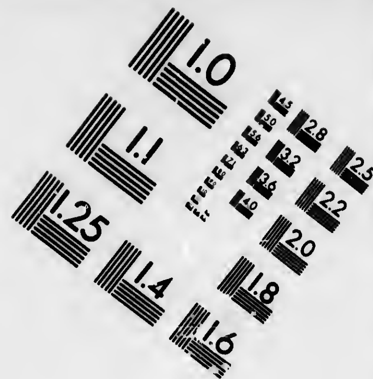
his escape to the deepest part, where he is entangled in the net and taken.

There has been a time when the beaver also, was an object of veneration. The Indians would not suffer dogs to touch their bones, for fear the *spirits* of the animals, exasperated by the insult, should render the next hunting-season unsuccssful.



The otter is another animal much esteemed by the Northern Indians for its fur. It is both hunted and trapped. Its strongest peculiarity is its toughness. Tanner often heard the savages say, that the stoutest man, without arms of some kind, could not kill one. He doubted this for a long time; but one day seeing an otter some distance out on the ice of a lake,





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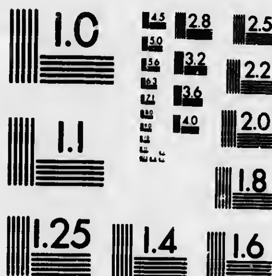

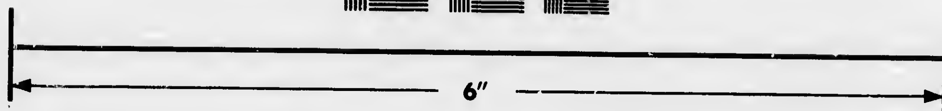

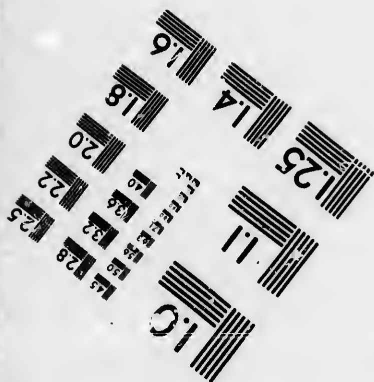

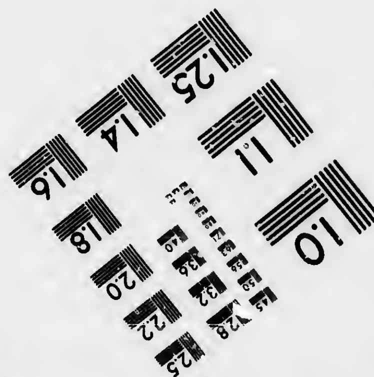

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in the winter, he concluded to try the experiment. He caught the animal, and for the space of nearly an hour, exerted himself, with his utmost strength, to kill him. He beat him, and kicked him, and jumped upon him; but all to no purpose. He tried to strangle him with his hands; but after lying still a little while, he would shorten his neck, and draw his head down between Tanner's hands, so that the breath would pass through. In fine, he was compelled at length to acknowledge, that he could not kill this sturdy antagonist without arms.

The porcupine is killed with more ease, and is so easily come up with, especially, that nothing like hunting can be said to be necessary, although the flesh of the animal is often eaten by the Indians, and is said to be very good.

The stupidity of the porcupine is no less proverbial with hunters than the hardihood of the animal last named.

When he is feeding, in the night-time, along the bank of a river, the hunter who passes by him with his canoe, sometimes raises some of the animal's food on the end of his paddle and holds it to his nose, without his ever perceiving the presence of a man. The porcupine has no protection but his quills. These indeed answer such a purpose that dogs can very seldom be induced to attack him; and when they do so, they are likely to feel much the worse for it a long time

CHAPTER IX.

HUNTING continued—Mode of hunting the racoon—Anecdotes of deer-hunting in ancient times—The deer hunted by the wolf—Anecdotes of moose, rein-deer, and elk-hunting—Practises of the Dog-Rib and other Indians of the North—Of the Penobscots and other more Southern tribes—Hunting among the Rocky Mountains.

The racoon is also much hunted by the Indians for its fur. This animal, we are told by Henry, goes abroad in the evening; and that traveller was accustomed to hunt for him at

that time. The dog is of great service in this case. The moment he falls on the fresh track of a racoon, he gives notice by a cry, and immediately commences a vigorous chase, his noise enabling his master to follow him. The racoon, travelling rather slowly, is soon over-

taken, and resorts to a tree, where he is shot. The track we have spoken of is easily discerned on the snow. During the winter, the racoon rarely leaves his habitation, and has only to be traced to it, in order to be killed. It will live weeks at this season without food, and several are sometimes found in the hollow of one tree, lying upon each other nearly in a torpid state.*

In ancient times various species of that beautiful animal, the deer, abounded in all parts of North America. The Indians of New England used to take them in traps as well as hunt them. Roger Williams says,—'When a Deere is caught by the leg in a Trap, sometimes there it lies by a day together before the Indian comes, and so falls a prey to the ranging Wolfe, who seizeth upon him and robs the Indian of neere half his prey. And if the Indian come not the sooner, hee makes a second greedie Meele, and leaves him nothing but the bones and the torne Skin, especially if he call some of his greedie companions to his bloodie Banquet.'

But the wolf has his evil day, too. For, 'upon this, the Indian makes a falling trap,

* Henry.

with a great weight of stones, and sometimes Knocks the Wolfe on the head with a gaineful revenge, especially if it be a blacke Wolfe, whose Skins they greatly prize.' Mr. Williams tells another story of *a wolf running down a deer*, till he at length tired him out at the end of ten miles, seized upon him, and killed him. As he was making a comfortable meal on the poor animal, two large ferocious English swine, which were running loose in the woods, came up. They boldly assaulted the wolf, and fairly drove him from the field; and then leisurely refreshed themselves with the relics of the savory game which they owed to his industry and science in hunting.

Of all the species of deer which belong to this continent, the Indian hunters consider the moose the shyest, and most difficult to take or kill. Their sense of hearing and the keenness of their smell are both extraordinary; and these render it almost impossible to approach them under ordinary circumstances. The Indians attempt it by creeping among the trees and bushes, always keeping to leeward of the animal, so as to give him no advantage. In the most violent storm, when the wind, the thunder, and the crash of falling trees, fill the forest

with uproar, if the hunter, with his foot or hand, breaks but the smallest dry limb, the moose will hear it. He ceases browsing, raises his nostrils, and snuffs the breeze. If in the course of an hour, perhaps, the man neither moves, nor makes the least noise of any kind, he may begin to feed again; but for a long time afterwards he continues even shyer than before.

