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THE CHIPEWYAN

NORTHERN Canada from about the fifty-seventh parallel to the Arctic circle and from Hudson bay to, and even beyond, the Rocky mountains is predominantly Athapascan territory. The region is characterized by large streams, numerous lakes, extensive swamps, prairies, barrens, evergreen forests, aspen groves, and bush-covered areas. There are two principal water systems. In the south, between Saskatchewan and Athapascan rivers, Churchill river flows eastwardly to Hudson bay. In the northwest Athabasca and Peace rivers, carrying Rocky Mountain waters eastward, unite below Lake Athabasca and flow northward as Slave river into Great Slave lake, thence as Mackenzie river to the Arctic.

The Chipewyan, who call themselves simply Déne ("people"), are a linguistic group occupying the country from Slave river southward to Cold lake, and from Heart lake (55° North, III° 30' West) eastward to Reindeer lake in north-central Saskatchewan. The name is from Cree Wichipwayániwuk ("they pointed fur people"), referring to the northerners' fur coats with pointed skirts. The Chipewyan at Cold lake recognize the following divisions:

(1) Kaí-theli-ke-hot!ínne ("willow flat-country up they-dwell"), centering about the western end of Athabasca lake at Fort Chipewyan and extending northward to Fort Smith on Slave river and southward to Fort McMurray on Athabasca river.

(2) Kés-ye-hot!ínne ("aspen house they-dwell"), at Lac Isle á la Crosse, Portage la Loche, Cold lake, Heart lake, Onion lake, all of which are near the head of the Churchill River system. The name probably came into use among other Chipewyan divisions when the traders built at Isle á la Crosse the first log houses seen in the region.[1]

(3) Hâthél-hot!inne ("lowland they-dwell"), in the region of Reindeer lake, which drains southward into Churchill river.

(4) Gáne-kúna^{n}-hot!ínne ("jack-pine home they-dwell"), in the barrens east of Athabasca lake and centering at Fond du Lac near the eastern end of that body.

1 These "Aspen-house Dwellers" are the "Thilanottine ('dwellers at the foot of the head,' i.e., of the great glacier)," noted in Handbook of American Indians.

Other Athapascan groups of this northern land, in the nomenclature of the Cold Lake dialect, follow:

1. Sa-yí^{n}si^{n}-dene ("sun under [i.e., eastern] people"), in the barrens between Reindeer lake, Hudson bay, and Chesterfield inlet.[2]

2. Tandzán-hot!ínne, on the northern shore of Great Slave lake (Dení-nu-eke-tówe, "moose island up lake-on") and along Yellowknife river, and formerly on Coppermine river. They are commonly known as Yellowknives in allusion to their former manufacture of knives and axes of native copper found near Coppermine river. Some of them now live at Fort Resolution on the south shore of Great Slave lake .[3]

3. Hli^{n}-chá^{n}-dene ("dog flank people"), or Hli^{n}-chá^{n}ghe, usually

2 This is the group noted in Handbook of American Indians as "Etheneldi ('cariboueaters')." Sir John Franklin, in his Narrative of a journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea, in the Years 1819-20-21-22, Third Edition, London, 1824, I, 241-242, says: "Those who come to Fort Chipewyan term themselves Saweessaw-dinneh, (Indians from the rising sun, or Eastern Indians,) their original hunting grounds being between the Athabasca, and Great Slave Lakes, and Churchill River. This district, more particularly termed the Chipewyan lands, or *barren country,* is frequented by numerous herds of rein-deer, which furnish easy subsistence, and clothing to the Indians; but the traders endeavour to keep them in the parts to the westward where the beaver resort. There are about one hundred and sixty hunters who carry their furs to the Great Slave Lake, forty to Hay River, and two hundred and forty to Fort Chipewyan."
In the northern part of this region Samuel Hearne in 1771 found Yathkyed (Chipewyan *yath-delgáyi* "snow white"*)* lake and Cathawhachaga (now Kazan) river to be Athapascan hunting-ground. In 1894 J. B. Tyrrell, his editor, found the district occupied by Eskimo.

3 *Tan* is perhaps for *toâ^{n}a^{n},* lake; *dzan,* scum; hence, "dwellers at the dirty lake." Handbook of American Indians has "Tatsanottine ('people of the scum of water,' scum being a figurative expression for copper)." But in the legend of the discovery of copper the metal is called *tsa-tsá^{n}ne,* which apparently means "beaver excrement." Franklin, II, 76, says: "The Copper Indians, termed by the Chipewyans, *Tantsawhot-dinneh,* or Birch-rind Indians ... were originally a tribe of the Chipewyans, and, according to their own account, inhabited the south side of Great Slave Lake, at no very distant period.... The number ... may be one hundred and ninety souls.... There are forty-five hunters in the tribe."

called Dogribs, between lakes Great Slave, Great Bear, and La Martre, and Coppermine river, where Sir John Franklin found them in 1820-1821. In the previous century they had lived near Hudson bay north of Churchill river and also near the sources of that system.[4]

4. Kéchaghe-hot!ínne ("down-stream they-dwell), or Échaghe-hot!ínne ("confluence they-dwell"), west and southwest of Great Slave lake, near the mouth of Hay river (which flows into the lake), along Mackenzie river, and on the lower course of Liard river, an important affluent of the Mackenzie. Their self-name is Kaí-tsuz-hot!ínne ("willow dry they-dwell"), in reference to the character of their fuel.[5] When the Cree obtained firearms in the first half of the eighteenth century they made relentless warfare on their Athapascan neighbors, and drove this group out of the country between Athabasca and Lesser Slave lakes. In reference to their comparative inferiority and the ease with which captives were taken the Cree applied to them the epithet of Slaves, and by that name they are still commonly known. This is the origin of Slave as the name of a river and two lakes.[6]

4 Franklin, 11, 80, 82-83: "The *Thlingcha-dinneh,* or Dog-ribs, or, as they are sometimes termed after the Crees, who formerly warred against them, Slaves, inhabit the country to the westward of the Copper Indians, as far as Mackenzie's River. The chief tribe of the Dog-rib nation, termed Horn Mountain Indians, inhabit the country betwixt Great Bear Lake, and the west end of great Slave Lake. They muster about two hundred men and boys capable of pursuing the chase. Small detachments of the nation frequent Marten Lake, and hunt during the summer in the neighborhood of Fort Enterprise. [Enterprise was the depot established by Franklin north of the source of Yellowknife river and occupied by him from August 1820 to June 1821.] Indeed this part of the country was formerly exclusively theirs, and most of the lakes and remarkable hills bear the names which they imposed upon them. As the Copper Indians generally pillage them of their women and furs when they meet, they endeavour to avoid them, and visit their ancient quarters on the barren grounds only by stealth."

5 Handbook of American Indians says "they were a timid, pacific people, called 'the people sheltered by willows' by the Chipewyan."

6 Franklin, II, 85: "The *Edchawtawhoot-dinneh*, Strong-bow, Beaver, or Thickwood Indians, who frequent the *Riviére aux Liards*, or south branch of Mackenzie's River. The Strong-bows resemble the dog-ribs somewhat in their disposition; but when they meet they assume a considerable degree of

5. Ga-chó-hot!ínne (hare big they-dwell"), north of Great Bear lake and on Mackenzie river from Fort Norman, at the mouth of the outlet of the lake, well beyond the Arctic circle, where they adjoined the Athapascan Kutchin of the Yukon. They are commonly called Hare Indians, in reference to their use of the Arctic hare for food and clothing.[7]

6. Tsá-hot!ínne ("beaver they-dwell"), on Peace river (Tsá-des, "beaver river") from Fort Vermilion to the Rocky mountains. There are now three bands, centering respectively at Fort Vermilion, Dunvegan, and Fort St. John. Beyond them, partly east but mostly west of the mountains, are the Athapascan Sekani.

Excepting the Hares, the Kutchin, and the Sekani, the Chipewyan readily converse with all these people.

The northern branch of the Athapascan stock east of the mountains have contact with but two alien peoples: the Eskimo on the shores of the Arctic ocean and Hudson bay, and the Algonquian Cree all along their southerly border. The Cree are called Enná ("strangers"), the Eskimo Hâthél-enná ("lowland strangers"). The Sarsi, cut off from the main area of Athapascan occupancy by the Cree, have been so long separated as to be known to their congeners only as Sásuwe, an adaption of Cree Sasíu, which in turn is from Blackfoot Sáhsi ("not good").

Franklin at Fort Chipewyan talked to four men who had taken part in hostile expeditions against the Arctic Eskimo, and of the "Copper

superiority over the latter, who meekly submit to the haughtiness of their neighbours. Until the year 1813, when a small party of them, from some unfortunate provocation, destroyed Fort Nelson on the *Riviére aux Liards*, and murdered its inmates, the Strong-bows were considered to be a friendly and quiet tribe, and esteemed as excellent hunters."

7 Franklin, II, 83: "Immediately to the northward of the Dog-ribs, on the north side of Bear Lake River [which connects Great Bear lake with Mackenzie river], are the *Kawcho-dinneh*, or Hare Indians ... These people report that in their hunting excursions to the northward of Great Bear Lake they meet small parties of Esquimaux." Of the Kutchin he says, II, 83: "Immediately to the northward of the Hare Indians, on both banks of Mackenzie's River, are the *Tykotheedinneh*, Loucheux, Squint-eyes, or Quarrellers. They speak a language distinct from the Chipewyan. They war often with the Esquimaux at the mouth of Mackenzie River."

Indians" he recorded that " the last war excursion they made against the Esquimaux was ten years ago [1810], when they destroyed about thirty persons, at the mouth of what they term Stony-point River, not far from the mouth of the Copper-Mine River."[8]

In July of 1771 Samuel Hearne, on his memorable pathfinding journey from Hudson bay to the Arctic at the mouth of Coppermine river, was an unwilling spectator at the slaughter of a band of Eskimo by his Athapascan companions. "During our stay at Clowey [Athapascan *hlúwe*, fish - a lake east of Great Slave Lake watershed] a great number of Indians [sixty] entered into a combination with those of my party to accompany us to the Copper-mine River; and with no other intent than to murder the Esquimaux. Each volunteer, as well as those who were properly of my party, prepared a target, or shield, before we left the woods of Clowey." Arriving at Coppermine river, they surprised five tents of sleeping Eskimo and ruthlessly murdered the occupants, who numbered about twenty. They then came upon an aged woman killing salmon at the foot of a waterfall, and "the wretches of my crew transfixed her to the ground in a few seconds, and butchered her in the most savage manner. There was scarcely a man among them who had not a thrust at her with his spear; and many in doing this, aimed at torture, rather than immediate death, as they not only poked out her eyes, but stabbed her in many parts very remote from those which are vital." Finally they plundered seven tents and killed one old man on the opposite side of the river; but all the rest of the inhabitants fled in canoes. This was within sight of the ocean.[9]

8 11, 79, 80.

9 A journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, and 1772, Edited by J.B. Tyrrell, Toronto, 1911, pages 149, 181-183. Hearne, a clerk of the Hudson's Bay Company, after two abortive attempts, left Prince of Wales Fort near the mouth of Churchill river in December of 1770 and returned in June of 1772, during which time he was the only white man among a band of Indians frequently numbering one hundred and fifty to two hundred. Progressing by short marches across the barrens, sometimes in the midst of plenty, sometimes for days without food, he had an opportunity probably unequalled in the experience of any other European of observing intimately the habits of a really primitive North American tribe. More than any other traveller in the far north he was

As to Athapascan relations with the Hudson Bay Eskimo, Hearne says that the latter were frequently suspected of causing the death of Northern Indian chiefs by sorcery, which was the principal cause of hostilities. "For some time past, however, those Esquimaux who trade with our sloops at Knapp's Bay, Navel's Bay, and Whale Cove, are in perfect peace and friendship with the Northern Indians; which is entirely owing to the protection they have for several years past received from the Chiefs at the Company's Fort at Churchill River. But those of that tribe who live so far to the North, as not to have any intercourse with our vessels, very often fall a sacrifice to the fury and superstition of the Northern Indians; who are by no means a bold or warlike people; nor can I think from experience, that they are particularly guilty of committing acts of wanton cruelty on any other part of the human race beside the Esquimaux.... In the Summer of 1756 a party of Northern Indians lay in wait at Knapp's Bay till the sloop had sailed out of the harbour, when they fell on the poor Esquimaux, and killed every soul [forty in all].... and for no other reason but because two principal Northern Indians had died in the preceding Winter."[10]

The northern Athapascans were no exception to the general rule that linguistic affiliation does not necessarily result in friendly intercourse. The depredations of the Yellowknives upon the Dogribs, as noted by Franklin, have been referred to; and the same writer says:

"At the time of Hearne's visit [in 1771], the Copper Indians being unsupplied with fire-arms, were oppressed by the Chipewyans. Since

interested in human beings rather than trade, and being an understanding and accurate observer (he was a capable artist), he left an unusually complete and authentic ethnological account. His companions were inhabitants of the barren grounds between Reindeer lake and Hudson bay, the "Caribou-eaters." He calls them Northern Indians, in distinction to the Cree, whom he designates Southern Indians. He never mentions the Chipewyan as such, although his "Athapuscow" sometimes seems to refer to that branch of the family, while in other passages he definitely infers that the "Athapuscow" speak the "Southern Indian" language and therefore are western Cree. In spite of his silence as to the Chipewyan, the similarity of that branch to the people with whom Hearne lived and travelled was such that the following numerous quotations from this author may be taken as fairly descriptive of Chipewyan life.

