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great stone, or into the crevices of the rocks, where we regaled ourselves with such provisions as we had brought with us, smoked our pipes, or went to sleep, till the weather permitted us to proceed on our journey.

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On the fourth, we had rather better weather, though constant light snow, which made it very disagreeable under foot. We nevertheless walked twenty-seven miles to the North West, fourteen of which were on what the Indians call the Stony Mountains; and surely no part of the world better deserves that name. On our first approaching these mountains, they appeared to be a confused heap of stones, utterly inaccessible to the foot of man: but having some Copper Indians with us who knew the best road, we made a tolerable shift to get on, though not without being obliged frequently to crawl on our hands and knees. Notwithstanding the intricacy of the road, there is a very visible path the whole way across these mountains, even in the most difficult parts: and also on the smooth rocks, and those parts which are capable of receiving an impression, the path is as plain and well-beaten, as any bye foot-path in England. By the side of this path there are, in different parts, several large, flat, or table stones, which are covered with many thousands of small pebbles. These the Copper Indians say have been gradually increased by passengers going to and from the mines; and on its being observed to us that it was the universal

versal custom for every one to add a stone to the heap, each of us took up a small stone in order to increase the number, for good luck.

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Just as we arrived at the foot of the Stony Mountains, three of the Indians turned back; saying, that from every appearance, the remainder of the journey seemed likely to be attended with more trouble than would counterbalance the pleasure they could promise themselves by going to war with the Esquimaux.

On the fifth, as the weather was so bad, with constant snow, sleet, and rain, that we could not see our way, we did not offer to move: but the sixth proving moderate, and quite fair till toward noon, we set out in the morning, and walked about eleven miles to the North West; when perceiving bad weather at hand, we began to look out for shelter among the rocks, as we had done the four preceding nights, having neither tents nor tent-poles with us. The next morning fifteen more of the Indians deserted us, being quite sick of the road, and the uncommon badness of the weather. Indeed, though these people are all enured to hardships, yet their complaint on the present occasion was not without reason; for, from our leaving Congecathawhachaga we had scarcely a dry garment of any kind, or any thing to screen us from the inclemency of the weather, except rocks and  
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caves; the best of which were but damp and unwholesome lodging. In some the water was constantly dropping from the rock that formed the roof, which made our place of retreat little better than the open air; and we had not been able to make one spark of fire (except what was sufficient to light a pipe) from the time of our leaving the women on the second instant; 'tis true, in some places there was a little moss, but the constant fleet and rain made it so wet, as to render it as impossible to set fire to it as it would be to a wet sponge.

We had no sooner entered our places of retreat, than we regaled ourselves with some raw venison which the Indians had killed that morning; the small stock of dried provisions we took with us when we left the women being now all expended.

Agreably to our expectations, a very sudden and heavy gale of wind came on from the North West, attended with so great a fall of snow, that the oldest Indian in company said, he never saw it exceeded at any time of the year, much less in the middle of Summer. The gale was soon over, and by degrees it became a perfect calm: but the flakes of snow were so large as to surpass all credibility, and fell in such vast quantities, that though the shower only lasted nine hours, we were in danger of being smothered in our caves.

On

On the seventh, we had a fresh breeze at North West, with some flying showers of small rain, and at the same time a constant warm sunshine, which soon dissolved the greatest part of the new-fallen snow. Early in the morning we crawled out of our holes, which were on the North side of the Stony Mountains, and walked about eighteen or twenty miles to the North West by West. In our way we crossed part of a large lake on the ice, which was then far from being broken up. This lake I distinguished by the name of Buffalo, or Musk-Ox Lake, from the number of those animals that we found grazing on the margin of it; many of which the Indians killed, but finding them lean, only took some of the bulls' hides for shoe-soals. At night the bad weather returned, with a strong gale of wind at North East, and very cold rain and sleet.