If he commences running, the prospect of taking him is well nigh desperate; for the moose is one of the swiftest animals. He throws his horns back towards his neck, elevates his nose, and dashes away with almost the fleetness of the wind itself. In running over a plain country, in particular, this is the case; and that notwithstanding the gait of the moose is nothing better than a kind of long shambling trot. While running in this manner his hoofs, which (like his legs) are remarkably long, separate as they press the ground, and close together as they are raised, with a clattering sound which may be heard at a considerable distance.*

To overtake this animal, although both ten-

* We acknowledge our great obligations, throughout these chapters on hunting, to the excellent *Natural History* of Mr Godman: Also to Mr. Neagle, for a generous permission to copy his Indian portraits in that work. See Frontispiece, Vol. II.

der-footed and short-breathed, the hunter is obliged to practise all his ingenuity, and to depend much upon favorable accidents, at the best. Sometimes he is lucky enough to find the object of his pursuit entangled, by his lofty and branching antlers, in the thick vines or underbrush of the woods. Sometimes they are killed in the act of crossing a stream, or in swimming from the shore to an island. The traveller, Hearne, says, that when pursued in this manner, they are the most inoffensive of all animals; they make no resistance, and the young ones are so simple, that an Indian will paddle his canoe up to one of them, and take him by the ears without opposition;—'the poor harmless animal, seeming, at the same time, as contented alongside the canoe as if swimming by the side of its dam, and looking up into our faces with the same fearless innocence that a house-lamb would.'

The same writer gives some instances of their being entirely tamed. He says, that in 1777, an Indian had two young ones so tame, that when, on his passage up and down one of the northern rivers in a canoe, they both followed him along the bank like a span of dogs. When he landed, they came about him, and

fondled on him and the other Indians as quietly as a lamb, and never offered to stray from the camp.

It is in summer-time that the moose is looked for by the hunter in the neighborhood of ponds and streams. They resort much at that season to low and swampy grounds, that, in wading through them, they may be relieved from the annoyance of insects. They are also seen wading out from the shores, for the purpose of feeding on water-plants which rise to the surface of the water. The hunter knows that they regularly frequent the same place in order to drink, and he avails himself of that circumstance to lie in wait and despatch them. As many as eight or ten pairs of horns have been picked up together at their drinking-places.*

But even when the moose is surprised in the water,—which the Indians consider a great point gained,—they do not always succeed in overtaking or killing him. He has, or at least is thought to have, the power of remaining under water for a long time. Tanner tells a story of two Indians, (considered honest men as well as good hunters,) who, on one occasion, after a long day's hunt, came home with the following

* Godman.

statement. They said they had chased a moose nto a small pond. They saw him reach about the middle of it, and he then disappeared. Choosing positions from which they could observe every point in the circumference of the pond, they began smoking, and so waited patiently until near evening. During all this time they could perceive no motion of the water, nor any thing else which indicated the situation of the moose. Discouraged at length, they abandoned the hope of taking him, and returned homeward. Presently after came along a solitary hunter, with a load of game on his shoulders. He reported, that having followed the track of a moose for some distance, he finally traced it to the pond above mentioned; but having also observed the tracks of two men, made at the same time with those of the animal, he concluded that they must have killed it. Nevertheless, approaching very cautiously to the margin of the pond, he sat down to rest. Presently, he saw the moose rise slowly in the centre of the pond, which was not very deep, and wade towards the shore where he was sitting; when he came sufficiently near, he shot him in the water.—No doubt the animal in this case found some means of breathing at the surface of the water.

During the winter the moose, in families of fifteen or twenty, seek the depths of the forest for shelter and food. Such a herd will range throughout an extent of about five hundred acres, browsing upon tree-mosses, or the tender branches of saplings, especially of the kind called moose-wood. The Indians name a part of the forest thus occupied a *moose-yard*.

In some latitudes, this animal is generally hunted in the month of March. The snow is then deep, and sufficiently crusted with ice to bear the weight of a dog, although not that of a heavier animal. Five or six hunters, carrying with them food for as many days, and the necessary materials for setting up a camp at night-fall, set out in search of a moose-yard. When they have discovered one, they collect their dogs, and encamp for the night, in order to be ready to commence the chase at an early hour, before the sun softens the crust upon the snow. At day-break the dogs are set on, and the hunters, wearing large snow-shoes, following as closely as possible. As soon as the dogs approach a moose, they assail him on all sides, and force him to attempt his escape by flight. He does not, however, proceed very far, before the snow-crust, through which he breaks at every

step, cuts his legs so severely, that the poor animal is obliged to give up the hope of avoiding his pursuers. He stands *at bay*, flourishes his head furiously, and endeavors to defend himself against the dogs by striking at them with his fore feet. By this time the hunters come up, and a ball from a rifle puts a speedy end to the contest.*

Moose are occasionally taken in this manner, at the present day, by the Penobscots and other Indians as far south as the central sections of the State of Maine. They were once numerous throughout New England. In Nova Scotia, the Isle of Breton, the territory round Hudson's bay, and other tracts in the same latitude, they are still found in considerable numbers. The flesh of the animal is excellent food, and the tongue and a certain part of the nose are accounted a rare treat. The flavor is doubtless owing partly to the food of the moose, which consists mostly of buds, mosses, aquatic plants, and tender leaves and twigs. The horns, which are sometimes nearly three feet in length,† and of the weight of fifty pounds, are wrought into spoons, scoops, heads for weapons of war, and other implements of common use. The skin is

* Godman and Charlevoix.

† See Frontispiece, Vol. II.

used for clothing and tent-covers. It is prepared, like the skin of the common deer, which is still more valuable, by stripping off first the hair and fleshy matter, and then rubbing it for a long time with a lather made of the brains of the animal, until it becomes soft, spongy and flexible. Those of the white people who wear gloves, know, quite as well as the Indians, the value of this useful preparation.

The North American Indians have never profited by the docility of the *rein-deer*, (in Canada and Maine called the *Caribou*,) as the Laplanders and other northern nations have, to aid them as a beast of burden—the deer-sledge being a thing unknown upon our continent.

They, however, hunt the animal to a very considerable extent, in the higher latitudes of British America, as well for its flesh as its hide and horns. Its ordinary weight is about one hundred and fifty pounds; and as a herd, migrating northward or southward at the different seasons, sometimes numbers more than one thousand, the pursuit of them is an object of more than usual importance.

The hunter is, in the first place, familiar with their seasons of travelling. He knows that their great movement northward commonly begins towards the end of April, when the snow first melts from the sides of the hills; and that they are found on the bank of the great Copper-Mine River, for instance, early in May, when a good deal of the ground is clear of snow. They linger in the neighborhood of the sea coast through the summer, sometimes as late as October, and then commence a return-journey for their winter retreats in the southern woods. The Indians have also remarked, that there are certain places which they invariably visit in the course of these migrations to and from the coast; as also that they never fail to travel against the wind.