10 Hearne, 321-322.

they have received arms from the traders, the Chipewyans are fearful of venturing upon their lands."[11]

The Cree, holding the country about the southwesterly shores of Hudson bay, obtained firearms at an early date, and with this advantage they pressed beyond Churchill river, which had been their northerly limit, drove the Athapascans before them, and took possession of Athabasca river down to the lake. This occupancy resulted in fastening a Cree name upon the flat, marshy region about the westerly end of the lake and the mouth of Athabasca and Peace rivers - Ayápaskáu, a wide stretch of low-lying hay slough, the original form of Athabasca .[12]

This is the native account of the events leading up to the first contact of the Chipewyan with English traders:

The first trading post on Hudson bay was established in Cree territory. More robust than the slender Cree, and more reckless fighters, the Chipewyan had held their own; but when they discovered that the Cree could point a stick which made a flash and a cloud of smoke and a noise of thunder, and kill a man, they felt helpless. Occasionally the Cree in their raids would catch a handsome young woman and carry her away. Such a woman was Thándelthur ["marten shake"].

Her Cree husband took her on a long journey eastward, and after a time left her behind and went on. When he returned, he had supplies of articles she had never seen. She wondered where he had got them. This happened again the next season. The following year when he left her in camp she followed far behind, keeping hidden in the bush. She saw her husband and his companions disappear in the side of a rock.

11 Franklin, II, 79,80.

12 J.N.B. Hewitt translates: *"athap,* 'in succession,' *-askaw,* 'grass,' 'reeds;' hence 'grass or reeds here and there."' According to Abbé Petitot the word refers to a reedy, grassy mouth of a river, and means "the herbaceous network." Dr. John Richardson, surgeon of Sir John Franklin's party, recorded a number of Cree words at Carlton House, a short distance above the mouth of the North Saskatchewan. He writes *th* for a slightly affricative sound represented in the present volume by y; as in Eithinyoowuc, Iyíniwuk ("people"). From this it appears probable that a hundred years ago the Cree said "Athápaskáu," instead of Ayápaskáu, or that the language of the Prairie Cree at Carlton House differed dialectally from that of Woods Cree described herein. Peter Pond's map of 1785 has "Arabasca" lake, which is the Bush Cree pronunciation.

She crept up and found that it was a stone house. She peered through the window. The factor saw her through the glass, opened the door and called her in. She entered and he asked, "Who are you?" She answered in Cree. He inquired if her people were numerous, and she said they were many.

"Are they good-looking people?"

"You see me. Do I look bad?"

"No, you look better than these people."

"Well, that is how my people look."

The man turned to the Cree, who on the woman's entrance had appeared disconcerted, and said: "You have been telling me that the people with whom you have been fighting, are bad-looking people, that they are like devils; and that is why you wanted to kill them. I think you are liars." He paid them for their furs and bought the woman.

The following winter he said to her, "Do you think you could find your country?"

"Of course I know my country," she replied.

So a party set out with several sleds, following the Cree trail westward for a time, then branching northward. Here the woman was sent ahead in order that her people might not be frightened. At last she met a man in the trail. She related what had happened and how she was bringing the White Flesh to trade with her people. Then she sent him home with the news and told him that the party would camp at the lake. When the people saw a great fire, the men were to come down and make a treaty. A few came to the camp, but some were fearful and hid. Those who came saw a flag flying, and they were in awe of it. The white men had raised a platform on which they placed the woman, so that her people could see her and have confidence. When she beheld her people coming, she sang with joy. The factor gave the Chipewyan presents, especially guns, and for each article he told how many skins they must bring him to pay for it. A gun he would hold upright with the butt on the ground, and explain that a pile of beaver-skins of equal height would pay for it. All day he taught them how to shoot at a mark, how to use axes and files, how to prepare furs. The woman returned with the factor to the fort on Hudson bay.

Unlike the Cree, according to Hearne, "few of the Northern Indians are fond of spirits, especially those who keep at a distance from the Fort: some who are near, and who usually shoot geese for us in the

Spring, will drink it at free cost as fast as the Southern Indians, but few of them are ever so imprudent as to buy it."[13]

In spite of the contemptuous epithet of Slaves applied by the Cree to their dispossessed enemies, native accounts of the Cree, as well as of the Chipewyan, indicate that this Athapascan group, at least, were stubborn fighters when attacked, even under the terrific handicap of bowmen against musketeers. They are said to have been without fear, undaunted by the death of a few, and the Cree commonly called them "bad people" in reference to their reckless, headlong attack. Ultimately they obtained arms and forced the Cree southward to the Saskatchewan, taking possession of the country formerly occupied by the Slaves. There followed a period during which a stretch of neutral ground separated the enemies, and still later a Cree band settled peaceably in the swampy country about Lake Claire between the deltas of Athabasca and Peace rivers, and another at Isle á la Crosse.

All these events occurred prior to the establishment of the first trading posts in Athapascan territory. In 1775, according to Alexander Mackenzie's journal,[14] John Frobisher met a party of Indians from the northwest on English, or Churchill, or Missinipi (Cree, "great water") river at a point somewhat west of the stream that flows out of Reindeer lake. The place was the portage connecting Churchill with lower Saskatchewan river, and the name Portage la Traite was given to it in reference to his trade negotiations with the Indians on that occasion. Prior to Frobisher's visit the Cree had driven back the Athapascan inhabitants of this region, and the portage at one time represented the limit of the northwestward advance of the Algonquians. They called it Portage of the Stretched Frog Skin in derision; for "they held them [the Athapascans] in great contempt, on many accounts, but particularly for their ignorance in hunting the beaver, as well as in preparing, stretching, and drying the skins of those animals. And as a sign of their derision they stretched the skin of a frog, and hung it up at the Portage." The Indians whom Frobisher encountered at this place were on

13 Hearne, 271.

14 Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in 1789 and 1793, London, 1801. Reprint, New York, 1901, 1, XXXIV *et seq.*

their way to trade at Fort Churchill at the mouth of the river. Apparently they were Cree, not Chipewyan, for Mackenzie says that it was the former who carried their furs down the river, while the latter made a hazardous and laborious journey over the barren grounds, where they sometimes met death by starvation. Fear of exciting the marauding instinct of the Cree by exposing valuable furs to their sight no doubt led the Chipewyan to this course. Two years later Frobisher sent his brother to explore northwestward, and the expedition reached Isle á la Crosse, which was destined to become one of the most important stations in the Northwest, a point of departure for Arctic-flowing waters by way of Portage la Loche and Clearwater river (an affluent of Athabasca river), for Hudson bay via Churchill river, for the Great Lakes and Montreal by way of the Churchill and Lake Winnipeg, and for the upper Saskatchewan system by way of Beaver river and its southerly affluents. Isle á la Crosse was frequented, according to Mackenzie, by Cree even more than by Chipewyan, and Cree domination is predicated by the name itself, which refers to the fact that here was a well-known field for the game of lacrosse, an Algonquian, but not an Athapascan, institution. Nevertheless, Daniel W. Harmon, a North West Company partner who was at this post in 1808, wrote: "The Indians who come to this establishment, are Chippewyans, in considerable numbers, and a few Crees."[15] The locality is now claimed by the Chipewyan.

In 1778 a number of traders into the Saskatchewan country pooled their surplus goods and despatched Peter Pond (whose name appears on maps of the Northwest) with four canoes up Churchill river and over Portage la Loche. On Elk river, forty miles from Lake of the Hills (Athabasca river and lake), he established a post and passed the winter in trade. He found "a vast concourse of the Knisteneaux [Cree]

15 A journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America, New York, 1922 (reprint). This work has comparatively little ethnological value for three reasons: (1) Data on Indian life refer in general terms to tribes west of the Rocky mountains and those east of the mountains, not to specific tribes. (2) There are numerous passages lifted, almost verbatim, from Mackenzie's journal or some earlier common source. (3) Harmon's manuscript was "edited" by a New England clergyman, and there is always uncertainty as to what stood in the original and what the editor interpolated.

and Chipewyan tribes." In 1781 smallpox depopulated the country by carrying off thousands and causing the survivors to flee into remoter regions. In 1786 a post was established on Slave river, and in 1788 Fort Chipewyan was built. It stood on a point eight miles east of the mouth of Athabasca river and on the southerly shore of the lake.[16] To this establishment came canoe-loads of trade goods from Rainy lake by way of lakes Winnipeg and Cumberland, Churchill river, Isle á la Crosse, Portage la Loche, and Athabasca river, a two-months voyage. And from there some were sent on westward up Peace river nearly to the Rocky mountains to trade with the Beavers, others northward down Slave river and beyond Great Slave lake. Fort Chipewyan was the point of departure for Mackenzie's voyage to the Arctic ocean in 1789.

The most important game animals to all the northern Athapascans were caribou, moose, hares, and beaver.

The barren-ground caribou, in a vast herd, migrate southward at the approach of winter and return northward in the spring. Their southerly limit was formerly a few miles from Fort Chipewyan, at which place a few stragglers from the main body were killed. In autumn and spring the people proceeded to various well-known places where the migrating animals always made use of certain narrow crossings of lakes or streams, to lie in wait in their canoes and spear

16 Mackenzie, I, 193, cxxxiv, is specific as to the situation of this post. "June, 1789. *Wednesday, 3*. – We embarked at nine in the morning, at Fort Chepewyan, on the South side of the Lake of the Hills, in latitude 58.40. North, and longitude 110.30. West from Greenwich." "In the year 1788 it [the Old Establishment of Peter Pond on Athabasca river] was transferred to the Lake of the Hills, and formed on a point on its Southern side, at about eight miles from the discharge of the river. It was named Fort Chepewyan, and is in latitude 58-38. North, longitude
110.26. West." Harmon is indefinite: "This fort stands on a rocky point, at the south western end of Athabasca Lake." Subsequently the fort was removed to the northern shore, for in 1820 Franklin wrote: "Fort Chipewyan has been built many years, and is an establishment of very considerable extent, conspicuously situated on a rocky point of the northern shore. The portion of this extensive lake which is near the establishments, is called 'The Lake of the Hills, not improperly, as the northern shore and the islands are high and rocky." (I, 237, 238.) Both the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, which had not yet combined, had trading posts at this place.

the swimming caribou. The meat was dried, the fat rendered, and the pounded mixture, packed in rawhide bags of a width convenient for sled transportation, constituted *ets!î*^{n}*s-tles*, pemmican. The woodland caribou, much larger than the barren-ground species, and, like it, dark in summer and whitish in winter, is found as far south as Cold lake. The importance of caribou to the Chipewyan of former days is sufficiently indicated by the use of its name as a term for meat.

Sir John Franklin describes three interesting methods of hunting caribou.

> The Copper Indians ... in summer ... enclose a herd upon a neck of land, and drive them into a lake, where they fall an easy prey.... The Copper Indians find by experience that a white dress attracts them most readily, and they often succeed in bringing them within shot, by kneeling and vibrating the gun from side by side, in imitation of the motion of a deer's horns when he is in the act of rubbing his head against a stone. The hunters [of the Dogribs] go in pairs, the foremost man carrying in one hand the horns and part of the skin of the head of a deer [caribou], and in the other a small bundle of twigs, against which he, from time to time, 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 somewhat suddenly, after the manner of a deer, and always taking care to lift their right or left feet simultaneously. If any of the herd leave off feeding to gaze upon this extraordinary phenomenon, it instantly stops, and the head begins to play its part by licking its shoulders, and performing other necessary movements. In this way the hunters attain the very centre of the herd without exciting suspicion, and have leisure to single out the fattest. The hindmost man then pushes forward his comrade's gun, the head is dropt, 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 terror, their foes stop at the same instant, and having loaded as they ran, greet the gazers with a second fatal discharge. The consternation of the deer increases, they run to and fro in the utmost confusion, and sometimes

a great part of the herd is destroyed within the space of a few hundred yards.[17]

Hearne made the following observations:

When the Indians design to impound deer [caribou], 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 a pound, it adds considerably to the commodiousness of the situation. The pound is built by making a strong fence with 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 well twisted together, which are amazingly strong. One end of the snare is usually made fast to a growing dole; but if no one of a sufficient size can be found near the place where the snare is set, a loose pole is substituted in its room, 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 brush-wood 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, which makes them the more distinctly observed. These poles, or brush-wood, 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 distance they extend from the entrance of the pound, which sometimes is not less than two or three miles; while the deer's path is exactly along the middle, between the two rows of brush-wood. Indians employed on this service always

17 Franklin, 11, 8, 10 -11.

pitch their tent on or near to an eminence that affords a commanding prospect of the path leading to the 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, till 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 brushy 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 breaking or jumping over the fence, while the men are employed spearing such as are entangled in the snares, and shooting with bows and arrows those which remain loose in the pound. This method of hunting ... is sometimes so successful, that many families subsist by it without having occasion to move their tents above once or twice during the course of a whole winter; and when the Spring advances, both the deer and Indians draw out to the Eastward, on the ground which is entirely barren.