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This was the first time we had seen any of the musk-oxen since we left the Factory. It has been observed that we saw a great number of them in my first unsuccessful attempt, before I had got an hundred miles from the Factory; and indeed I once perceived the tracks of two of those animals within nine miles of Prince of Wales's Fort. Great numbers of them also were met with in my second journey to the North: several of which my companions killed, particularly on the seventeenth of July one thousand seven hundred and seventy. They are also found at times in considerable numbers near the sea-coast of Hudson's Bay,

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all the way from Knapp's Bay to Wager Water, but are most plentiful within the Arctic Circle. In those high latitudes I have frequently seen many herds of them in the course of a day's walk, and some of those herds did not contain less than eighty or an hundred head. The number of bulls is very few in proportion to the cows; for it is rare to see more than two or three full-grown bulls with the largest herd: and from the number of the males that are found dead, the Indians are of opinion that they kill each other in contending for the females. In the rutting season they are so jealous of the cows, that they run at either man or beast who offers to approach them; and have been observed to run and bellow even at ravens, and other large birds, which chanced to light near them. They delight in the most stony and mountainous parts of the barren ground, and are seldom found at any great distance from the woods. Though they are a beast of great magnitude, and apparently of a very unwieldy inactive structure, yet they climb the rocks with great ease and agility, and are nearly as sure-footed as a goat; like it too, they will feed on any thing; though they seem fondest of grass, yet in Winter, when that article cannot be had in sufficient quantity, they will eat moss, or any other herbage they can find, as also the tops of willows and the tender branches of the pine tree. They take the bull in August, and bring forth their young the latter end of May, or beginning of June; and they never have more than one at a time.

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The musk-ox, when full grown, is as large as the generality, or at least as the middling size, of English black cattle \*; but their legs, though large, are not so long; nor is their tail longer than that of a bear; and, like the tail of that animal, it always bends downward and inward, so that it is entirely hid by the long hair of the rump and hind quarters: the hunch on their shoulders is not large, being little more in proportion than that of a deer: their hair is in some parts very long, particularly on the belly, sides, and hind quarters; but the longest hair about them, particularly the bulls, is under the throat, extending from the chin to the lower part of the chest, between the fore-legs; it there hangs down like a horse's mane inverted, and is full as long, which makes the animal have a most formidable appearance. It is of the hair from this part that the Esquimaux make their musketto

\* Mr. Dragge says, in his Voyage, vol. ii. p. 260, that the musk-ox is lower than a deer, but larger as to belly and quarters; which is very far from the truth; they are of the size I have here described them, and the Indians always estimate the flesh of a full-grown cow to be equal in quantity to three deer. I am sorry also to be obliged to contradict my friend Mr. Graham, who says that the flesh of this animal is carried on sledges to Prince of Wales's Fort, to the amount of three or four thousand pounds annually. To the amount of near one thousand pounds may have been purchased from the natives in some particular years, but it more frequently happens that not an ounce is brought one year out of five. In fact, it is by no means esteemed by the Company's servants, and of course no great encouragement is given to introduce it; but if it had been otherwise, their general situation is so remote from the settlement, that it would not be worth the Indians while to haul it to the Fort. So that, in fact, all that has ever been carried to Prince of Wales's Fort, has most assuredly been killed out of a herd that has been accidentally found within a moderate distance of the settlement; perhaps an hundred miles, which is only thought a step by an Indian.

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wigs, and not from the tail, as is asserted by Mr. Ellis\* ; their tails, and the hair which is on them, being too short for that purpose. In Winter they are provided with a thick fine wool, or furr, that grows at the root of the long hair, and shields them from the intense cold to which they are exposed during that season ; but as the summer advances, this furr loosens from the skin, and, by frequently rolling themselves on the ground, it works out to the end of the hair, and in time drops off, leaving little for their Summer clothing except the long hair. This season is so short in those high latitudes, that the new fleece begins to appear, almost as soon as the old one drops off ; so that by the time the cold becomes severe, they are again provided with a Winter-dress.

The flesh of the musk-ox noways resembles that of the Western buffalo, but is more like that of the moose or elk ; and the fat is of a clear white, slightly tinged with a light azure. The calves and young heifers are good eating ; but the flesh of the bulls both smells and tastes so strong of musk, as to render it very disagreeable : even the knife that cuts the flesh of an old bull will smell so strong of musk, that nothing but scowring the blade quite bright can remove it, and the handle will retain the scent for a long time. Though no part of a bull is free from this smell, yet the parts of generation, in particular the *urethra*, are by far the most strongly impregnated. The

urine itself must contain this scent in a very great degree; for the sheaths of the bull's *penis* are corroded with a brown gummy substance, which is nearly as high-scented with musk as that said to be produced by the civet cat; and after having been kept for several years, seems not to lose any of its quality.