Mr. Hearne furnishes the following account

of the modes of surprising this cunning animal which are adopted by the Indian hunters of the higher latitudes.

'When they design to impound a deer,' he says, 'they look out for one of the paths in which a number of them have trod, and which is observed to be still frequented by them. When these paths cross a lake, a wide river, or a barren plain, they are found to be much the best for the purpose; and if the path run through a cluster of woods, capable of affording materials for building the pound, it adds considerably to the commodiousness of the situation. The pound is built by making a strong fence of brushy trees, without observing any degree of regularity, and the work is continued to any extent, according to the pleasure of the builders. I have seen some that were not less than a mile round, and am informed that there are others still more extensive. The door or entrance of the pound is not larger than a common gate, and the inside is so crowded with small counter hedges as very much to resemble a maze, in every opening of which they set a snare made with thongs of parchment, deer-skins, &c. twisted together, which are amazingly strong. One end of the snare is

usually made fast to a growing pole; but if no one of sufficient size can be found near the place where the snare is set, a loose pole is substituted, which is always of such size and length, that a deer cannot drag it far before it gets entangled among the other woods, which are all left standing, except what is found necessary for making the fence, hedges, &c.

'The pound being thus prepared, a row of small brushwood is stuck up in the snow on each side the door or entrance, and these hedge-rows are continued along the open part of the lake, river or plain, where neither stick nor stump besides is to be seen. These poles or brushwood are generally placed at the distance of fifteen or twenty yards from each other, and ranged in such a manner as to form two sides of a long acute angle, growing gradually wider in proportion to the dimensions of the pound, which is sometimes not less than two or three miles, while the deer-path is exactly along the middle, between the two rows of brushwood.

'Indians employed on this service always pitch their tent on or near to an eminence that affords a commanding prospect of the path leading to a pound; and when they see any

deer going that way, men, women and children, walk along the lake or river-side, under cover of the woods, until they get behind them, then step forth to open view, and proceed towards the pound in the form of a crescent. The poor timorous deer, finding themselves pursued, and at the same time taking the two rows of bushy poles to be two ranks of people stationed to prevent their passing on either side, run straight forward in the path till they get into the pound. The Indians then close in, and block up the entrance with some brushy trees that have been cut down and lie at hand for that purpose. The deer being thus enclosed, the women and children walk round the pound to prevent them from jumping over the fence, while the men are employed in spearing such as are entangled in the snares, and shooting with bows and arrows those which remain loose in the pound.'

Captain Franklin, in his 'Narrative of a Journey to the shore of the Polar Sea,' relates, in addition to these particulars, that the herds of deer are attended in their migrations by bands of wolves, which destroy a great many of them. The Copper Indians kill the deer in summer with a gun; or else, taking advantage of a favor

able disposition of the ground, they enclose a herd upon a neck of land, and drive them into a lake, where they fall an easy prey. At some seasons they take them with snares, which are simple nooses formed in a rope made of twisted sinew. These are placed in the aperture of a slight hedge, constructed of the branches of trees,—and so composed as to form several winding compartments, in which the deer, once entered, finds himself confined. He is led into the entrance by two converging rows of poles. The hunter, too, lying in ambush, stabs some of them, and shoots others as they pass in; and in the end, not unfrequently secures them all in his enclosure. The Copper Indians find that a white dress attracts them, most readily; and, they often succeed in bringing them within gun-shot by kneeling and swinging the gun from side to side, in imitation of the motions of a deer's horns when he is in the act of rubbing his head against a stone.

The Dog-Rib tribe have a still simpler mode of killing this animal. The hunters go in pairs, —the foremost man carrying in one hand the skin of a deer's head, and in the other a small bundle of twigs, against which he occasionally rubs the horns, imitating the gestures peculiar

to the animal. His comrade follows, treading exactly in his footsteps, and holding the guns of both in a horizontal position, so that the muzzles project under the arms of him who carries the head. Both hunters have a fillet of white skin round their foreheads, and the foremost has a strip of the same kind round his wrists. They approach the herd by degrees,—raising their legs very slowly, but setting them down rather suddenly, after the manner of a deer; and the two always taking care to lift their right or left feet at the same moment. If any of the herd leave off feeding to gaze at them, they instantly stop, and the disguised head begins to play its part by licking its shoulders, and performing other movements proper to complete the deception. Thus the hunters reach the very centre of the herd without exciting suspicion. Here they have an opportunity to single out the fattest. The hindmost man of the pair then pushes forward his comrade's gun; the head is dropped; and they both fire nearly at the same instant. The herd scampers off; the hunters trot after them; in a short time the poor animals halt, to ascertain the cause of their error; their foes stop also, and having already loaded as they ran, meet

the herd with a second discharge. The deer, completely staggered, now push to and fro in the utmost confusion, and sometimes a great part of them are thus destroyed in the space of a few hundred yards.*

The elk is a highly valued species of the deer, still occasionally seen so near the Atlan-

tic coast as the settled sections of Pennsylvania. But the number is small there; and it is only in the wilds of the West and North-West, to about the 50th degree of north latitude, that considerable herds are found. The great forests are their favorite haunts, where are plenty of buds and tender twigs; or those wide prairies and

* Franklin's Narrative.

plains, where man is seldom met with, but nature is bountiful in her supplies of verdant food. The hide is used by the Indians for a great variety of domestic articles. The flesh is excellent food; even the horns, in their soft state, early in spring, are esteemed a delicacy; while the harder portions are made into bows of the best kind. Several such weapons are to be seen in the collection of Indian implements belonging to the Philadelphia Museum.

The elk is a large, stately animal. The towering antlers of the male are several feet in length. The head is beautifully formed, tapering to a narrow point; the ears large, and rapidly moveable; the eyes full and dark; the body finely proportioned; the limbs small and delicate, but strong and agile; the neck slender and graceful. The animal is both shy and swift. The moment he perceives the approach of the hunter, he ceases to feed; his head is erected; his ears move rapidly in various directions, and his eye glistens and rolls. At length he catches a glimpse of his wary enemy, lurking among the bushes at a distance. He bounds along, a few paces only, as if trying his strength for flight. He stops to turn half round, and gaze again at his pursuer. Then throwing back

his branching horns upon his neck, and projecting his taper nose forward, he springs onward at a rate which soon leaves the hunter far in the back-ground.