When the Indians see a herd of deer [in summer], and intend to hunt them with bows and arrows, they observe which way the wind blows, and always get to leeward, for fear of being smelled by the deer. The next thing to which they attend, is to search for a convenient place to conceal those who are appointed to shoot. This being done, a large bundle of sticks, like large ramrods, (which they carry with them the whole Summer for the purpose), are arranged in two ranks, so as to form the two sides of a very acute angle, and the sticks placed at the distance of fifteen or twenty yards from each other. When those necessary arrangements are completed, the women and boys separate into two parties, and go round on both sides, till they form a crescent at the back of the deer, which are drove right forward; and as each of the sticks has a small flag, or more properly a pendant, fastened to it, which is easily waved to and fro by the wind, and a lump of moss stuck on each of their tops, the poor timorous deer, probably taking them for ranks of people, generally run straight forward between the two ranges of sticks, till they get among the Indians, who lie concealed in small circular fences, made with loose stones, moss, &c. When the deer

approach very near, the Indians who are thus concealed start up and shoot; but as the deer generally pass along at full speed, few Indians have time to shoot more than one or two arrows, unless the herd be very large.[18]

Moose are still numerous wherever there is swampy cover, but except in the rutting season or in deep snow they are killed with great difficulty. The Chipewyan call this animal "the wary one." The favorite method used to be to surround a bit of swamp or brush in which one was known to be feeding; and while one hunter slowly followed its trail, others disposed themselves in favorable spots and loosed their arrows if the animal came within range. Few men possess the cunning required for successfully stalking a moose under ordinary conditions. In the mating season, however, the animals are with little difficulty lured to the hunter by the use of a birch-bark trumpet with which he imitates the call of either male or female. Snow of great depth so impedes this small-hoofed animal that it has little chance of escaping a hunter on snowshoes. Both moose and woodland caribou were formerly snared, and the practice no doubt still exists in some remote districts. The end of a rawhide rope was attached near the top of a stout but resilient sapling, and the other end, arranged in a noose, was hung at the proper height in a trail. At the four sides of a rectangle the noose was attached by light threads to adjacent branches, so that a slight pressure would snap the threads and permit the noose to tighten on the animal's neck. The pursuit of moose over the snow is thus described by Hearne:

The moose are so tender-footed, and so short-winded, that a good runner will generally tire them in less than a day, and very frequently in six or eight hours; though I have known some of the Indians continue the chace for two days, before they could come up with, and kill the game. On those occasions the Indians, in general, only take with them a knife or bayonet, and a little bag containing a set of fire-tackle, and are as lightly clothed as possible; some of them will carry a bow and two or three arrows. When the poor moose are incapable of making farther speed, they stand and keep their pursuers at bay with their head and fore-feet; in the use of which they are very dexterous, espe-

18 Hearne, 120-122, 309.

cially the latter; so that the Indians who have neither a bow nor arrows, nor a short gun, with them, are generally obliged to lash their knives or bayonets to the end of a long stick, and stab the moose at a distance.... The flesh of the moose, thus killed, is far from being well-tasted, ... being soft and clammy, ... neither resembling fish, flesh, nor fowl. Though I was a swift runner in those days, I never accompanied the Indians in one of those chaces, but have heard many of them say, that after a long one, the moose, when killed, did not produce more than a quart of blood, the remainder being all settled in the flesh; which, in that state, must be ten times worse tasted, than the spleen or milt of a bacon hog.[19]

Hares become overwhelmingly abundant in some years, but a periodic epidemic destroys them in vast numbers, leaving the ground in some places so thickly covered with decaying bodies that the stench is unbearable. The survivors multiply rapidly, and in a few years the country is again overrun with hares and the epidemic once more spreads. One need not actually see these swarming animals to realize the infinity of their number. Here and there are to be observed hundreds of acres where every shoot up to three-quarters of an inch in diameter has been gnawed off to a cleanly rounded end a foot or two from the ground to furnish winter food for the rodents. In such places one may see remnants of many snares. The noose of these snares hangs in a runway beneath an arching stick - either a naturally growing vine or a hoop placed by the hunter, - and just above the noose the cord is attached to this arch by a slip-knot. The end of the cord is fastened to the tip of a pole balanced across a branch or a stump, and the base of the pole is sufficiently heavy to lift the hare from the ground when the slip-knot is released by its struggles. In winter the vine or hoop is replaced by a branch or a small sapling broken above the level of the snow and bent down at an angle across the trail. Hares are also shot when the female leaps from cover in response to a squeaking sound, imitative of the cry of her young, produced by means of a vibrating fibre tongue held between the ends of two splints lashed together.

In this region of numerous streams and swamps beaver were very plentiful, a condition that led to its early exploration by the traders. It

19 Hearne, 279-280.

has already been noted that Peace river is known to the natives as Beaver river and the inhabitants of that district are called Beaver People. Not only for their fur but for their flesh, beaver were taken by four methods. Poles were so placed as to obstruct the entrance of a hut, and the hunter opened the roof and speared the animals. The implement for opening a hut was *ttha"hl,* a beaver's skull with a single incisor in place. It was not swung, like an adz. Pressure was applied with a movement approximating that of a gnawing beaver. Less laborious, but also less productive, was the practice of standing on the dam at an opening made in it and catching an investigating beaver on a caribou-antler gaff. A third method was to set below an opening in the dam a bag-net about six feet square and having a drawstring controlled by a man on shore. The mesh was just large enough to admit a beaver's head. The net was lightly attached at the corners to two poles, by means of which it was pushed down into the water and held in place. When a beaver passed into the net, the hunter hauled on his line, the light fastenings were broken, the net was drawn shut. If a beaver got into the net while the hunter was warming himself at his fire, it very soon cut the net to pieces; therefore in later times a warning bell was attached to the line and hung on a pole. In winter poles were driven so as to obstruct a stream above a pond, and the beaver, confined to the water immediately above their dam, were speared at their breathing-holes in the ice.

Of beaver-hunting Hearne says:

When the beaver which are situated in a small river or creek are to be taken, the Indians sometimes find it necessary to stake the river across, to prevent them from passing; after which, they endeavor to find out all their holes or places of retreat in the banks. Every man being furnished with an ice-chisel, lashes it to the end of a small staff about four or five feet long; he then walks along the edge of the banks, and keeps knocking his chisels against the ice. Those who are well acquainted with that kind of work well know by the sound of the ice when they are opposite to any of the beavers' holes or vaults. As soon as they suspect any, they cut a hole through the ice big enough to admit an old beaver; and in this manner proceed till they have found out all their places of retreat, or at least as many of them as possible. While the principal men are thus employed, some of the understrappers, and the women, are busy in breaking open the house, which at times is no easy task; for I have frequently known these houses to be

five and six feet thick; and one in particular, was more than eight feet thick on the crown. When the beaver find that their habitations are invaded, they fly to their holes in the banks for shelter; and on being perceived by the Indians, which is easily done, by attending to the motion of the water, they block up the entrance with stakes of wood, and then haul the beaver out of its hole, either by hand, if they can reach it, or with a large hook made for that purpose, which is fastened to the end of a long stick. In this kind of hunting, every man has the sole right to all the beaver caught by him in the holes or vaults; and as this is a constant rule, each person takes care to mark such as he discovers, by sticking up the branch of a tree, or some other distinguishing post, by which they may know them. All that are caught in the house also are the property of the person who finds it. Where one beaver is caught in the house, many thousands are taken in their vaults in the banks. The Northern Indians think that the sagacity of the beaver directs them to make that part of their house which fronts the North much thicker than any other part, ... and for this reason ... generally break open that side of the beaver-houses which exactly front the South.[20]

Elk and woodland buffalo were abundant on Peace, Athabasca, and Slave rivers,[21] but were of little importance to the natives. Of the former Hearne says they "are the most stupid of all the deer kind, and frequently make a shrill whistling, and quivering noise, ... which directs the hunter to the very spot where they are. They generally keep in large herds, and when they find plenty of pasture, remain a long time in one place. Those deer are seldom an object of chace with the Indians bordering on Basquiau [Cree *pasqáu,* prairie?], except when moose and other game fail."[22] Whatever tribe this statement refers to, it is certain

20 Hearne, 245-246, 249.

21 Mackenzie, II, 27, has the following interesting passage: "He [a Beaver Indian on Peace river one hundred and twenty miles west of Lesser Slave lake] remembered the opposite hills and plains, now interspersed with groves of poplars, when they were covered with moss, and without any animal Inhabitant about but the rein-deer. By degrees, he said, the face of the country changed to its present appearance, when the elk came from the East, and was followed by the buffalo; the rein-deer then retired to the long range of high lands that, at a considerable distance, run parallel, with this river."

22 Hearne, 337.

that the Chipewyan attached no importance to the elk; otherwise the animal would be mentioned in tales, and a well-informed member of that tribe now living at Cold lake would not think, as he does, that his ancestors were unacquainted with the species. Of the buffalo, which he found very plentiful south of Great Slave lake, the same explorer says: "Of all the large beasts in those parts the buffalo is the easiest to kill, and the moose are the most difficult; neither are the deer [woodland caribou] very easy to come at, except in windy weather."[23]

In the far north were musk-oxen, and in his boyhood an informant saw many of their hides brought down to Fort Chipewyan. He has heard that the people of the north, when they find a herd of these animals near a small, frozen lake, send a man to make a trail in the snow almost encircling the lake. Through the opening left by his trail they cautiously drive the herd out upon the ice, where the oxen begin to move slowly in a circle, never attempting to cross the trail. In this situation they are easily shot down.

Hearne repeatedly mentions the wasteful killing of game, a thing quite contrary to the custom of most Indians. "They insisted on it, that killing plenty of deer and other game in one part of the country, could never make them scarcer in another. Indeed, they were so accustomed to kill every thing that came within their reach, that few of them could pass by a small bird's nest, without slaying the young ones, or destroying the eggs."[24] Probably this trait was partly the result of their living in a vast and almost uninhabited region. Indians confined to smaller and definitely limited territories easily recognized the danger of wanton destruction of game.

The Chipewyan at Cold lake have the reputation of being skilful and industrious trappers. The winters are spent in localities remote from the summer camps, never more than two trappers being associated. A man recently took in one winter furs that sold for more then three thousand dollars. This of course was exceptional. Half of that amount is regarded as a good return for a successful trapper.

The fur-bearing animals are fox, lynx, coyote, wolf, marten, fisher, mink, otter, beaver, muskrat, skunk, weasel, and an occasional bear.

23 Hearne, 257.

24 Hearne, 152.

The arch-enemy of northern trappers is the wolverene, glutton, or carcajou - rapacious, cunning, and wanton, difficult to catch in a trap, seldom seen, given to robbing traps of bait and captives and to destroying stores of provisions that he cannot devour. Many amusing tales are told of his depredations.

A trapper found his cache of provisions opened and much of the food destroyed. There were tracks of two wolverenes. He set a trap, but they dragged it aside and entered the cache again. Several times this was repeated. Then he killed a moose, filled its stomach with the blood, poured in a quantity of alcohol, tied it up, and laid it in the cache. The next morning he came to see what had happened. On the ice near by he saw two black spots. He went out and found the two robbers. They would stand on their hind-legs and endeavor to fight, but would fall like drunken men. He watched them a while and then killed both with an ax.

A man, about to leave his tipi for a time, piled his food on a platform five or six feet above the ground and covered the fire with ashes. When he returned he found his tipi demolished and partially burned, and near by a wolverene with badly burned mouth and eyes and singed fur. He killed it with his ax, and deduced that it had climbed up the side of the tipi, crept through the smoke-vent, and dropped down upon the platform. Opening the bundle, it had tossed aside the inedible articles, among which was a bag of gunpowder. Unextinguished embers beneath the ashes had ignited the bag, and the resultant explosion had wrecked the tipi and greatly surprised the marauder.

In spite of the importance attached to the caribou and the periodic abundance of hares, fish were the staff of life for many of the northern Athapascans, including those Chipewyan who lived on Slave river and Athabasca lake and southward. When game animals failed, it was usually possible to catch fish through the ice – maskinonge (locally known as jack-fish), lake trout, and whitefish.

Bone-pointed spears, antler gorge-hooks, and gill-nets were used both summer and winter. The nets, made of babiche (caribou raw-hide cord), weighted with stone sinkers and supported by wooden floats, were as long as thirty fathoms. Mackenzie tells of his own men at Fort Chipewyan using nets sixty fathoms long and fifteen five-inch meshes broad. In making a winter set, the fisherman chopped, or burned with hot stones, a hole through the ice, pushed the end of the net about

thirty feet with a forked pole, opened another hole, and pushed the net forward again. Shorter nets were set in streams and the fish were removed by men in canoes. There is an old tale about two members of a party wandering in search of food, who in the night swam out to a net in midstream to steal fish. One of them became entangled in the net. His struggles were heard, and the owner of the net put off in a canoe and speared him joyously, as if he were a great fish caught in the net. Fifty or sixty years ago it became customary to catch a large quantity of fish after the arrival of cold weather and hang them on pole frames to freeze without drying or smoking. In ancient times the people fished throughout the year.[25] When they found a good station, they remained close at home all winter, carefully avoiding leaving tracks that might betray them to the Cree who frequented the southerly lakes. According to Mackenzie, raw fish-eyes were a delicacy.