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On the eighth, the weather was fine and moderate, though not without some showers of rain. Early in the morning we set out, and walked eighteen miles to the Northward. The Indians killed some deer; so we put up by the side of a small creek, that afforded a few willows, with which we made a fire for the first time since our leaving Congecathawhachaga; consequently it was here that we cooked our first meal for a whole week. This, as may naturally be supposed, was well relished by all parties, the Indians as well as myself. And as the Sun had, in the course of the day, dried our clothing, in spite of the small showers of rain, we felt ourselves more comfortable than we had done since we left the women. The place where we lay that night, is not far from Grizzled Bear Hill; which takes its name from the numbers of those animals that are frequently known to resort thither for the purpose of bringing forth their young in a cave that is found there. The wonderful description which the Copper Indians gave of this place exciting the curiosity of several of my companions as well as myself, we went to view it; but on our arrival at it

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found little worth remarking about it, being no more than a high lump of earth, of a loamy quality, of which kind there are several others in the same neighbourhood, all standing in the middle of a large marsh, which makes them resemble so many islands in a lake. The sides of these hills are quite perpendicular; and the height of Grizzled Bear Hill, which is the largest, is about twenty feet above the level ground that surrounds it. Their summits are covered with a thick sod of moss and long grass, which in some places projects over the edge; and as the sides are constantly mouldering away, and washing down with every shower of rain during the short Summer, they must in time be levelled with the marsh in which they are situated. At present those islands, as I call them, are excellent places of retreat for the birds which migrate there to breed; as they can bring forth their young in perfect safety from every beast except the Quequehatch, which, from the sharpness of its claws and the amazing strength of its legs, is capable of ascending the most difficult precipices.

On the side of the hill that I went to survey, there is a large cave which penetrates a considerable way into the rock, and may probably have been the work of the bears, as we could discover visible marks that some of those beasts had been there that Spring. This, though deemed very curious by some of my companions, did not appear so to me, as it neither engaged my attention, nor raised my surprise,

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surprise, half so much as the sight of the many hills and dry ridges on the East side of the marsh, which are turned over like ploughed land by those animals, in searching for ground-squirrels, and perhaps mice, which constitute a favourite part of their food. It is surprising to see the extent of their researches in quest of those animals, and still more to view the enormous stones rolled out of their beds by the bears on those occasions. At first I thought these long and deep furrows had been effected by lightning; but the natives assured me they never knew any thing of the kind happen in those parts, and that it was entirely the work of the bears seeking for their prey.

On the ninth, the weather was moderate and cloudy, with some flying showers of rain. We set out early in the morning, and walked about forty miles to the North and North by East. In our way we saw plenty of deer and musk-oxen: several of the former the Indians killed, but a smart shower of rain coming on just as we were going to put up, made the moss so wet as to render it impracticable to light a fire. The next day proving fine and clear, we set out in the morning, and walked twenty miles to the North by West and North North West; but about noon the weather became so hot and sultry as to render walking very disagreeable; we therefore put up on the top of a high hill, and as the moss was then dry, lighted a fire, and should have made a comfortable meal, and been otherwise tolerably happy, had it not been  
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for the muskettoes, which were uncommonly numerous, and their stings almost insufferable. The same day Matonabbee sent several Indians a-head, with orders to proceed to the Copper-mine River as fast as possible, and acquaint any Indians they might meet, of our approach. By those Indians I also sent some small presents, as the surest means to induce any strangers they found, to come to our assistance.

11th.

The eleventh was hot and sultry, like the preceding day. In the morning we walked ten or eleven miles to the North West, and then met a Northern Indian Leader, called Oule-eye, and his family, who were, in company with several Copper Indians, killing deer with bows and arrows and spears, as they crossed a little river, by the side of which we put up, as did also the above-mentioned Indians \*. That afternoon I smoked my calumet of peace with these strangers, and found them a quite different set of people, at least in principle, from those I had seen at Congecathawhachaga: for though they had great plenty of provisions, they neither offered me nor my companions a mouthful, and would, if they had been permitted, have taken the last garment from off my back, and robbed me of every article I possessed. Even my Northern companions could not help taking notice of such unaccountable behaviour. Nothing but their poverty pro-

\* This river runs nearly North East, and in all probability empties itself into the Northern Ocean, not far from the Copper River.

ted them from being plundered by those of my crew ; and had any of their women been worth notice, they would most assuredly have been pressed into our service.