And yet the Indians will even *run down* an elk. Not only does Charlevoix state this fact of the Canadian tribes, but Tanner and others say the same of the modern tribes of the West On one occasion, in the commencement of winter, when the snow was yet but a foot deep in the woods, Tanner says,—'We found a herd of elks, *and chasing them one day, overtook and killed four of them.*' It seems that the elks, being frightened, outstrip the hunters at first by many miles; but the latter, following at a steady pace along their path, at length come in sight of them. They then make a fresh effort, and are no more seen for an hour or two. But the intervals at which the Indians have them in sight, grow more and more frequent, and longer and longer, until they finally cease to lose sight of them at all. The elks are now so much fatigued, that they can only move in a slow trot. At last they can but walk. By this time the strength of the Indians is indeed somewhat exhausted, but they are commonly able to come up, and fire into the

rear of the herd. The discharge of a gun quickens their motions once more, and it is only a very active and resolute hunter who will come up after this, so as to do execution, unless the snow is quite deep. If that be the case, the game is more easily taken, for the elk does not lift his feet well from the ground in running. Tanner states, that there are some men among the tribes, though not many, who can run down the elk even on a smooth prairie, when there is neither snow nor ice.

In a closer contest, there is sometimes danger to be apprehended from the fury of this animal, when wounded. Some of our western travellers mention a herd of twenty or thirty elk being seen at no great distance from their party, standing in the water, or lying upon the sand-beach near it. One of the finest bucks (males) was singled out by a hunter, who fired upon him. The whole herd plunged into the thicket, and disappeared. Confident that the shot had been fatal, several of the party pursued them into the woods. The wounded animal was soon overtaken. Finding his pursuers close upon him, he turned furiously upon the foremost, who saved himself only by springing into a thicket. This was impassable to the

elk; and the violent efforts of the animal had no effect but to entangle his branching horns among the tough thick vines, where he was held fast and blindfolded until the hunters were able to despatch him with knives and bullets.*

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* Long's Expedition to the Rocky Mountains.

CHAPTER X.

Anecdotes of HUNTING, continued—Modes of hunting the common, or Indian deer—Uses of the animal to the Indians—Fire-hunting—The bison or buffaloe—Its uses—Modes of hunting it—Superstitions of the Indians in relation to hunting in general—Use of charms—Medicine-hunting—Hunting-feasts.

There is still another species of the American deer, not yet mentioned, but the most extensively spread over the continent, and the

most commonly hunted, of all. This is the 'common deer,' so called; and otherwise termed the fallow, the Virginian, and the Indian deer. It is found throughout the country from

Canada in the North, to the banks of the Orinoco River in South America. It is the smallest and slenderest of the deer-kind, the weight being about one hundred pounds. The horns are not so stout or long as those of the other species.

The common deer has always been of great value to the Indian tribes. The flesh is always used as food; and in the fall of the year, it is very palatable. The hunter of course feeds on it at all seasons; nor is he often delicate in selecting particular parts of the animal for his sustenance, as is the case with the whites. On the contrary, he perhaps begins by applying his mouth to the gushing wound, in order to refresh himself, after his long chase, with a supply of warm blood. If he should feel as much hunger as he does thirst, he cuts a hole in the animal's beating side, thrusts his hand in, and tears out the kidneys, which are instantly devoured, though still quivering with life. Even the stomach of the animal is a favorite dish, especially among those Northern tribes, where the deer feeds on mosses and birds; and they eat this substance without the least preparation by way of cookery. Those white men who have had occasion in their travels to taste this

kind of savage food, do not consider it so disagreeable as might be supposed.* The *steaks* are, however, in much better repute. 'Mr. Dunn and myself,' says a modern Journalist, 'made our breakfast on a choice slice, cut (*raw*) from the spine, and found it so good, that at dinner-time we preferred the same food to our preserved meat. The *wind-pipe* is exceedingly good.'†

The sight of the common deer is not particularly keen; but his hearing and smelling are so, and therefore the hunter always approaches him against the wind. Herds, in various numbers, resort to the forests and plains near rivers and lakes. They are led by one of the largest bucks, acting the part of protector and pilot. If any thing occurs to check the progress of the herd, he stops short, stamps with his feet, and snorts loudly. If he stands fast, the rest of the company take courage, and hold together. If he gives way, they all follow after him at full speed.

In many parts of the Western States and Territories, the salines, or *licks*, (as the salt-springs are called,) are a favorite haunt of the deer,—owing to their fondness for salt. The hunter is so familiar with their habits as to trace

* Lyon's Narrative. Also Hearne and Godman. † Lyon.

them with ease to these places, and often to surprise them on the spot.

When slightly wounded, they are able to inflict severe blows by leaping forward and striking with the edges of their hoofs held together. If the hunter falls on the ground in attempting to despatch the animal with his knife, he is in great danger of being killed.

There is a method of surprising the deer, practised by the Indians on the Northern Lakes under the name of *fire-hunting*. A party of Indians, in canoes, go out some distance upon the water, in the evening. In the bow of each boat is placed a brilliant torch-light, made of wax separated from wild honey, and poured into the hollow stem of a kind of cane,—a strip of cotton-cloth serving the purpose of a wick. Two or three of these canes together form a dazzling and beautiful light. The simple deer, seeking the water's edge to allay his thirst, and to eat his favorite moss, gazes at the moving splendor, until it gradually approaches within shooting-distance, when he soon pays the forfeit of his unwary curiosity.*

There are numerous animals, not yet named, such as the wolf, fox, and wild-cat, which are

* Schoolcraft.

frequently met with, and killed or trapped, by the Indians; but these are not generally made the express object of a hunt, and no particular system, therefore, is adopted in regard to them. But there is one powerful and well known animal, without some description of which no account of Indian sports or occupations could be considered any thing like complete.

The bison or buffalo,* is too well known throughout a large part of the North American continent, not to be familiarly distinguished from all other animals, by his long, shaggy, coarse beard, descending to the knee, and closely curled and matted over the forehead; his uncommonly thick neck, and large and ponderous head; the oblong hump on the shoulders, diminishing in height as it recedes; the very thick, black, tapering horns; and the small, dark and brilliant eye. In general, the frame of the animal may be called huge and shapeless. His gait is awkward and heavy, although his great strength enables him to run with considerable speed over plains in summer, and in winter to plunge expeditiously through the snow. Tanner states that the buffalo is swifter than the elk.

The skin, fur and hide of this animal, as well

* See Frontispiece.

as his flesh, make him an object of pursuit by all the savage tribes who live in those regions where he is found. This includes a vast tract of western wilderness, reaching, in some points, as far north as the 60th degree of latitude, south nearly to the latitude of the Gulf of Mexico, and west to the Pacific Ocean.

The flesh is coarser than that of the domestic ox, but in other respects not much inferior. The *hump* is famed for its delicacy and sweetness. The Indians cut out this part separately for a meal. Wrapping it up closely in skin stripped of its fur, they place it in a hole dug in the earth for its reception, which has been heated by a strong fire in and over it for several hours previous. It is covered with cinders and earth about a foot deep, and a strong fire made over it; and by the following day it is fit for use. The tongues and marrow-bones are also esteemed delicacies.