Waterfowl were shot with arrows and caught in snares. Of the latter method Hearne says:

To snare swans, geese, or ducks, in the water, it requires no other process than to make a number of hedges, or fences, project into the water, at right angles, from the banks of a river, lake, or pond; for it is observed that those birds generally swim near the margin, for the benefit of feeding on the grass, &c. Those fences are continued for some distance from the shore, and separated two or three yards from each other, so that openings are left sufficiently large to let the birds swim through. In each of those openings a snare is hung and fastened to a stake, which the bird, when intangled, cannot drag from the bottom; and to prevent the snare from being wafted out of its proper place by the wind, it is secured to the stakes which form the opening, with tender grass, which is easily broken. To snare those birds in their nests requires a considerable degree of art, and, as the natives say, a great deal of cleanliness; for they have observed, that when snares have been set by those whose hands were not clean, the birds would not go into the nest. Even the goose, though so simple a bird, is notoriously known

25 This does not necessarily conflict with Mackenzie, who says that in his time fish were frozen in enormous quantities and kept in good condition until April. He was speaking of his own crew's activities, and the custom may not have been a native one. Myths and tales consistently support the statement in the text.

to forsake her eggs, if they are breathed on by the Indians. The smaller species of birds which make their nest in the ground, are by no means so delicate, of course less care is necessary to snare them. It has been observed that all birds which build in the ground go into their nest at one particular side, and out of it on the opposite. The Indians, thoroughly convinced of this, always set the snares on the side on which the bird enters the nest; and if care be taken in setting them, seldom fail of seizing their object. For small birds, such as larks, and many others of equal size, the Indians only use two or three hairs out of their head; but for larger birds, particularly swans, geese, and ducks, they make snares of deer-sinews, twisted like pack-thread, and occasionally of a small thong cut from a parchment deer-skin.[26]

The same author notes that white owls and great-horned owls were much esteemed by Indians and Europeans, but only the natives cared for eagles and hawks. Out of the fulness of his experience he describes many peculiar dishes and tastes of his companions. A favorite dish was blood-pudding made with the blood [of a caribou], a good quantity of fat shred small, some of the tenderest of the flesh, together with the heart and lungs cut, or more commonly torn into small shivers; all which is put into the stomach, and roasted, by being suspended before the fire on a string. Care must be taken that it does not get too much heat at first, as the bag would thereby be liable to be burnt, and the contents be let out. When it is sufficiently done, it will emit steam ... and if it be taken in time, before the blood and other contents are too much done, it is certainly a most delicious morsel, even without pepper, salt, or any other seasonings.[27]

The most remarkable dish among them ... is blood mixed with the half-digested food which is found in the deer's stomach or paunch, and boiled up with a sufficient quantity of water, to make it of the consistence of pease-pottage. Some fat and scraps of tender flesh are also shred small and boiled with it. To render this dish more palatable, they have a method of mixing the blood with the contents of the stomach in the paunch itself, and hanging it up in the heat and smoke of the fire for several days; which puts the whole mass into a state of

26 Hearne, 274-275.

27 Hearne, 171.

fermentation, and gives it such an agreeable acid taste, that were it not for prejudice, it might be eaten by those who have the nicest palates. Most of the fat which is boiled in it is first chewed by the men and boys, in order to break the globules that contain the fat.... Neither old people with bad teeth, nor young children, have any hand in preparing this dish.... The stomach of no other large animal beside the deer is eaten by any of the Indians that border on Hudson's Bay. In Winter, when the deer feed on fine white moss, the contents of the stomach is so much esteemed by them, that I have often seen them sit round a deer where it was killed, and eat it warm out of the paunch.

The young calves, fawns, beaver, &C. taken out of the bellies of their mothers, are reckoned most delicate food; and I am not the only European who heartily joins in pronouncing them the greatest dainties that can be eaten. The same may be said of young geese, ducks, &c. in the shell. In fact, it is almost become a proverb in the Northern settlements, that whoever wishes to know what is good, must live with the Indians.

The parts of generation belonging, to any beast they kill, both male and female, are always eaten by the men and boys; and though those parts, particularly in the males, are generally very tough, they are not, on any account, to be cut with an edge-tool, but torn to pieces with the teeth; and when any part of them proves too tough to be masticated, it is thrown into the fire and burnt. For the Indians believe firmly, that if a dog should eat any part of them, it would have the same effect on their success in hunting, that a woman crossing their hunting-track at an improper period would have. The same ill-success is supposed also to attend them if a woman eat any of those parts.

They are also remarkably fond of the womb of the buffalo, elk, deer, &c. which they eagerly devour without washing, or any other process but barely stroking out the contents.... The Indian method of preparing this unaccountable dish is by throwing the filthy bag across a pole directly over the fire, the smoke of which, they say, much improves it, be taking off the original flavour; and when any of it is to be cooked, a large flake, like as much tripe, is cut off and boiled for a few minutes....

The lesser stomach, or, as some call it, the many-folds, either of

buffalo, moose, or deer, are usually eat raw, and are very good.[28]

The Athapascans dried their meat in sun and wind, the Cree in heat and smoke. Meat cured by the former method Hearne found much the more tasty. Flesh was commonly cooked by broiling, less often by boiling in birch-bark vessels by means of heated stones; but,

For want of firing they are frequently obliged to eat their victuals quite raw, particularly in the Summer season, while on the barren ground; . they frequently do it by choice, and particularly in the article of fish; for when they do make a pretence of dressing it, they seldom warm it through. I have frequently made one of a party who has sat round a fresh-killed deer, and assisted in picking the bones quite clean, when I thought that the raw brains and many other parts were exceedingly good.[29]

Though the flesh of the moose is esteemed by most Indians both for its flavour and substance, yet the Northern Indians of my crew did not reckon either it or the flesh of the buffalo substantial food. This I should think entirely proceeded from prejudice, especially with respect to the moose; but the flesh of the buffalo, though so fine to the eye, and pleasing to the taste, is so light and easy of digestion, as not to be deemed substantial food by any Indian in this country.[30]

Their clothing, which chiefly consists of deer-skins in the hair, makes them very subject to be lousy; but that is so far from being thought a disgrace, that the best among them amuse themselves with catching and eating these vermin; of which they are so fond, that the produce of a lousy head or garment affords them not only pleasing amusement, but a delicious repast. My old guide, Matonabbee,[31] was so remarkably fond of those little vermin, that he frequently set five or six of his strapping wives to work to louse their hairy deer-skin shifts, the produce of which being always considerable, he eagerly received with both hands, and licked them in as fast, and with as good a grace, as any European epicure would the mites in a cheese[32]

28 Hearne, 306-308.

29 Hearne, 305.

30 Hearne, 262.

31 Unquestionably a Cree name, containing the element *nápiw*, old man.

32 Hearne, 312.

When the rutting season is over, and the Winter sets in, the deer-skins are not only very thin, but in general full of worms and warbles; which render them of little use, unless it be to cut into fine thongs, of which they make fishing-nets, and nets for the heels and toes of their snow-shoes. Indeed the chief use that is made of them in Winter is for the purpose of food; and really when the hair is properly taken off, and all the warbles are squeezed out, if they are well-boiled, they are far from being disagreeable. The Indians, however, never could persuade me to eat the warbles, of which some of them are remarkably fond, particularly the children. They are always eaten raw and alive, out of the skin; and are said, by those who like them, to be as fine as gooseberries.[33]

Although vegetal products, and especially roots, were of little importance to the more northerly Chipewyan, the southerly portion of their territory yields a fairly wide variety of such foods, especially four species of *Vaccinium:* blueberries, otter-berries (a species of blueberry on stalks four to six inches high), and dwarf and swamp cranberries; and service-berries, or June-berries (*Amelanchier Canadensis*), which are known throughout western Canada as saskatoon (*misáskotumina),* their Cree name. The dwarf cranberries occur in great abundance, not in bogs, but in sandy and partially shaded soil in company with dwarf blueberries and bearberries. They are stored far into the winter. Service-berries are dried and stored, but blueberries cannot be so treated. The fruit of all the *Vaccinia,* however, remains on the plants through the winter, and this exposure improves it in the opinion of the Indians. Chokecherries, said to be unknown farther north, are found at Cold lake, and are crushed and dried in small cakes, to be used as a relish and as an ingredient in meat stew. Formerly they were sometimes added to pounded meat and grease in making a special kind of pemmican. Gooseberries, bearberries, raspberries, strawberries, and rosehips are now of little moment, but were not despised when commercial products were either unknown or almost prohibitively expensive. The roots of cattail (*Typha*) were peeled and roasted on embers. For storage they were then thoroughly dried, enclosed in a folded rawhide, and beaten with stones into a meal that was kept in bags and used for mak-

33 Hearne, 215.

ing porridge. The tender young root-stalks of tule (*Scirpus*) also were eaten. Bast was scraped from the bark of aspens and jack-pines with a rib and eaten directly from the tool, and a glutenous soup was made of a species of lichen. This lowly plant, the *tripe de roche* of the Canadian voyageurs, was for days at a time the sole resource of Franklin's party on its return from the Arctic to Fort Enterprise.

Famine is a favorite theme in tales, and the people are compared to coyotes constantly roving in search of food, sometimes feasting, sometimes starving.

In recent years the Chipewyan at Cold lake have raised small quantities of wheat. Their summers are devoted to fishing, their winters to fishing through the ice, trapping, or patiently waiting for spring.

The Chipewyan house was a conical frame of poles covered with caribou-skins. In the southerly territory wrested from the Cree, into which the migratory caribou did not penetrate, moose-skins became the mode. Wickiups of spruce boughs were constructed for temporary use, and traditions tell of a long fire flanked by two semi-circular windbreaks, each of which sheltered a family. It is of interest to note that Mackenzie saw exactly this type of shelter among the Dogribs on lower Mackenzie river. The season was summer, and the winter habitation no doubt was a skin-covered tipi. Modern summer dwellings are canvas-covered tipis. The sweat-lodge was not a Chipewyan institution.

The typical garment of northern Athapascans was a sleeved coat or shirt reaching to mid-thigh and terminating in a point before and behind. It was put on over the head, tied together at the throat and at the sides of the skirt, and belted with a leather thong passing twice around the waist. For summer use the material was caribou-skin tanned on both sides. The winter parka was of caribou-fur worn with the dressed surface next to the body, and in extremely cold seasons two such garments were used, one with the fur against the skin, the other with the fur exposed to the weather. The winter garment had an attached hood. In addition there were fur robes, either entire skins sewn together or preferably ropes of hare-fur with cord weft, which were tied at the throat so that the hands were not impeded. Both sexes wore parkas, but those of women reached slightly below the knee so as to meet their shorter leggings. A distinctive feature was a tail pendent from the rear point of the skirt, and sometimes from the front one also. In

winter the under-parka served as a sleeping garment. Says Mackenzie: "This dress is worn single or double, but always in the winter, with the hair within and without. Thus arrayed a Chepewyan will lay himself down on the ice in the middle of a lake, and repose in comfort; though he will sometimes find a difficulty in the morning to disencumber himself from the snow drifted on him during the night." Franklin thus describes the bedtime preparations of one of his Yellowknife companions: "He stripped himself to the skin, and having toasted his body for a short time over the embers of the fire, he crept under his deer-skin and rags, previously spread out as smoothly as possible, and coiling himself up in a circular form, fell asleep instantly. This custom of undressing to the skin even when lying in the open air is common to all the Indian tribes. The thermometer at sunset stood at 29°."[34]

Moose-skin moccasins are still worn, the only relic of primitive dress among the Chipewyan at Cold lake. Formerly caribou-skin was much used, and probably it still is in more northerly districts. The separate sole curves upward at the edges so that the seam is not in contact with the ground. There was no ornamentation, it is said, on moccasins in really primitive times, but dyed porcupine-quills, beads, and bright silks are cleverly employed now. Mackenzie observed the ornamentation of clothing and of navel-cord packets with dyed quills, beads, and dyed moose-hairs. Winter moccasins are lined with hair or grass; or fur, especially that of hares, is made into socks. Warriors having outworn their moccasins removed the skin from the shank of a caribou or a moose and fitted it immediately to the foot. The only sewing required was the seam to close the opening left by cutting off the animal's foot. If such moccasins became wet and then dried, the wearer experienced much difficulty until he found another supply of water to wet them again.

The leggings of men were of the kind common to the Plains Indians—hip-length and supported by a belt beneath the parka, which also confined the leather breech-cloth. The material was caribou-skin, which for winter use was cured in the fur. In warm weather the legs were ordinarily bare. Women's leggings were tied just below the knee. Mackenzie repeatedly says that leggings were sewed to the moccasins.

34 Franklin, 1, 361.

Mittens of hare-fur were either sewed to the sleeves or attached to cords fastened to the shoulder or passing behind the neck.

It requires the prime parts of the skins of from eight to ten deer to make a complete suit of warm clothing for a grown person during the Winter; all of which should, if possible, be killed-in the month of August, or early in September... Beside these skins, which must be in the hair, each person requires several others to be dressed into leather, for stockings and shoes, and light Summer clothing; several more are also wanted in a parchment state, to make *clewla* [*hluhl*] as they call it, or thongs to make netting for their snow-shoes, snares for deer, sewing for their sledges, and, in fact, for every other use where strings or lines of any kind are required: so that each person, on an average, expends, in the course of a year, upwards of twenty deer skins in clothing and other domestic uses, exclusive of tent cloths, bags, and many other things which it is impossible to remember.[35]

Infants are now bedded on soft, dry moss *(Sphagnum)* and laced tightly in cloth bags; but Hearne says: "They make no use of cradles, like the Southern Indians, but only tie a lump of moss between their [infants'] legs, and always carry their children at their backs, next the skin, till they are able to walk."[36]

Men and women cut the hair at the level of the eyes and permitted it to hang loosely before and behind. Tattooing, and ornaments for nose and ears, were unknown so far as modern informants are aware; but Mackenzie reported that " both sexes have blue or black bars, or from one to four straight lines on their cheeks or forehead," and that the designs were made either by pricking the skin or by drawing a thread under it; and Hearne says that "every tribe of Northern Indians, as well as the Copper and Dog-ribbed Indians, have three or four parallel black strokes marked on each cheek; which is performed by entering an awl or needle under the skin, and, on drawing it out again, immediately rubbing powdered charcoal into the wound." Probably the Chipewyan also had the custom. The writer quoted describes the typical Northern Indian woman as having "a broad flat face, small eyes, high cheek-bones, three or four broad black lines a-cross each cheek,

35 Hearne, 214.

36 Hearne, 303.

a low forehead, a large broad chin, a clumsy hook-nose, a tawny hide, and breasts hanging down to the belt."[37]

The tools and utensils of the Chipewyan include articles made of bone, horn, antler, tooth, wood, and skin.