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The twelfth was so exceedingly hot and sultry, that we did not move ; but early in the morning of the thirteenth, after my companions had taken what dry provisions they chose from our unsociable strangers, we set out, and walked about fifteen or sixteen miles to the North and North by East, in expectation of arriving at the Copper-mine River that day ; but when we had reached the top of a long chain of hills, between which we were told the river ran, we found it to be no more than a branch of it which empties itself into the main river about forty miles from its influx into the sea. At that time all the Copper Indians were dispatched different ways, so that there was not one in company who knew the shortest cut to the main river. Seeing some woods to the Westward, and judging that the current of the rivulet ran that way, we concluded that the main river lay in that direction, and was not very remote from our present situation. We therefore directed our course by the side of it, when the Indians met with several very fine buck deer, which they destroyed ; and as that part we now traversed afforded plenty of good fire-wood, we put up, and cooked the most comfortable meal to which we had sat down for some months. As such favourable opportunities of indulging the appetite happen but seldom, it is a general rule

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rule with the Indians, which we did not neglect, to exert every art in dressing our food which the most refined skill in Indian cookery has been able to invent, and which consists chiefly in boiling, broiling, and roasting: but of all the dishes cooked by those people, a *beeatee*, as it is called in their language, is certainly the most delicious, at least for a change, that can be prepared from a deer only, without any other ingredient. It is a kind of haggis, made with the blood, 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 by 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, in the same manner as a fowl or a joint of meat; which is as much as to say, Come, eat me now: 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 seasoning.

After regaling ourselves in the most plentiful manner, and taking a few hours rest, (for it was almost impossible to sleep for the muskettoes,) we once more set forward, directing our course to the North West by West; and after walking about nine or ten miles, arrived at that long wished-for spot, the Copper-mine River.

## C H A P. VI.

Transactions at the Copper-mine River, and till we joined all the women to the South of Cogead Lake.

*Some Copper Indians join us.—Indians send three spies down the river.—Begin my survey.—Spies return, and give an account of five tents of Esquimaux.—Indians consult the best method to steal of them in the night, and kill them while asleep.—Cross the river.—Proceedings of the Indians as they advance towards the Esquimaux tents.—The Indians begin the massacre while the poor Esquimaux are asleep, and slay them all.—Much affected at the sight of one young woman killed close to my feet.—The behaviour of the Indians on this occasion.—Their brutish treatment of the dead bodies.—Seven more tents seen on the opposite side of the river.—The Indians harass them, till they fly to a shoal in the river for safety.—Behaviour of the Indians after killing those Esquimaux.—Cross the river, and proceed to the tents on that side.—Plunder their tents, and destroy their utensils.—Continue my survey to the river's mouth.—Remarks there.—Set out on my return.—Arrive at one of the Copper-mines.—Remarks on it.—Many attempts made to induce the Copper Indians, to carry their own goods to market.—Obstacles to it.—Villany and cruelty of Keelspies to some of those poor Indians.—Leave the Copper-mine, and walk at an amazing rate till we join the women, by the side of Cogead Whoie.—Much foot-foundered.—The appearance very alarming, but soon changes for the better.—Proceed to the Southward, and join the remainder of the women and children.—Many other Indians arrive with them.*

WE had scarcely arrived at the Copper-mine River when four Copper Indians joined us, and brought with them two canoes. They had seen all the Indians who were sent from us at various times, except Matonabee's

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brother, and three others that were first dispatched from Congecathawhachaga.

On my arrival here I was not a little surprised to find the river differ so much from the description which the Indians had given of it at the Factory; for, instead of being so large as to be navigable for shipping, as it had been represented by them, it was at that part scarcely navigable for an Indian canoe, being no more than one hundred and eighty yards wide, every where full of shoals, and no less than three falls were in sight at first view.