The flesh is often preserved a long time by being cut into thin slices, and dried in the open air, which in the North-West is called by white people *jerking*. *Pemmican* is this dried flesh, pounded into powder, cleaned, and melted down with about one third of its weight of the buffalo tallow.

The difficulty of hunting these animals, independently of their speed and ferocity, may be estimated by an anecdote of their extreme keenness of smell. It is related, in the Expedition of Long, that on one occasion when the exploring party were riding through a dreary country, enlivened only by vast multitudes of straggling buffaloes, as the wind was blowing from the south, the scent of the party was wafted by it directly over the river Platte; and through a distance of *eight or ten miles* its progress could be distinctly traced by the consternation it produced among the herds in all quarters. The moment the tainted breeze reached them,—so shy were they of strangers,—they began running as violently as if closely pursued by mounted hunters. This singular scene continued for the space of some hours.

These immense herds, sometimes five and even ten thousand together, wander over the wide plains of the West, in search of food, usually led on, like the deer, by a male of extraordinary size and courage. While feeding, they are scattered loosely to a great distance; when travelling, they form an immense solid column, bearing down all obstacles in its way. No river checks the march; they plunge through

it in the same order with which they traverse the plains.

It is evident, that in case of a procession of this kind, pursued by the hunters, it would be in vain for the foremost to attempt turning back, or even moving aside from a nearly straight line of advance. Of this circumstance the Indians cunningly avail themselves, in such a manner as sometimes to force an entire herd over the brink of a precipice, upon a rocky surface some hundred feet below.

When they determine to destroy bison in this way,—which is not very frequently,—one of their swiftest-footed and most active young men is selected, who is disguised in a bison skin, having the head, ears, and horns adjusted on his own head, so as to make the deception very complete; and thus accoutred, he stations himself between the bison herd and some of the precipices, that often extend for several miles along the rivers. The Indians surround the herd as nearly as possible, when, at a given signal, they show themselves and rush forward with loud yells. The animals being alarmed, and seeing no way open but in the direction of the disguised Indian, run towards him, and he, taking to flight, dashes on to the precipice,

where he suddenly secures himself in some previously ascertained crevice. The leaders of the herd arrive at the brink—there is no possibility of retreat, no chance of escape; the foremost may for an instant shrink with terror, but the crowd behind, who are terrified by the approaching hunters, rush forward, and the aggregated force hurls them successively into the gulf, where certain death awaits them.*

For a considerable time after an event like this, the wolves and vultures feast and fatten on the decaying remains, to such a degree of stupid tameness, as to suffer themselves to be knocked down by the Indians, with sticks, in the act of eating.

Much the more common, and better way of killing bison, is to attack them on horseback. The Indians, mounted, and well armed with bows and arrows, encircle the herd, and gradually drive them into a situation favorable to the employment of the horse. They then ride in and single out one, generally a female, and following her as closely as possible, wound her with arrows until the mortal blow is given, when they go in pursuit of others until their quivers are exhausted.

* Godman. See Frontispiece Vol. II.

Tanner gives an animated sketch of an engagement between an Indian party to which he belonged, and an immense herd of buffaloes. They were so numerous and so noisy, that when the party lay down on the ground to sleep, the night before finding them, they heard their trampling, roaring, and butting of horns at a distance, as they supposed, of near twenty miles. Starting early in the morning, they rode some hours before coming in sight of them. At the distance of ten miles, they appeared like a black line drawn along the edge of the sky, or a low shore seen across a lake. The hunters very courageously rode directly towards the herd.

'As we came,' says Tanner, 'we killed a wounded bull, which scarce made an effort to escape from us. He had wounds in his flanks, into which I could put my whole hand. As we knew that the flesh of the bulls was not now good to eat, we did not wish to kill them, though we might easily have shot any number. Dismounting, we put our horses in the care of some of our number, who were willing to stay back for that purpose, and then crept into the herd to try to kill some cows. I had separated from the others, and advancing, got entangled

among the bulls. Before I found an opportunity to shoot a cow, the bulls began to fight very near me. In their fury they were totally unconscious of my presence, and came rushing towards me with such violence, that, in some alarm for my safety, I took refuge in one of those holes which are so frequent where these animals abound, and which they themselves dig to wallow in. Here I found that they were pressing directly upon me, and I was compelled to fire to disperse them, in which I did not succeed until I had killed four of them. By this firing the cows were so frightened that I perceived I should not be able to kill any in this quarter; so regaining my horse, I rode to a distant part of the herd, where the Indians had succeeded in killing a fat cow. But from this cow, as is usual in similar cases, the herd had all moved off, except one bull, who, when I came up, still kept the Indians at bay. 'You are warriors,' said I, as I rode up, 'going far from your own country, to seek an enemy; but you cannot all together slay this animal, who has nothing in his hands.' So saying, I passed them directly, towards the bull, then standing something more than two hundred yards distant. He no sooner saw me approach, than he came

plunging towards me with such impetuosity, that knowing the danger to my horse and myself, I turned and fled. The Indians laughed heartily at my repulse, but they did not give over their attempts to get at the cow. By dividing the attention of the bull, and creeping up to him on different sides, they at length shot him down. While we were cutting up the cow, the herd were at no great distance, and an old cow, which the Indians supposed to be the mother of the one we had killed, taking the scent of the blood, came running with great violence directly towards us. The Indians were alarmed and fled, many of them not having their guns in their hands; but I had carefully re-loaded mine, and had it ready for use. Throwing myself down close to the body of the cow, and behind it, I waited till the other ca[illegible] up within a few yards of the carcass, when [illegible] fired upon her; she turned, gave one or two jumps, and fell dead. We had now the meat of two fat cows, which was as much as we wanted; accordingly, we repaired without delay to the appointed place, where we found our party, whose hunger was already somewhat allayed by a deer one of them had killed.'

Some allusion has been made to the super-

stitions which the Indians connect with their notions of hunting; but there are still others which deserve a passing notice. Nearly all the tribes in the vicinity of the Western and Northern Lakes, and many in other parts of the continent, believe implicitly in the efficacy of charms, chanting and prayers. These are resorted to in all emergencies, as, for instance, when game becomes alarmingly scarce, or the weather exceedingly severe.

Among many tribes, the *medicine-bag*, as the whites call it, is in general use. This is a little leathern sack, attached to the hunter's girdle on the occasions in question, and in which he carries certain roots, pounded fine, and mixed with red paint. This paint is to be applied to what the Chippewa calls his *muz-zi-ne-neen-ug*, which are small rude images,—generally on wood,—of the wild-fowl

which the hunter wishes to kill, and so of any other game.