Their bows were of willow or birch split from the main stem of the tree, and if designed for large game or for fighting they were recurved and strengthened with sinew, which was not a backing cemented to the wood with glue, as in more southerly areas, but was rather a stout cord tied while "green" in a series of half-hitches two or three inches apart. Horn bows were unknown. Strips split from a spruce growing in a moist locality were the favored material for arrow-shafts, because arrows were much used for shooting waterfowl, and such wood was believed to resist warping. The strips were shaved down with a knife and smoothed by drawing them between two blocks of hard wood. The cylindrical point, made of a small bone from the fore-leg of a moose, or of antler, was socketed in the shaft. Its sides were sometimes notched. Flint points are found in the region, but their use by the ancient Chipewyan is not credited by the writer's informants. Arrows were triply winged with eaglefeathers, which were fastened with spruce-gum and sinew thread. Says Hearne: "They have so far lost the art of shooting with bows and arrows, that I never knew any of them who could take those weapons only, and kill either deer, moose, or buffalo, in the common, wandering, and promiscuous method of hunting. The Southern Indians, though they have been much longer used to firearms, are far more expert with the bow and arrow."[38]

Spears six to eight feet long were used for killing swimming caribou, beaver trapped in their huts, and fish, as well as for fighting at close quarters. In primitive times the spear was a man's constant companion. Spear-heads were of moose shin-bone, and of moose- or caribou-antler. Those designed for caribou hunting and for fighting were wider than thick,[39] while those for fishing were pointed cylinders

37 Hearne, 129, 299.

38 Hearne, 310.

39 Mackenzie says the caribou-spear had a barbed head of bone. He recorded things seen, but it would appear that a hunter in a canoe must have had difficulty in withdrawing his spear from the body of a caribou killed in

notched on the sides. An informant has heard of a primitive fish-spear with detachable point, but never saw one of this kind.

Aboriginal knives were made of moose-antler, but these crude tools were so quickly supplanted by the crooked steel implements of trade that neither Hearne nor Mackenzie mentions them. A chisel or adz, rather than an ax, was the upper incisor of a beaver in place in the maxilla. This novel tool, remembered in tradition, was seen by Mackenzie among the Dogribs, as were stone adz-blades fastened perpendicularly to wooden handles with green rawhide.

A gaff consisting of a sharply pointed tine of caribou-antler lashed to a slightly curving wooden handle was used for capturing beaver when they approached under water to investigate a gap opened by the hunter in their dam.

The fish-hook was a double-pointed spindle of caribou-antler, and the line, an untwisted cord of caribou rawhide, was attached at its middle, so that a jerk turned the device crosswise in the fish's gullet. Hearne mentions a hook made by lashing a pointed bone to a wooden shank.

In the preparation of skins the primitive flesher and scraper are still employed. The flesher is a moose ulna beveled at the lower end by fracturing the bone and grinding the fractured surface on a stone, and serrated on the cutting edge by means of a sharpened rib. At the knee-end a looped thong passes through a nerve orifice. Of equal length with the bone, the loop at its lower end encircles the wrist of the worker when the tool is grasped just above the beveled edge. With the left hand bearing heavily on the upper end and pushing from her, she draws the cutting edge toward her with a movement like that of a canoeman using a paddle, the looped thong giving additional leverage. The bone, almost as close-grained as ivory, takes a high polish, and with age becomes very hard. The scraper is a longitudinal half-section of a moose ulna ground fairly sharp along one of the fractured edges and wrapped with leather for hand-holds at both ends. A hide having been soaked in water and draped on a post set firmly aslant in the ground, the scraper is used in the manner of a draw-knife downward against the hair. Having removed hair and flesh, the workwoman rubs grease into the skin

the water if the barbs were at all prominent.

and hangs it in the heat of a smoking fire. Next she works a quantity of brains into its pores and weights it down in water. She then rubs it vigorously with a round, flat stone, in order to remove as much water as possible, and works it with her hands until it becomes pliable. In this last process she usually attaches both ends of a sinew cord to the post and draws the hide back and forth against the loop.

The most important skins were those of caribou, not because they were of the highest quality but because they were so easily obtained. Sir John Franklin noted that the caribou were pestered by swarms of gadflies, which deposited their ova under the skin. The larvæ, maturing in the spring, produced so many perforations that skins taken at that season were worthless, and the natives therefore made their clothing of skins taken in the fall, at which time of the year former perforations were represented by cicatrices. The same pest attacked the elk, but not the moose[40], Seven caribou-skins were required for a single robe, and though light yet warm and therefore excellent for winter, they were unfit for summer use, because moisture caused the skin to spoil, and lose its hair.

The primitive instrument for sewing skins was a pointed section of one of two small bones that lie behind a moose's shin. The thread was, and is, sinew.

Skin bags of several kinds are still seen. Most distinctive is *na^{n}hlchéth,* a rectangular, satchel-like receptacle for dried meat, dried berries, or personal articles of value. It is made of skin, tanned in the fur, from caribou fore-legs, and is laced together along the top. Another bag has a carrying-strap, a fringed bottom, and a flap buttoned on the side by means of a wooden toggle. Infants are confined in bags of soft skin laced down the front, lined with dry moss, and carried on the back by a thong passing across the chest. In winter they were placed in that position under the mother's loose-fitting parka, where they were conveniently suckled. Quivers were the entire furs of any animals of appropriate size, as fox, coyote, otter; and receptacles for pemmican were like the familiar parfléche of the Plains Indians, flat, folded rectangles of rawhide.

40 These encysted larvæ are the "warbles" noted by Hearne as a delicacy of the Indians

Leather and fur were the sole materials for garments, and the favorite robe was, and still is, made by weaving ropes of hare-fur on a warp of caribou-skin cord.

Cordage of the Chipewyan was either babiche, a continuous thong of caribou rawhide cut with much skill to a surprisingly uniform thickness, or sinew. Babiche was used for nets, fish-lines, snares, and snowshoes; sinew for bowstrings and thread. Chipewyan nets, it has been noted above, were designed for capturing fish by the gills and for enmeshing beaver. Mackenzie saw snares for caribou and moose consisting of twenty to thirty strands of rawhide, so closely twisted that the rope shrunk to a diameter "no thicker than a cod-line." The nets of the Dogribs, he said, were made of willow-bark cord. Hearne is explicit on this point:

It is of the inner bark of willows ... that the Dog-ribbed Indians make their fishing-nets; and they are much preferable to those made by the Northern Indians. The Northern Indians make their fishing-nets with small thongs cut from raw deer-skins; which when dry appear very good, but after being soaked in water some time, grow so soft and slippery, that when large fish strike the net, the hitches are very apt to slip and let them escape ... Beside this inconvenience, they are very liable to rot, unless they be frequently taken out of the water and dried.[41]

In the borderland of Cree culture, water-pails, platters, berry-baskets, and cooking vessels were of birch-bark. For berry-baskets and containers of general utility these are still made. The material is in a single piece, and the only seams are near three edges of one end. The material for sewing is spruce-roots, and imperfect joints and small orifices in the bark are sealed with spruce-gum. Primitive boiling was accomplished in vessels of this kind by means of heated stones. The antiquity of the use of bark for containers is indicated by its mention in traditions, as in one to the effect that if a man suspected the presence of enemies in camp at night and required a torch at once, he would seize a bark dish and light it at the smoldering fire. Mackenzie noted water-tight spruce-root baskets among the Dogribs. Bowls were hollowed out of poplar knurls.

In the far north musk-ox horns were boiled, split, and shaped into

41 Hearne, 265.

dishes and ladles.

Fire was made by means of a wooden spindle twirled between the palms, and by striking two stones together, processes so laborious that particular pains were taken to carry fire from one camp to another. Hearne observed only the second method.

The Chipewyan had no tobacco pipes, for smoking was unknown prior to the advent of European traders. Corroborative evidence on this point is found in the story of a man who received a twist of tobacco from a trader and proceeded to eat it, and in Mackenzie's observation that the Dogribs did not know the use of the tobacco he gave them. Bearberry leaves mixed with tobacco are now smoked in commercial pipes.

The primitive canoe is said to have been a wooden frame covered with the hides of caribou, a craft frequently mentioned in myths and tales as *ghúljai-ts!i* ("rawhide canoe"). Although birch-bark canoes were generally used in the earliest times of which we have record, it is quite likely that the inhabitants of the barrens formerly found it easier to use hides than to obtain suitable bark. Hearne noted with surprise that "they do not make use of the skin-canoes." The canoes made by his companions are thus described:

In shape the Northern Indian canoe bears some resemblance to a weaver's shuttle; being flat-bottomed, with straight upright sides, and sharp at each end; but the stern is by far the widest part, as there the baggage is generally laid, and occasionally a second person, who always lies down at full length in the bottom of the canoe. In this manner they carry one another across rivers and the narrow parts of lakes in those little vessels, which seldom exceed twelve or thirteen feet in length, and are from twenty inches to two feet broad in the widest part. The head, or fore part, is unnecessarily long, and narrow; and is all covered over with birch-bark, which adds considerably to the weight, without contributing to the burthen of the vessel. In general, these Indians make use of the single paddle, though a few have double ones, like the Esquimaux: the latter, however, are seldom used, but by those who lie in wait to kill deer as they cross rivers and narrow lakes.[42]

Canoes were used mainly for crossing unfordable streams, and for

42 Hearne, 135.

killing swimming caribou and waterfowl. The Indians, says Hearne, "are sometimes obliged to carry their canoes one hundred and fifty, or two hundred miles, without having occasion to make use of them; ... and were they not very small and portable, it would be impossible for one man to carry them, which they are often obliged to do, not only the distance above mentioned, but even the whole Summer."[43] A canoe was carried crosswise on the back, supported by a thong passing across the chest. In ferrying a large party it was customary, if several craft were available, to construct a raft on them.

Goods were transported in winter on sleds, which consisted of two narrow slips of board, up-curving at the forward end and rigidly joined by wooden cross-bars. Sleds mentioned in stories are usually uncured hides with the hair next to the ice, and the motive power in such cases is supplied by human beings, usually women, with a strap across the chest. Dogs as beasts of burden are a comparatively recent revival of ancient practice, but they now not only draw sleds in winter but carry loads on their backs in summer. Mackenzie tells of women dragging loads of two hundred to four hundred pounds, and Sir John Franklin observed that the Yellowknives and Chipewyan in 1820 had killed all their dogs on the advice of a religious fanatic:

The Northern Indians suppose that they originally sprang from a dog; and about five years ago, a superstitious fanatic so strongly pressed upon their minds the impropriety of employing these animals, to which they were related, for purposes of labour, that they universally resolved against using them any more, and, strange as it may seem, destroyed them. They now have to drag every thing themselves on sledges. This laborious task falls most heavily on the women. When a party is on a march, the women have to drag the tent, the meat, and whatever the hunter possesses, whilst he only carries his gun and medicine case. In the evening they form the encampment, cut wood, fetch water, and prepare the supper; and then, perhaps, are not permitted to partake of the fare until the men have finished. We were surprised by a visit from a dog; the poor animal was in a low condition, and much fatigued. Our Indians discovered, by marks on his ears, that he belonged to the Dog-ribs. This tribe, unlike the Chipewyans and

43 Hearne, 91.

Copper Indians, had preserved that useful associate of man, although from their frequent intercourse with the latter people, they were not ignorant of the prediction alluded to in a former page.[44]

As usual, Hearne's account is comprehensive:

In the fall of the year, and as the Winter advances, those people sew the skins of the deer's legs together in the shape of long portmanteaus, which, when hauled on the snow as the hair lies, are as slippery as an otter, and serve them as temporary sledges while on the barren ground; but when they arrive at any wood's, they then make proper sledges, with thin boards of the larch-tree, generally known in Hudson's Bay by the name of Juniper...

The boards of which those sledges are composed are not more than a quarter of an inch thick, and seldom exceed five or six inches in width; as broader would be very unhandy for the Indians to work, who have no other tools than an ordinary knife, turned up a little at the point. The boards are sewed together with thongs of parchment deer-skin, and several cross bars of wood are sewed on the upper side, which serves both to strengthen the sledge and secure the ground-lashing, to which the load is always fastened by other smaller thongs, or stripes of leather. The head or fore-part of the sledge is turned up so as to form a semi-circle, of at least fifteen or twenty inches diameter. The trace or draught-line to those sledges is a double string, or slip of leather, made fast to the head; and the bight is put across the shoulders of the person who hauls the sledge, so as to rest against the breast.

The tents ... are generally composed of deer-skins in the hair; and for convenience of carriage, are always made in small pieces, seldom exceeding five buck-skins in one piece. These tents, as also their kettles, and some other lumber, are always carried by dogs, which are trained to that service, and are very docile and tractable. Those animals are of various sizes and colours, but all of the fox and wolf breed, with sharp noses, full brushy tails, and sharp ears standing erect. They are of great courage when attacked. These dogs are equally willing to haul in a sledge, but as few of the men will be at the trouble of making sledges for them, the poor women are obliged to content themselves with lessening the bulk of their load, more than the weight, by making the

44 Franklin, I, 250; II, 13-14.

dogs carry these articles only, which are always lashed on their backs.[45]

Chipewyan snowshoes now to be seen at Cold lake are comparatively long and narrow, not up-curved at the tip, and the birch frame is netted with babiche. "The Chipewyans," says Franklin, "are celebrated for making them good and easy to walk in; we saw some here upwards of six feet long, and three broad."[46] These were unusually large. According to Hearne, the snowshoes of his Northern Indians "differ from all others made use of in those parts; for though they are of the galley kind, that is, sharp-pointed before, yet they are always to be worn on one foot, and cannot be shifted from side to side, like other snow-shoes; for this reason the inner-side of the frames are almost straight, and the outer-side has a very large sweep."[47] His accompanying sketch shows them turned up at the tip, and fifty-four inches long by thirteen inches broad. "Small staves of birch-wood, about one and a quarter inch square, and seven or eight feet long .... serve as tent-poles all the Summer, while on the barren ground; and as the fall advances, are converted into snow-shoe frames for Winter use."[48]

Hearne's pages are full of vivid pictures of the hazards and hardships of primitive life, particularly with respect to women. His principal guide on the journey to Coppermine river explained the economic status of women on the march:

"When all the men are heavy laden, they can neither hunt nor travel to any considerable distance; and in case they meet with success in hunting, who is to carry the produce of their labour? Women," added he, "were made for labour; one of them can carry, or haul, as much as two men can do. They also pitch our tents, make and mend our clothing, keep us warm at night; and, in fact, there is no such thing as travelling any considerable distance, or for any length of time, in this country, without their assistance. Women," said he again, "though they do every thing, are maintained at a trifling expence; for as they always stand cook, the very licking of their fingers in scarce times, is sufficient for their subsistence."