The numerous and extremely barbarous Chippeyans of the North-West, whose bleak and barren country affords not even birch-bark from which these images can be made, and whose rudeness has left them ignorant of any material proper to delineate figures upon, use, in their preparations for the *medicine-hunt*, one of the shoulder-bones of the rein-deer, or such other animals as are found in their region. After awkwardly sketching on this bone the figure of the animal which they wish to kill,—and of which it generally happens that they have had more or less *dreams* beforehand,—they throw the bone into the fire, or otherwise destroy it. The mere sketching of the figure, in their theory, serving as good a purpose as the much more laborious and tedious singing, watching, carving, and often drumming and other ceremonies, practised by most other tribes. Some Indians imagine that they effect the same object by drawing the outlines of animals, with a coal perhaps, on a bit of bark; others, with only a stick, in the ashes or sand. But all these preparations are charms, or *medicines;* and the hunts which follow them are *medicine-hunts.*

The Boy's Feast has been mentioned in the

case of Tanner. It is observed among many tribes, whenever the young hunter kills his first game. Should it be but a small bird, or even a fish, the feast must not be forgotten.

The hunters of the same tribes,—the North-Western,—observe what they call a *Medicine-Feast.* During one whole day in spring, and another in autumn, they spread out the contents of the medicine-bag in the back part of their wigwam, and invite their neighbors to a feast in honor of their medicine, or guardian spirit.* Other superstitious observances connected with hunting, too numerous to be specified, are practised in other sections of the continent.

* Tanner's Narrative.

CHAPTER XI.

Sketches of Indian FISHING—Trout-spearing in the Northern Lakes—Fishing of the Western Indians—Fishing machines—Seal and whale-fishing of the Nootkas—Crail, sweep and net-fishing of the Southern tribes—Cane-fishing and hand-fishing—Anecdotes from Mc'Kenzie, Adair, and Henry.

A large number of the American Indians, especially of those west of the Rocky Mountains, and in the neighborhood of the great Lakes, depend more upon fishing than upon hunting for their sustenance. Spearing is a very common mode of fishing among the Indians of the Lakes. One variety of it, not yet mentioned, is practised in taking the large and delicious trout of those beautiful waters, during the winter. Holes are cut through the ice of the lake, or river, of perhaps two yards in circumference. Over these, arbors are constructed, of small branches of trees, two or three feet high, and so closely covered outside with skins as wholly to exclude the light. The effect of this contrivance is, that objects may be discerned distinctly in the water beneath to a considerable depth.

A spear-head of iron being fastened to the end of a pole about ten feet in length, this in-

strument is lowered into the water, while the fisherman, lying flat on the ice, with his head under the cabin, and over the hole, lets down also the wooden figure of a fish, made heavy with lead or stone. Round the middle of the image a thread is tied: and when at the depth of some forty or fifty feet,—or, as deep as it is meant to be used,—it is made, by drawing the string, and by pressure of the water, to move about in the manner of a living fish. Deceived by the resemblance, the trout spring forward to seize it; but this they are prevented from effecting by a dexterous jerk of the string. The image is now drawn up nearer the surface; and the fish take some time for renewing the attack, during which the fisherman has his spear made ready for striking. This is easily done, and the fish as easily drawn out by the barb of the instrument. Henry states that the light is so entirely excluded by this contrivance, that he had himself seen the *shadows* of the fish, on the bottom, following them as they moved; and this when the ice itself was two feet in thickness. The trout are also taken by hook and line.

The Indians beyond the Rocky Mountains are in the habit of taking immense quantities of fish,—the most common of which is the sal-

mon. They use various kinds of nets, weirs and machines, among which Mc'Kenzie describes a large machine, which, he says, could never have been brought into the house where he saw it without the roof being previously taken off. It was cylindrical in form, fifteen feet long, and four and one half feet in diameter. One end was flat, like the head of a cask. To the other end a conical machine was fixed inwards, of about the same breadth; and at the extremity of this, was an opening of several inches diameter. The whole was evidently designed to be set in the river, to catch large fish; and Mc'Kenzie says it must be impossible for them, after once entering, to make their escape. It was made of long pieces of split wood, rounded to the size of a small finger, and placed at the distance of an inch asunder on six hoops; to all which was added 'a kind of boot of the same material, into which it may be supposed that the fish are driven, when they are to be taken out.'

Among the more southern tribes, such as the Choctaws, Chickasaws and Cherokees, several modes of fishing,—or stratagems to serve the same purpose,—are or have been in vogue, which are mostly peculiar to themselves.

The Nootkas, and other Indians on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, are the most expert fishers on the continent. Their lines are made of whale-sinews, and are extremely tough; their hooks, of wood and bone. In taking salmon, which abound in their rivers, one person seats himself in a small canoe, and baiting his hook with a sprat, which they are always careful to procure as fresh as possible, fastens his line to the handle of the paddle: this, as he plies it in the water, keeps the fish in constant motion, so as to give it the appearance of life, which the salmon seeing, leaps at it and is instantly hooked, and by a sudden and dexterous motion of the paddle, drawn on board. Mr. Jewett, who was wrecked on the North-West coast in 1803, and lived there several years, saw twenty or thirty canoes employed at one time in fishing in this manner. The porpoise, sea-cow, and even the whale are killed with a kind of javelin or harpoon. The barbs of this instrument are formed of bone which are sharpened on the outer side, and hollowed within, for the purpose of forming a socket for the staff; these are then secured firmly together with whale-sinew, the point being fitted so as to receive a piece of muscle-shell, which is ground to a very sharp

edge, and secured in its place by means of turpentine. To this head or prong is fastened a strong line of whale-sinew about nine feet in length, to the end of which is tied a bark rope from fifty to sixty fathoms long, having from twenty to thirty seal-skin floats or buoys attached to it at certain intervals, in order to check the motion of the whale and obstruct his diving. In the socket of the harpoon a staff or pole of about ten feet long, gradually tapering from the middle to each end, is placed; this the harpooner holds in his hand in order to strike the whale, and immediately detatches it as soon as the fish is struck. These tribes on the coast live almost wholly upon various kinds of fish, shell-fish, spawn, blubber and train-oil.

In a dry summer-season,—says Mr. Adair in his 'General Observations,'*—they gather horse-chestnuts, and different kind of roots, pound them fine, and steep them for some time with water in a trough. This mixture they cast about in certain parts of a pond, and stir it with poles, until the water is more or less impregnated with the intoxicating bitter. The fish pretty soon turn over on their backs, and rise to the surface. The fishers gather in baskets

* London, 1775.

as many as they wish, and the others are left to recover from their stupid slumbers in the best manner they may.

The same writer describes a machine under the name of a *crail*, made with canes and splinters of hickory-wood, tapering to a point,—resembling the contrivance of the Western Indians described by Mc'Kenzie. The crail is laid at a fall of water, 'where stones are placed in two sloping lines from each bank, till they meet together in the middle of the rapid stream, where the entangled fish soon die.' Above such a place as this, the fishermen, fastening together a wreath of long grape-vines, to reach across the stream or pond, with stones so attached to it as to make it rake the bottom, would swim perhaps a quarter of a mile, holding the wreath, and whooping and plunging all the way, so as to frighten the fish before them into the crails or cane-pots.

The southern Indians were also very expert in striking large fish, from their canoes, with long sharp-pointed green canes, well bearded, or notched, and hardened in the fire. In Savannah river, Adair saw them take sturgeon in this manner. After the first blow, the fish would immediately dive deep, carrying the cane

off with them; but their struggles soon expended their strength, and as soon as the top-end of the cane appeared again on the surface, they were readily secured, or at least wounded a second time.

These Indians had also a method of fishing under the edges of rocks, jutting over the deep places of a river, for the large fierce *cat-fish*, which, in the hot climate of these regions, were often to be found sheltering themselves from the blaze of noon-day under the rocks of the shore, and at the same time watching for prey. The fisherman, well knowing the animal's habits, wrapped a strip of coarse red cloth around his right arm, so as to reach the lower part of the palm of the right hand. He then dived under the shadow of the shore, and approached the cat-fish. The latter seized voraciously at the red bait. The diver, with great dexterity opened his hand suddenly, grasped the fish, struggled with it against the crevices of the rock, and at length brought it safe ashore. The southern Indians, except the Choctaws, says Mr. Adair, are,—'in the watery element nearly equal to amphibious animals, by practice.'

Their *hand-nets* were about three feet deep, of the same diameter at the opening, and made

of wild hemp. On each side of the mouth, strong elastic canes were fastened to the ends. Prepared with these, the fishermen jumped in at the end of a long pond, and then swam under water, with their net stretched open by both hands, and the canes in a horizontal position. This they swept through the water until they were either compelled to rise for breath, or to carry their burden ashore on account of its weight.

'I have been engaged half a day at a time,' —Mr. Adair says,—'with the old friendly Chickasaws, and half drowned in the diversion. When any of us was so unfortunate as to catch *water-snakes* in our sweep, and empty them ashore, we had the ranting outcry of our whole company raised against us, until some other fisherman was unlucky enough to meet with the same misfortune. During this exercise the women are fishing from shore, with coarse baskets, to catch the fish that escape our nets. At the end of our diversion, we cheerfully return home.' As the kinds of amusement last described could not well be practised in cold climates, it scarcely need be remarked that they were confined almost entirely to the southern tribes. At present they are not much in fashion any

where. The southern tribes have been much reduced in some cases, and in others have become wholly extinct, while the introduction of the metal and tools of the whites into quite common use among them, has made it less necessary than it once was to depend for a livelihood on the contrivances and stratagems of savage cunning.

CHAPTER XII.

Games and sports of the New-England Indians—Of the Canadians—Of the Lake tribes—Of the Southern tribes—Game of Reeds—Of Dice—Of the Dish—Baggatiwa, and other ball-playing—'Running Hard Labor'—Riding and Racing—Various other amusements of the tribes in various sections of the continent—Superstitions connected with games.

From the gravity of the American savages, it might be supposed that they were little in the habit of indulging themselves with sportive recreations. Nor do they, indeed, cultivate amusement much for its own sake. They have their dances, (of which hereafter,) and they have many little pastimes, like running races and shooting at marks, which are common in some degree to almost all nations. But the greater part of their sports are games, and these games are used as occasions for *gambling*. There is no people on the face of the earth, who gamble so much to their own injury, as the American Indians. As a vice among them all it is second only to drunkenness.

Their games are either public or private. Public games were formerly more frequent than now. Roger Williams, speaking of the New

England Indians, nearly two centuries ago, says —'Their publique Games are solemnized by the meeting of hundreds, sometimes thousands, and consist of many varieties; none of which,' adds that worthy gentleman, 'I durst ever be present at, that I might not countenance and partake of their folly, after I once saw the evill of them.'

Among the rest was a 'Game like unto the English cards; yet, instead of cards, they play with strong Rushes.' No doubt this is the same game which the French writer Charlevoix alludes to in his Letters on the Northern Indians, written in 1720. Speaking of the Pottewatemies and Miamies,—tribes which are well known at the present day,—he observes, that while he was on a visit to the latter, two parties of them played against each other in the great cabin of the Miami chieftain, and upon an open space in front of it.

He calls it the 'game of straws,' or reeds. These were about as large as a wheat-stem, and about six inches long. They put together a parcel of them, always an odd number, and generally two hundred and one. After shuffling them well together, they separated them with a kind of awl, or a pointed bone, into parcels of

ten each; every one chose his parcel at a venture, and he that happened to get the bunch of *eleven*, gained a certain number of points which are agreed on. The whole game was sixty or eighty. The Indians were so much engaged in playing for the wager agreed on, as to continue it sometimes for whole days and nights in succession, until they gambled away even the clothes which they wore. Something like this game is in common use at this day.

Another New-England game is mentioned by Roger Williams, as being played 'with a kinde of *Dice*, which are Plumb-stones painted; and these they cast in a Tray with a mighty noyse and sweating.' When large numbers were engaged in this game,—as, for instance, one town against another,—they were accustomed to meet in a square arbor-like play-house, made of poles and green boughs, and built expressly for this purpose. The dice being handled only by two, one was chosen by each party; and when either of these two was beaten, a bystander stepped in to fill his place, until victory was declared for one of the two parties. All this went on 'with great shouting and solemnity.' The wager played for was generally that kind of small smooth shells, of different

colors, called by the Northern Indians *wampum*, or *wampumpeague*, and used as well for a coin, as for ornamenting the dress, and other purposes.

This game, too, is described by Charlevoix as played among the Canadian tribes. He calls it the 'game of the dish.' He saw it played by two persons. Each of them had six or eight little bones, of about the size and shape of apricot-stones, each bone being furnished with six unequal sides, and the two principal of which were painted, one black, and the other yellow. They made them jump up by striking the ground, or the table, with a round and hollow dish, which contained the bones, and which they twirled round first, making it serve the purpose of a dice-box. When they had no dish, they threw them into the air with their hands. If in falling, they turned up all one color, he who threw them won five, and the whole game was forty. Five bones of one color won but one, the first time; the second time, they gave the player his game. A less number gave him nothing. The winner continued playing; the loser gave place to another appointed by his party.