45 Hearne, 310-312.

46 Franklin, I, 209.

47 Hearne, 312.

48 Hearne, 127-128.

In times of want the poor women always come off short; and when real distress approaches, many of them are permitted to starve, when the males are amply provided for.

One of the Indian's wives, who for some time had been in a consumption, had for a few days past become so weak as to be incapable of travelling, which, among those people, is the most deplorable state to which a human being can possibly be brought.... Without much ceremony, she was left unassisted, to perish above ground.... They say it is better to leave one who is past recovery, than for the whole family to sit down by them and starve to death; well knowing that they cannot be of any service to the afflicted. On those occasions, therefore, the friends or relations of the sick generally leave them some victuals and water; and, if the situation of the place will afford it, a little firing. When those articles are provided, the person to be left is acquainted with the road which the others intend to go; and then, after covering them well up with deer skins, &c. they take their leave, and walk away crying. Sometimes persons thus left, recover; and come up with their friends, or wander about till they meet with other Indians.... The poor woman above mentioned, however, came up with us three several times, after having been left in the manner described. At length, poor creature! she dropt behind, and no one attempted to go back in search of her.[49]

Harmon's remark now becomes credible: "Instances of suicide, by hanging, frequently occur, among the women of all the tribes, with whom I have been acquainted; but the men are seldom known to take away their own lives." [50]

On the eleventh of January [1772, south of Great Slave lake], as some of my companions were hunting, they saw the track of a strange snow-shoe, which they followed; and at a considerable distance came to a little hut, where they discovered a young woman sitting alone. As they found that she understood their language, they brought her with them to the tents. On examination, she proved to be one of the Western Dog-ribbed Indians, who had been taken prisoner by the Atha-

49 Hearne, 101-102, 218-219, 288.

50 Harmon, 163-164.

puscow Indians[51] in the Summer of one thousand seven hundred and seventy; and in the following Summer, when the Indians that took her prisoner were near this part, she had eloped from them, with an intent to return to her own country; but the distance being so great, and having, after she was taken prisoner, been carried in a canoe the whole way, the turnings and windings of the rivers and lakes were so numerous, that she forgot the track; so she built the hut in which we found her, to protect her from the weather during the Winter, and here she had resided from the first setting in of the fall.

From her account of the moons passed since her elopement, it appeared that she had been near seven months without seeing a human face; during all which time she had supported herself very well by snaring partridges, rabbits, and squirrels; she had also killed two or three beaver, and some porcupines. That she did not seem to have been in want is evident, as she had a small stock of provisions by her when she was discovered; and was in good health and condition, and I think one of the finest women, of a real Indian, that I have seen in any part of North America.

The methods practised by this poor creature to procure a livelihood were truly admirable, and are great proofs that necessity is the real mother of invention. When the few deer-sinews that she had an opportunity of taking with her were all expended in making snares, and sewing her clothing, she had nothing to supply their place but the sinews of the rabbits legs and feet; these she twisted together for that purpose with great dexterity and success. The rabbits, &c. which she caught in those snares, not only furnished her with a comfortable subsistence, but of the skins she made a suit of neat and warm clothing for the Winter. It is scarcely possible to conceive that a person in her forlorn situation could be so composed as to be capable of contriving or executing any thing that was not absolutely necessary to her existence; but there were sufficient proofs that she had extended her

51 This is one of several instances in which Hearne seems to designate the Chipewyan as "Athapuscow." It was the Chipewyan who harassed the tribes north of Great Slave lake, and the Chipewyan who inhabited the country along Slave river, where Hearne noted several abandoned camps of "Athapuscow." Nevertheless, he represents the people so called as speaking the language of the Southern Indians (Cree).

care much farther, as all her clothing, beside being calculated for real service, shewed great taste, and exhibited no little variety of ornament. The materials, though rude, were very curiously wrought, and so judiciously placed, as to make the whole of her garb have a very pleasing … appearance.

Her leisure hours from hunting had been employed in twisting the inner rind or bark of willows into small lines, like net-twine, of which she had some hundred fathoms by her; with this she intended to make a fishing-net as soon as the Spring advanced.…

Five or six inches of an iron hoop, made into a knife, and the shank of an arrow-head of iron, which served her as an awl, were all the metals this poor woman had with her when she eloped; and with these implements she had made herself complete snow-shoes, and several other useful articles.

Her method of making a fire was equally singular and curious, having no other materials for that purpose than two hard sulphurous stones. These, by long friction and hard knocking, produced a few sparks, which at length communicated to some touchwood; but as this method was attended with great trouble, and not always with success, she did not suffer her fire to go out all the Winter. Hence we may conclude that she had no idea of producing fire by friction, in the manner practised by the Esquimaux, and many other uncivilized nations; because if she had, the above-mentioned precaution would have been unnecessary.

The singularity of the circumstance, the comeliness of her person, and her approved accomplishments, occasioned a strong contest between several of the Indians of my party, who should have her for a wife; and the poor girl was actually won and lost at wrestling by near half a score different men the same evening.…

When the Athapuscow Indians took the above Dog-ribbed Indian woman prisoner, they, according to the universal custom of those savages, surprised her and her party in the night, and killed every soul in the tent, except herself and three other young women. Among those whom they killed, were her father, mother and husband. Her young child, four or five months old, she concealed in a bundle of clothing, and took with her undiscovered in the night; but when she arrived at the place where the Athapuscow Indians had left their wives (which was not far distant), they began to examine her bundle, and finding the

child, one of the women took it from her, and killed it on the spot.

This last piece of barbarity gave her such a disgust to those Indians, that notwithstanding the man who took care of her treated her in every respect as his wife, and was, she said, remarkably kind to, and even fond of her; so far was she from being able to reconcile herself to any of the tribe, that she rather chose to expose herself to misery and want, than live in ease and affluence among persons who had so cruelly murdered her infant. The poor woman's relation of this shocking story, which she delivered in a very affecting manner, only excited laughter among the savages of my party.

In a conversation with this woman soon afterward, she told us, that her country lies so far to the Westward, that she had never seen iron, or any other kind of metal, till she was taken prisoner. All of her tribe, she observed, made their hatchets and ice-chisels of deer's horns, and their knives of stones and bones; that their arrows were shod with a kind of slate, bones, and deer's horns; and the instruments which they employed to make their wood-work were nothing but beavers' teeth. Though they had frequently heard of the useful materials which the nations or tribes to the East of them were supplied with from the English, so far were they from drawing nearer, to be in the way of trading for iron-work, &c. that they were obliged to retreat farther back, to avoid the Athapuscow Indians, who made surprising slaughter among them, both in Winter and Summer.[52]

The favorite form of gambling among the Chipewyan is *údzi*, the well-known hand-game. There are two markers, one a short length of bone or wood, the other a stone or a bit of bone nearly spherical, and the play is between two sets of men who kneel in opposite rows. The leader of one party places the markers while concealing his actions beneath a blanket draped over his knees. Both may be held in either hand or left on the ground beside his knees, or either may be placed in any one of these positions. He folds his arms, with fists clenched, and the other leader, after studying while his opponents sing, indicates his guess. A motion of the thumb to right or left means that the round marker is on the ground, the other in the left or the right hand; and if the long one is thought to be on the ground, the same gesture is made

52 Hearne, 263-267.

with extended forefinger. Thumb and forefinger extended means that both markers are in the hands, the thumb indicating which hand is thought to hold the round one, the forefinger the long one. The forefinger moved directly toward the opponent signifies that both markers are supposed to lie on the ground. Failure to locate either marker yields the "in" side one of the four tally-sticks that lie between the players. Guessing one correctly and missing the other is only a half success, therefore the same man hides the markers again, but does not win a tally. The next correct guess gives the inning to the other side. But if both markers are held in one hand, either the thumb or the finger directed to that hand wins the inning. A side losing a point replaces in the pool a tally-stick from its accumulated store, if it has any; otherwise, the winner, as noted, takes one from the pool. Thus one side must be successful at least four consecutive times in order to win a game. Wagers are laid between individuals, not between parties. A player sets out an article to be wagered and declares that it will require, say, two games to win it. An opponent places beside it something of equal value, or of greater or less value, in which case he and his rival agree on how many games it is worth in comparison with the other wager. Having come to terms, each lays beside his wager the number of sticks that indicates how many games will win it, and when a game is decided, the winner takes from his opponent one of these game indicators. If he loses the next game, this tally is returned to its place. It is apparent that one side must have a long run of luck in order to take a wager, and that the contest may last for days, as indeed it often does.

The dice play, *sás-ka-gáne* ("bear foot claw"), is no longer in fashion at Cold lake. Four bear-claws were filled with lead and carefully squared off at the base. Before lead was available, they probably were weighted with sand and plugged with gum. On the back of each was a mark indicating its value: one, two, or three notches, and a cross. The four were placed on a shallow bowl made of a knurl, which was shaken and then suddenly raised and lowered. The dice that stood upright on their base scored the number of notches on their backs. Ten points thus counted, or a single scoring with the cross, constituted a game. The system of wagering was the same as in the hand-game. A player continued to cast so long as he scored, until he reached ten. The other then cast, and if he reached ten without missing, there was no count; they stood even. If the first player scored less than ten and then missed,

his opponent proceeded to cast; and if he counted ten, the first player had another opportunity to even the score. If he in turn reached ten, his opponent made a single cast, and the other did likewise; and the one scoring the greater number on this trial won the bout. If in the first round neither counted ten, the score of the second round was added to that of the first.

The rod-game is called *dechén-dar-áze* ("stick thin small"). An odd number of sections of cattail stalks are separated into two parts as nearly equal as possible without actual counting. The player holds them out very quickly, and the other must immediately choose one packet. The one who holds the larger number of rods wins a point. This game is played also with three or more packets, but always with such a number of rods that there must be one remaining when they are divided as nearly equally as possible.

The cup-and-ball game, *pekégwiyi* ("insert something with a thrusting movement"), is played more by women than by men. The small bone from the fore-leg of a lynx is the pin, and on a leather cord attached to its larger end are strung eight cones made of caribou toes. The cord terminates in a tall-like flap pierced by a double row of small holes and a slightly larger orifice between them. A large bead, a modern addition to the device, is on the cord just above the tail. The pendent string is swung forward and upward, and the point of the pin is thrust at the row of cones. Catching any one or more of them counts one, except that the one nearest to the bead, if caught by itself, scores ten. The bead counts fifty, the larger hole in the tail one, and a small hole entitles the player to another trial.

String-game patterns include "beaver-net," "raven foot," and "stomach filled with moose blood."

A favorite winter sport was *nálzusi* (a word suggesting a sliding movement). Each of two contestants cast over the hard snow or ice, with a sidewise swing, a wooden missile about four feet long, heavy near the head and having a long, slender point beyond this bulging part. Sometimes it was dipped in water and thus encased in a coat of ice. The trial was for distance, not accuracy, and ten successive points won a game.

In *názel-gúhl*[i] ("shafts launch") one of two opponents cast a javelin so that it stood upright, and each then launched his two javelins after it. He won whose missile impaled the ground nearest the target.

Of the same character was *názel-tházi* ("shafts shoot"). An arrow was cast by hand, and the two players, having carefully observed where it fell, shot their sheafs of arrows toward it with averted faces. He who placed a missile nearest the mark took up this target-arrow, and each recovered his own sheaf. All this was merely preliminary to the contest, a trial for priority. The winner of the trial let fly the target-arrow, then in turn they shot their arrows, this time without averting their faces. The one who placed a dart nearest the mark took the target-arrow and one of the missiles of his opponent, laying the latter aside along with one of his own. He shot the target-arrow again, and they contested as before. If the same man won again, he took another arrow from his opponent and placed it and one of his own with the two already withdrawn from the game. If, however, he lost, he gave back the arrow taken from his opponent and recovered his own, so that both had the original number. The contest continued until one or the other had lost all his arrows.

As to Chipewyan pastimes, Mackenzie says that they seldom sang and danced; that they shot at marks and played games, but preferred to sleep, because the task of obtaining food was so arduous that they were glad to rest in idleness.

Of Chipewyan warfare little can be said. Their enemies were Cree and Eskimo, and the Athapascan Dogribs and Yellowknives.

They are said to have been reckless fighters when attacked, and their weapons were bows and arrows, spears, and clubs. Their tales are silent as to scalping, though of course the Cree practice was known, and the customary victory-dance was represented simply by extemporized songs of exultation.

In his record of the raid upon the Eskimo, Hearne sheds light on Northern Athapascan war customs:

Each volunteer .... prepared a target, or shield, before we left the woods of Clowey. Those targets were composed of thin boards, about three quarters of an inch thick, two feet broad, and three feet long; and were intended to ward off the arrows of the Esquimaux.

When we arrived on the West side of the river, each painted the front of his target or shield; some with the figure of the Sun, others with that of the Moon, several with different kinds of birds and beasts of prey, and many with the images of imaginary beings.... Each man painted his shield with the image of that being of which he relied most

for success in the intended engagement....

[After maltreating the bodies and despoiling the tents, they] assembled on the top of an adjacent high hill, and standing all in a cluster, so as to form a solid circle, with their spears erect in the air, gave many shouts of victory.

Immediately after my companions had killed the Esquimaux at the Copper River, they considered themselves in a state of uncleanness, which induced them to practise some very curious and unusual ceremonies. In the first place, all who were absolutely concerned in the murder were prohibited from cooking any kind of victuals, either for themselves or others.... When the victuals were cooked, all the murderers took a kind of red earth, or oker, and painted all the space between the nose and chin, as well as the greater part of their cheeks, almost to the ears, before they would taste a bit, and would not drink out of any other dish, or smoke out of any other pipe, but their own.... We had no sooner joined the women, at our return from the expedition, than there seemed to be an universal spirit of emulation among them, vying who should first make a suit of ornaments for their husbands, which consisted of bracelets for the wrists, and a band for the forehead, composed of porcupine quills and moose-hair, curiously wrought on leather. The custom of painting the mouth and part of the cheeks before each meal, and drinking and smoking out of their own utensils, was strictly and invariably observed, till the Winter began to set in; and during the whole of that time they would never kiss any of their wives or children. They refrained also from eating many parts of the deer and other animals, particularly the head, entrails, and blood; and during their uncleanness, their victuals were never sodden in water, but dried in the sun, eaten quite raw, or broiled, when a fire fit for the purpose could be procured. When the time arrived that was to put an end to these ceremonies, the men, without a female being present, made a fire at some distance from the tents, into which they threw all their ornaments, pipe-stems, and dishes, which were soon consumed to ashes; after which a feast was prepared, consisting of such articles as they had long been prohibited from eating; and when all was over, each man was at liberty to eat, drink, and smoke as he pleased; and also to kiss his wives and children at discretion, which they seemed to do with more raptures than I had ever known them do it either

before or since.[53]

The absence of clans and a property-holding system leaves the Chipewyan with no reason for fixing descent as either patrilineal or matrilineal. Girls were married soon after puberty, and matches were either the result of negotiations between the elders, in which case payment was made to the girl's father and gifts to the girl herself, or informal mating, either partner bringing his or her personal possessions to the home of the other. A man regarded his son-in-law as the support of his old age, and between them relations were somewhat ceremonious; but the familiar mother-in-law taboo was known only as a Cree custom. Polygyny was practised by men that could provide for more wives than one. An informant knew a man that had simultaneously six wives of different families, living in six skin tipis pitched in a row. He spent one day in each tipi and "hunted from there," bringing the result of his efforts to the wife of the day. Hearne's guide "had no less than seven, most of whom would for size have made good grenadiers. He prided himself much in the height and strength of his wives, and would frequently say, few women would carry or haul heavier loads."

Since mother's sister and stepmother are synonymous in Chipewyan, it is inferable that marrying a wife's younger sisters was common practice, and, in fact, Franklin noted that "they frequently marry two sisters." Further, the identity of stepfather and mother's sister's husband seems to point to the custom of marrying a wife's widowed sister and adopting her children. A man usually married his deceased brother's widow, but not against her wish. The marriage of a man and his father's sister's daughter was encouraged to such an extent that paternal aunt and mother-in-law, and uncle and father-in-law, became synonymous.[54]

Sharing a wife with another man had the status of an institution; but an adulterous wife might be flogged or simply discarded, or hus-

53 Hearne, 149, 181, 220-221. The reference to kissing does not necessarily confute the averment of a modern informant that "kissing came from the Cree," for the smoking mentioned in the same passage was certainly an introduced custom.

54 Franklin, II, 79, says, "There is no prohibition to the intermarriage of cousins."

band and lover might engage in personal combat by wrestling, each grasping the other's hair. The winner of the bout claimed the woman, and the affair went no farther. Says Hearne:

It has ever been the custom among those people for the men to wrestle for any woman to whom they are attached; and, of course, the strongest party always carries off the prize. A weak man, unless he be a good hunter and well-beloved, is seldom permitted to keep a wife that a stronger man thinks worth his notice: for at any time when the wives of those strong wrestlers are heavy-laden either with furrs or provisions, they make no scruple of tearing any other man's wife from his bosom, and making her bear a part of his luggage. This custom prevails throughout all their tribes, and causes a great spirit of emulation among their youth, who are upon all occasions, from their childhood, trying their strength and skill in wrestling. This enables them to protect their property, and particularly their wives, from the hands of those powerful ravishers; some of whom make almost a livelihood by taking what they please from the weaker parties, without making them any return.... I never knew any of them receive the least hurt in these rencontres; the whole business consists in hauling each other about by the hair of the head: they are seldom known either to strike or kick one another. It is not uncommon for one of them to cut off his hair and to grease his ears, immediately before the contest begins. This, however, is done privately; and it is sometimes truly laughable, to see one of the parties strutting about with an air of great importance, and calling out, "Where is he? Why does he not come out?" when the other will bolt out with a clean shorned head and greased ears, rush on his antagonist, seize him by the hair, and though perhaps a much weaker man, soon drag him to the ground, while the stronger is not able to lay hold on him.... The standers-by never attempt to interfere in the contest.... It was often very unpleasant to me, to see the object of the contest sitting in pensive silence watching her fate, while her husband and his rival were contending for the prize. [Sometimes the woman was loath to accompany the victor.] On those occasions their grief and reluctance to follow their new lord has been so great, that the business has often ended in the greatest brutality; for, in the struggle, I have seen the poor girls stripped quite naked, and carried by main force to their new lodgings. At other times it was pleasant enough to see a fine girl led off the field from a husband she disliked, with a tear in one eye and a finger

on the other: for custom, or delicacy if you please, has taught them to think it necessary to whimper a little, let the change be ever so much to their inclination.... They are .... the mildest tribe, or nation, that is to be found on the borders of Hudson's Bay: for let their effronts or losses be ever so great, they never will seek any other revenue than that of wrestling. As for murder, which is so common among all the tribes of Southern Indians [Cree], it is seldom heard of among them. A murderer is shunned and detested by all the tribe, and is obliged to wander up and down, forlorn and forsaken even by his own relations and former friends. [Even men of tribal eminence were not exempt from losing wives to superior strength.] An Indian man .... insisted on taking one of Matonabbee's wives from him by force, unless he ... should give him a certain quantity of ammunition, some pieces of iron-work, a kettle, and several other articles; every one of which, Matonabbee was obliged to deliver, or lose the woman; for the other man far excelled him in strength. Matonabbee was more exasperated on this occasion, as the same man had sold him the woman no longer ago than the nineteenth of the preceding April.... Matonabbee... at that time thought himself as great a man as then lived.[55]

Politically the Chipewyan consisted of local bands, and he was chief who by reason of ability as hunter, fighter, and thoughtful leader proved himself the most capable man of the band.

The interesting, but not unique, practice of designating individuals as the parents of their pet dogs or of their children, instead of employing personal names, was noted by Franklin as a custom of the Slave Indians, who "take their names, in the first instance, from their dogs. A young man is the father of a certain dog, but when he is married, and has a son, he styles himself the father of the boy. The women have a habit of reproving the dogs very tenderly when they observe them fighting. – 'Are you not ashamed,' say they, 'are you not ashamed to quarrel with your little brother?' The dogs appear to understand the reproof, and sneak off."[56]

Referring to the people of the barrens, Hearne says: "The names of the girls are chiefly taken from some part or property of a Martin; such

55 Hearne, 141-146.

56 Franklin, II, 85-86.

as, the White Martin, the Black Martin, the Summer Martin.... Matonabbee had eight wives, and they were all called Martins."[57] Among the modern western Cree a name referring to marten is always feminine.

There was no puberty ceremony for girls. All females in their periods remained apart from the men in small huts secluded in the bush. They refrained from eating the internal organs and the heads of animals, for these parts represent the "life," and their association with menstrual blood would have offended the animals and game would have been too wary for the hunters. For the same reason such women were not permitted to approach a place where hunters had dammed a stream above a beaver colony for the purpose of spearing the animals at their breathing-holes in the ice, nor to step across a hunter's trail. According to Hearne, "the young girls, when those symptoms make their first appearance, generally go a little distance from the other tents for four or five days, and at their return wear a kind of veil or curtain, made of beads, for some time after, as a mark of modesty."[58]

The Chipewyan disposed of a corpse by wrapping it in a skin and leaving it exposed on the ground, unless the bereaved family were an important one, in which case the body was laid in a tipi. It is probable that tree-burial was practised in wooded country, but the absence of trees and soil in the barrens made simple exposure the easiest solution. Personal property was left with the corpse, and members of the family discarded all their possessions, cut the hair, blackened the face, and wore old clothing for two or three years. When the deceased person was a favorite son or a beloved spouse, men and women slashed their limbs and breasts and severed the first joint of a finger with deliberate prolongation of torture. The name of a deceased person was not mentioned in the presence of relatives during a period of two or three years. Franklin's narrative has the following passage: "We found several of the [Yellowknife] Indian families in great affliction, for the loss of three of their relatives who had been drowned in the August preceding [this November], by the upsetting of a canoe near Fort Enterprise. They bewailed the melancholy accident every morning and evening,

57 Hearne, 132.

58 Hearne, 304.

by repeating the names of the persons in a loud singing tone, which was frequently interrupted by bursts of tears. One woman was so affected by the loss of her only son, that she seemed deprived of reason, and wandered about the tents the whole day, crying and singing out his name."[59] The contradiction of the taboo on names of the recently dead is only apparent, for this restriction applied to the mention of such names by others in the presence of relatives who had ceased grieving.

The home of the dead was conceived to be in the west. There is no evidence of a ceremony or of customary precautions for laying the ghost, except that an informant cited the practice of warriors after a battle covering the face with charcoal, which he regarded as an attempt to frighten the ghosts of slain enemies. This plausible explanation of a wide-spread custom would apply equally well to the blackening of the faces of mourning relatives.

The Chipewyan had neither religious nor fraternal societies, and apparently no tribal ceremonies. An informant who passed his boyhood at Fort Chipewyan never saw them perform a dance except in imitation of the Cree. Franklin is corroborative on this point, while describing dancing observed among the Dogribs and the Slaves.

When bands of Dog-ribs meet each other after a long absence, they perform a kind of dance. A piece of ground is cleared for the purpose, if in winter of the snow, or if in summer of the bushes; and the dance frequently lasts for two or three days, the parties relieving each other as they get tired. The two bands commence the dance with their backs turned to each other the individuals following one another in Indian file, and holding the bow in the left hand, and an arrow in the right. They approach obliquely, after many turns, and when the two lines are closely back to back, they feign to see each other for the first time, and the bow is instantly transferred to the right hand, and the arrow to the left, signifying that it is not their intention to employ them against their friends.... These people are the dancing-masters of the country. The Copper Indians have neither dance nor music but what they borrow from them.[60]

Franklin's subordinate, George Back, observed some Slave Indians

59 Franklin, II, 364.

60 Franklin, II, 82.

at Fort Resolution on Great Slave lake.

They had four feathers in each hand. One commenced moving in a circular form, lifting both feet at the same time, similar to jumping sideways. After a short time a second and a third joined, and afterwards the whole band was dancing, some in a state of nudity, others half dressed, singing an unmusical wild air with (I suppose,) appropriate words; the particular sounds of which were, ha! ha! ha! uttered vociferously, and with great distortion of countenance, and peculiar attitude of body, the feathers being always kept in a tremulous motion.[61]

Hearne refers to a similar backwardness in the matter of dancing among the people of the barrens.

Those people, though a distinct nation, have never adopted any mode of dancing of their own, or any songs to which they can dance; so that when anything of this kind is attempted, which is but seldom, they always endeavour to imitate either the Dog-ribbed or Southern Indians, but more commonly the former, as few of them are sufficiently acquainted either with the Southern Indian language, or their manner of dancing. The Dog-ribbed method .... consists in lifting the feet alternately from the ground in a very quick succession, and as high as possible, without moving the body, which should be kept quite still and motionless; the hands at the same time being closed, and held close to the breast, and the head inclining forward.... [The singing] is always accompanied by a drum or tabor; and sometimes a kind of rattle is added, made with a piece of dried buffalo skin, in shape exactly like an oil-flask, into which they put a few shot or pebbles.[62]

Chipewyan religious belief and practice were comprehended in the dream cult of the shamans and in numerous hunting-charms and taboos.

A shaman is called *i^{n}ká^{n}ze-déne* ("shadow person"), and *i^{n}ká^{n}ze* is the dream or vision through which he derives his power. In dreams various animals and phenomena, and particularly monstrous creatures living under the water and under hills, appear and instruct the shamans, and to these tutelars they offer prayers.