'The players appear like people possessed,

and the spectators are not more calm. They all make a thousand contortions, talk to the bones, load the *spirits* of the adverse party with imprecations; and the whole village echoes with howlings. If all this does not recover their luck, the losers may put off the party till the next day: it costs them only a small treat to the company. Then they prepare to return to the engagement. Each invokes his *Genius*, and throws some tobacco in the fire to his honor. They ask him, above all things, for lucky dreams. As soon as the day appears, they go again to play; but if the losers fancy that the goods in their cabins made them unlucky, the first thing they do is to change them all. The great parties commonly last five or six days, and often continue all night. In the meantime, all the persons present, concerned in the game, are in an agitation which deprives them of reason.'* Some quarrelling and fighting frequently ensued.

A third New England game mentioned by Mr. Williams, is called by him *foot-ball.* It was played only in summer time,—frequently town against town,—and the place chosen was some broad sandy shore, free from stones; or perhaps some smooth level plain.

* Charlevoix.

A species of ball-playing has been in vogue throughout the continent, which is called by the Chippewas, Ottawas, and other Indians of the Lakes, *baggátiwa*. It is played by them with a bat and ball, corresponding to those used in the English game *cricket*. The bat is about four feet long, curved, and terminating in a sort of racket, shaped suitably for striking the ball. Two posts are planted in the ground, at a considerable distance from each other,—perhaps a mile. Each party has its post, and the game consists in throwing the ball up to the adversary's post. The ball, at the beginning, is placed in the middle of the course, and each party endeavors as well to throw the ball out of the direction of its own post, as into that of the adversary's. It was under the pretext of playing this violent and noisy game, that a combination of Indians hostile to the English, in 1763, succeeded in taking the fortress and massacring the incautious garrison of Michilimackinac. They played immediately before the walls, and the soldiers were politely invited to witness the sport. They did so: but, in the midst of it, the Indians suddenly and very cunningly took advantage of a moment of great excitement and bustle, to rush into the

gates and take possession of the fortress. Nearly one hundred English soldiers were butchered on the spot.*

Charlevoix saw a game of this description played among the Miamies, more than a hundred years since, which he calls the 'Game of the Bat.' 'Their business is to strike the ball to the foot of the adverse party, *without letting it fall to the ground, and without touching it with the hand*,—for in either of these cases they lose the game, unless he that makes the fault, repairs it *by striking the ball at one blow to the foot*, which is often impossible. These savages are so dexterous at catching the ball with their bats, that sometimes one game will last for days together.'—This ancient game is evidently dangerous to life and limb. There was another among the Miamies, much like it, but less hazardous.

The Southern Indians have been much addicted to ball-playing. 'The ball,'—says Adair, speaking of the Choctaws and Cherokees,—'is made of a piece of scraped deer-skin, moistened, stuffed hard with deer's hair, and strongly sewed with deer's sinews. The ball-sticks are about two feet long, the lower end

* See Lives of the Indians, Vol. II.

somewhat resembling the palm of a hand, and which are worked with deer-skin thongs. Between these they catch the ball, and throw it a great distance, when not prevented by some of the opposite party, who fly to intercept them. The goal is about five hundred yards in length. At each end of it they fix two long bending poles into the ground, three yards apart below, but standing a considerable way outwards. The party that throws the ball over these, counts one; but if it be thrown underneath, it is cast back, and played for as usual. The gamesters are equal in number on each side; and at the beginning of every course of ball, they throw it up high in the centre of the ground, and in a direct line between the goals. When the crowd of players prevents the one who caught the ball from throwing it off with a long direction, he commonly sends it the right course by an artful sharp twirl. They are so exceedingly expert in this exercise, that, between the goals, the ball is mostly kept flying the different ways, by the force of the playing sticks, *without falling to the ground, for they are not allowed to catch it with their hands.* It is surprising to see how swiftly they fly, when closely chased by a nimble-footed

pursuer. When they are intercepted by one of the opposite party, his fear of being cut off [struck] by the ball-sticks, commonly gives them an opportunity of throwing it perhaps a hundred yards; but the antagonist does sometimes run up close behind, and dash down the ball.'

It might be supposed that this violent sport would be attended with some blood-shedding and bone-breaking, and that the parties would become enraged with each other. It was however very uncommon to witness any thing like spitefulness in the game. Only once Mr. Adair saw legs and arms broken, by some of the players hurling down their opponents, when upon descending and slippery ground, and running at full speed. In this instance there was a family dispute of ancient standing, between the players, and the wager at stake was all they were worth. The Choctaws, in particular, have formerly been addicted to gambling to great excess. Frequently, they would stake not only all the property in their possession, but as much more as their credit would procure for them.

The Southern Indians were not less diligent than the Northern in their endeavors to propi-

tiate the favor of their gods. The Choctaws were less religious than the neighboring tribes; but even they, previous to any great ball-playing, fasted and kept awake all night, while their female relations spent the same time in dancing out of doors. In the morning, each party turned out to the ball-ground, in a long row, painted white, and whooping (we are told,) 'as if Pluto's prisoners were all broke loose.' At the close of this grand shouting, the leader began a religious invocation, by crying *yah*, short—then *yo*, long, and on a low key like the leader;—and thus they went on with their chanting. The activity with which they played this severe game, is the more remarkable, since it was never played but in *mid-summer time*,—as Mr. Williams says was the custom respecting foot-ball in New England.

There was another ancient sport among the southern warriors, which bore some resemblance to what is called by the whites quoit-pitching, but which might with more propriety, as Mr. Adair says, be termed '*running hard labor*.'

For playing this game, a square piece of ground was kept well cleaned, in the centre of the village; and fine sand was carefully strown

over it, when requisite, to give a swifter motion to whatever passed along the surface. Only one or two on a side, played at one time. Each of these had a flat stone, about a foot and a half in circumference, and an inch or two thick; and also a pole some eight feet long, smooth, and tapering at each end,—but the points flat. They set off abreast of each other, at six yards from the end of the play-ground. Then one of them hurled the stone on its edge, in as direct a line forward as possible, a considerable distance towards the middle of the other end of the square. After running a few yards, each one darted his pole, (anointed with bear's oil) with such a force as he judged most likely, considering the motion of the stone, to bring the end down close to the stone. If this should be the case, the successful player counted *two* in the game; and in proportion to the nearness of the poles to the mark, *one* was counted, —unless, by measurement, both were found to be at an equal distance. Thus the players would keep running the greater part of the day, under the violent heat of the sun. They staked their silver ornaments; their nose, finger, and ear-rings; their breast, arm, and wrist-plates;

and even most of their wearing apparel. The stones, used in this laborious sport, were very carefully made smooth by rubbing against rocks; and once properly fashioned, they were preserved, among the common property of the town or tribe, from one generation to another.

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