The treatment of a sick person took place at night and without ar-

61 Franklin, II, 60.

62 Hearne, 318-319.

tificial light. The shaman's assistants erected a small, skin-covered tipi, the four poles being oriented to the cardinal points and anchored by as many ropes to stakes or trees. They sometimes wound a rawhide rope about the frame from top to bottom, supposedly laying the coils close together but actually leaving wide interstices. This structure was called *shu*^{n}*s*. The patient lay on the ground near by. The shaman walked about it once, uttering a rapid sound, r*ararararara*, and quickly disappeared inside, professedly by magically projecting his body through the cover and the coils of rope. He beat the sides of the tipi rapidly, and shook it violently. His "power" sometimes caused one of the ropes to part, and he then suddenly appeared, took the broken rope in his hand, blew on it, and magically mended it. He reëntered the *shu*^{n}*s* and called out to the patient to think what wrong he had committed. Sickness was thought to be the result of violation of one of numerous taboos, most of which were of a personal nature and imposed upon an individual by a dream. A generally observed taboo was to leave an injured animal to die a lingering death, and one who was guilty of this act became ill of a lingering malady. As soon as the patient, after long thought, confessed what taboo he had violated, the shaman in his hut fell in a pretended trance. His assistants then carried the sick man away to his own tipi and returned to build a fire near the *shu*^{n}*s* for the purpose of waking the shaman. When, as he pretended, he had partially recovered his senses, he came forth and rushed to the fire with the professed intention of leaping into it in his half-unconscious state. To prevent this his assistants grappled and struggled with him.

A shaman was sometimes requested to bring news of an absent relative. He then went into his hut to project his spirit to the distant place, and in a few minutes the *shu*^{n}*s* began to shake. In response to the client's anxious questioning, he made report in a disguised voice, pretending that his tutelar was speaking. Impending events were sometimes perceived in dreams, and this was called "looking forward."

The following is Hearne's account of shamanistic practice.

A conjuring-house is erected, by driving the ends of four long small sticks, or poles, into the ground at right angles, so as to form a square of four, five, six, or seven feet, as may be required. The tops of the poles are tied together, and all is close covered with a tent-cloth or other skin, exactly in the shape of a small square tent, except that there is no vacancy left at the top to admit the light. In the middle

of this house, or tent, the patient is laid, and is soon followed by the conjurer, or conjurers. Sometimes five or six of them give their joint-assistance; but before they enter, they strip themselves quite naked, and as soon as they get into the house, the door being well closed, they kneel round the sick person or persons, and begin to suck and blow at the parts affected, and then in a very short space of time sing and talk as if conversing with familiar spirits, which they say appear to them in the shape of different beasts and birds of prey. When they have had sufficient conference with those necessary agents, or shadows, as they term them, they ask for the hatchet, bayonet, or the like, which is always prepared b another person, with a long string fastened to it by the haft, for the convenience of hauling it up again after they have swallowed it. At the time when the forty and odd tents of Indians joined us, one man was so dangerously ill, that it was thought necessary the conjurers should use some of these wonderful experiments for his recovery; one of them therefore immediately consented to swallow a broad bayonet. Accordingly, a conjuring-house was erected in the manner above described, into which the patient was conveyed, and he was soon followed by the conjurer, who, after a long preparatory discourse, and the necessary conference with his familiar spirits, or shadows, as they call them, advanced to the door and asked for the bayonet, which was then ready prepared, by having a string fastened to it, and a short piece of wood tied to the other end of the string, to prevent him from swallowing it.... Though I am not so credulous as to believe that the conjurer absolutely swallowed the bayonet, yet I must acknowledge that in the twinkling of an eye he conveyed it to - God knows where; and the small piece of wood, or one exactly like it, was confined close to his teeth. He then paraded backward and forward before the conjuring-house for a short time, when he feigned to be greatly disordered in his stomach and bowels; and, after making many wry faces, and groaning most hideously, he put his body into several distorted attitudes, very suitable to the occasion. He then returned to the door of the conjuring-house, and after making many strong efforts to vomit, by the help of the string he at length, and after tugging at it some time, produced the bayonet, which apparently he hauled out of his mouth, to the no small surprize of all present. He then looked round with an air of exultation, and strutted into the conjuring-house, where he renewed his incantations, and continued them without inter-

mission twenty-four hours. Though I was not close to his elbow when he performed the above feat, yet I thought myself near enough .... to have detected him. Indeed I must confess that it appeared to me to be a very nice piece of deception, especially as it was performed by a man quite naked....

For some inward complaints; such as, griping in the intestines, difficulty of making water, &c., it is very common to see those jugglers blowing into the *anus,* or into the parts adjacent, till their eyes are almost starting out of their heads: and this operation is performed indifferently on all, without regard either to age or sex. Being naturally not very delicate, they frequently continue their windy process so long, that I have more than once seen the doctor quit his patient with his face and breast in a very disagreeable condition....

His disorder was the dead palsey, which affected one side, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. Besides this dreadful disorder, he had some inward complaints, with a total loss of appetite; so that he was reduced to a mere skeleton, and so weak as to be scarcely capable of speaking. In this deplorable condition, he was laid in the center of a large conjuring-house.... The same man who deceived me in swallowing a bayonet in the Summer, now offered to swallow a large piece of board, about the size of a barrel-stave, in order to effect his recovery. The piece of board was prepared by another man, and painted according to the direction of the juggler, with a rude representation of some beast of prey on one side, and on the reverse was painted, according to their rude method, a resemblance of the sky.... I advanced close to him, and found him standing at the conjuring-house door as naked as he was born. When the piece of board was delivered to him, he proposed at first only to shove one-third of it down his throat, and then walk round the company afterward to shove down another third; and so proceed till he had swallowed the whole, except a small piece of the end, which was left behind to haul it up again. When he put it to his mouth it apparently slipped down his throat like lightning and only left about three inches sticking without his lips; after walking backwards and forwards three times, he hauled it up again, and ran into the conjuring-house with great precipitation. This he did to all appearance with great ease and composure; and notwithstanding I was all attention on the occasion, I could not detect the deceit; and as to the reality of its being a piece of wood that he pretended

to swallow, there is not the least reason to doubt of it, for I had it in my hand, both before and immediately after the ceremony.... It is necessary to observe, that this feat was performed in a dark and excessively cold night; and although there was a large fire at some distance, which reflected a good light, yet there was great room for collusion: for though the conjurer himself was quite naked, there were several of his fraternity well-clothed, who attended him very close during the time of his attempting to swallow the board, as well as at the time of his hauling it up again... On the day preceding the performance of this piece of deception, in one of my hunting excursions, I accidentally came across the conjurer as he was sitting under a bush, several miles from the tents, where he was busily employed shaving a piece of wood exactly like that part which stuck out of his mouth after he had pretended to swallow the remainder of the piece.... So that when his attendants had concealed the main piece, it was easy for him to stick the small point into his mouth, as it was reduced at the small end to a proper size for the purpose.... As soon as our conjurer had executed the above feat, and entered the conjuring-house,... five other men and an old woman, all of whom were great professors of that art, stripped themselves quite naked and followed him, when they soon began to suck, blow, sing, and dance, round the poor paralytic; and continued so to do for three days and four nights, without taking the least rest or refreshment, not even so much as a drop of water. When these poor deluding and deluded people came out of the conjuring-house, their mouths were so parched with thirst as to be quite black, and their throats so sore, that they were scarcely able to articulate a single word.... Some of them, to appearance, were almost as bad as the poor man they had been endeavouring to relieve. But great part of this was feigned; for they lay on their backs with their eyes fixed, as if in the agonies of death, and were treated like young children; one person sat constantly by them, moistening their mouths with fat, and now and then giving them a drop of water. At other times a small bit of meat was put into their mouths, or a pipe held for them to smoke. This farce only lasted for the first day; after which they seemed to be perfectly well, except the hoarseness, which continued for a considerable time afterwards. And it is truly wonderful, though the strictest truth, that when the poor sick man was taken from the conjuring-house, he had not only recovered his appetite to an amazing degree, but was able to

move all the fingers and toes of the side that had been so long dead. In three weeks he recovered so far as to be capable of walking, and at the end of six weeks went a hunting for his family.[63]

The susceptibility of Indians to suggestion has heretofore in volumes of this series been offered as the reason for their sometimes remarkable response to treatment by incantation, and for their not infrequent succumbing to the arts of the sorcerer. On the latter phase of the subject Hearne has an extremely interesting passage. His guide begged him to employ sorcery against an enemy whom Hearne had seen but once and who was then several hundred miles distant.

To please this great man to whom I owed so much, and not expecting that any harm could possibly arise from it, I drew a rough sketch of two human figures on a piece of paper, in the attitude of wrestling: in the hand of one of them, I drew the figure of a bayonet pointing to the breast of the other. This is me, said I to Matonabbee, pointing to the figure which was holding the bayonet; and the other, is your enemy. Opposite to those figures I drew a pine-tree, over which I placed a large human eye, and out of the tree projected a human hand. This paper I gave to Matonabbee, with instructions to make it as publicly known as possible. Sure enough, the following year, when he came in to trade, he informed me that the man was dead, though at that time he was not less than three hundred miles from Prince of Wales's Fort. He assured me that the man was in perfect health when he heard of my design against him; but almost immediately afterwards became quite gloomy, and refusing all kind of sustenance, in a very few days died .[64]

As usual, hunting-charms were based on mimetic magic.

With the pelvis of a beaver or a lynx in the left hand a hunter stood with arms widely extended and uttered a short prayer, ending, "Tomorrow I will kill [for example] a moose." Then he brought his hands together above his head, the right forefinger being extended and the other fingers of that hand closed. If he succeeded in placing his finger cleanly in the femur socket, he would have success; but if not, he was not necessarily deterred from proceeding to hunt.

63 Hearne, 209-2I2, 228-232.

64 Hearne, 233.

A scapula of any animal was marked with an irregular black line representing a trail, with a tipi, the present camp, at one end, and another, the next camp, at the opposite end. The bone was then exposed to a smoking fire, and when it became slightly blackened, it was studied with care. From the character of the deposit of carbon the events of the next march were foretold, as, "At such and such a place we will find a bear."

When a woman cut open a beaver, she very carefully removed the spleen and gave it to her husband. He held it by the two ends, the larger of which was called the head, the smaller the tail. If it was full and symmetrical, he predicted good luck; if it was thin and ill-formed, bad luck was bound to come and nothing could be done to prevent it.

Sometimes a flat, round object covered with fur is found under the skin of a hare. A charm of this sort exhibited by an informant is two and a half inches in diameter, an inch thick, quite hard, and covered with perfect fur. He found it just beneath the skin of the flank. Several of these objects are known. They are held to bring good luck in hunting if carried by the hunter, and are particularly effective for snaring hares. When a snare is set, the charm is passed through the loop. Another man has a hard concretion found under the skin of a moose. He keeps it in a secret place well removed from his house, and before hunting large game he scrapes off a bit with his knife and rubs the powder on a bullet.

"Few of the Northern Indians," says Hearne, "chuse to kill either the wolf or the quiquehatch [wolverene], under a notion that they are something more than common animals. I have frequently seen the Indians go to their [wolf] dens, and take out the young ones and play with them. I never knew a Northern Indian hurt one of them: on the contrary, they always put them carefully into the den again; and I have sometimes seen them paint the faces of the young Wolves with vermillion, or red ochre."[65]

The same author describes some interesting fishing-charms.

When they make a new fishing-net, which is always composed of small thongs cut from raw deer-skins, they take a number of birds bills and feet, and tie them, a little apart from each other, to the head

65 Hearne, 224, 339.

and foot rope of the net, and at the four corners generally fasten some of the toes and jaws of the otters and jackashes [mink]. The birds feet and bills made choice of on such occasions are generally those of the laughing goose, wavey, (or white goose,) gulls, loons, and black-heads; and unless some or all of these be fastened to the net, they will not attempt to put it into the water, as they firmly believe it would not catch a single fish. A net thus accoutred is fit for setting whenever occasion requires, and opportunity offers; but the first fish of whatever species caught in it, are not to be sodden in the water, but broiled whole on the fire, and the flesh carefully taken from the bones without dislocating one joint; after which the bones are laid on the fire at full length and burnt. A strict observance of these rules is supposed to be of the utmost importance in promoting the future success of the new net.... When they fish in rivers, or narrow channels that join two lakes together, they could frequently, by tying two, three, or more nets together, spread over the whole breadth of the channel, and intercept every sizable fish that passed; but instead of that, they scatter the nets at a considerable distance from each other, from a superstitious notion, that were they kept close together, one net would be jealous of its neighbour, and by that means not one of them would catch a single fish.... When they bait a book, a composition of four, five, or six articles, by way of charm, is concealed under the bait, which is always sewed round the hook. In fact, the only bait used by those people is in their opinion a composition of charms, inclosed within a bit of fish skin, so as in some measure to resemble a small fish. The things used by way of charm, are bits of beavers tails and fat, otter's vents and teeth, musk-rat's guts and tails, loon's vents, squirrel's testicles, the cruddled milk taken out of the stomach of sucking fawns and calves, human hair, and numberless other articles equally absurd.... Without some of those articles to put under their bait, few of them could be prevailed upon to put a hook into the water, being fully persuaded that they may as well sit in the tent, as attempt to angle without such assistance.... The same rule is observed on broiling the first fruits of a new hook that is used for a new net; an old hook that has already been successful in catching large fish is esteemed of more value, than a handful of new ones which have never been tried.[66]

66 Hearne, 314-316.

A hunter returning with large provision of dry meat and pemmican gave a feast to as many as forty to fifty people. Quantities of food were prepared and set before the guest, and every bit must be eaten lest he have bad luck in his future hunting.

Women must not step in or across the fresh blood of any animal, for creatures of that species would detect the odor and would be impossible to kill.

The northern Athapascans had the common custom of adding a stone to a heap beside the trail, and murmuring a wish for good luck as they passed.

Unlike most Indians, the Chipewyan attach no ceremonial importance to the eagle.

They are characterized by poverty of mythology as well as of ceremony. There is no cycle of anecdotes about a transformer or trickster, although the neighboring Cree have numerous tales of this kind.

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