Near the water's edge there is some wood; but not one tree grows on or near the top of the hills between which the river runs. There appears to have been formerly a much greater quantity than there is at present; but the trees seem to have been set on fire some years ago, and, in consequence, there is at present ten sticks lying on the ground, for one green one which is growing beside them. The whole timber appears to have been, even in its greatest prosperity, of so crooked and dwarfish a growth as to render it of little use for any purpose but fire-wood.

Soon after our arrival at the river-side, three Indians were sent off as spies, in order to see if any Esquimaux were inhabiting the river-side between us and the sea. After walking about three quarters of a mile by the side of the river, we put up, when most of the Indians went a hunting,

hunting, and killed several musk-oxen and some deer. They were employed all the remainder of the day and night in splitting and drying the meat by the fire. As we were not then in want of provisions, and as deer and other animals were so plentiful, that each day's journey might have provided for itself, I was at a loss to account for this unusual œconomy of my companions; but was soon informed, that those preparations were made with a view to have victuals enough ready-cooked to serve us to the river's mouth, without being obliged to kill any in our way, as the report of the guns, and the smoke of the fires, would be liable to alarm the natives, if any should be near at hand, and give them an opportunity of escaping.

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Early in the morning of the fifteenth, we set out, when I immediately began my survey, which I continued about ten miles down the river, till heavy rain coming on we were obliged to put up; and the place where we lay that night was the end, or edge of the woods, the whole space between it and the sea being entirely barren hills and wide open marshes. In the course of this day's survey, I found the river as full of shoals as the part which I had seen before; and in many places it was so greatly diminished in its width, that in our way we passed by two more capital falls.

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Early in the morning of the sixteenth, the weather being fine and pleasant, I again proceeded with my survey, and continued it for ten miles farther down the river;

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but still found it the same as before, being every where full of falls and shoals. At this time (it being about noon) the three men who had been sent as spies met us on their return, and informed my companions that five tents of Esquimaux were on the west side of the river. The situation, they said, was very convenient for surprizing them; and, according to their account, I judged it to be about twelve miles from the place we met the spies. When the Indians received this intelligence, no farther attendance or attention was paid to my survey, but their whole thoughts were immediately engaged in planning the best method of attack, and how they might steal on the poor Esquimaux the ensuing night, and kill them all while asleep. To accomplish this bloody design more effectually, the Indians thought it necessary to cross the river as soon as possible; and, by the account of the spies, it appeared that no part was more convenient for the purpose than that where we had met them, it being there very smooth, and at a considerable distance from any fall. Accordingly, after the Indians had put all their guns, spears, targets, &c. in good order, we crossed the river, which took up some time.

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, which, according

ing to their silly notions, are the inhabitants of the different elements, Earth, Sea, Air, &c.

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On enquiring the reason of their doing so, I learned that each man painted his shield with the image of that being on which he relied most for success in the intended engagement. Some were contented with a single representation; while others, doubtful, as I suppose, of the quality and power of any single being, had their shields covered to the very margin with a group of hieroglyphics quite unintelligible to every one except the painter. Indeed, from the hurry in which this business was necessarily done, the want of every colour but red and black, and the deficiency of skill in the artist, most of those paintings had more the appearance of a number of accidental blotches, than “of any thing that is on the earth, or in the water under the earth;” and though some few of them conveyed a tolerable idea of the thing intended, yet even these were many degrees worse than our country sign-paintings in England.

When this piece of superstition was completed, we began to advance toward the Esquimaux tents; but were very careful to avoid crossing any hills, or talking loud, for fear of being seen or overheard by the inhabitants; by which means the distance was not only much greater than it otherwise would have been, but, for the sake of keeping in the lowest grounds, we were obliged to walk through  
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entire swamps of stiff marly clay, sometimes up to the knees. Our course, however, on this occasion, though very serpentine, was not altogether so remote from the river as entirely to exclude me from a view of it the whole way: on the contrary, several times (according to the situation of the ground) we advanced so near it, as to give me an opportunity of convincing myself that it was as unnavigable, as it was in those parts which I had surveyed before, and which entirely corresponded with the accounts given of it by the spies.

It is perhaps worth remarking, that my crew, though an undisciplined rabble, and by no means accustomed to war or command, seemingly acted on this horrid occasion with the utmost uniformity of sentiment. There was not among them the least altercation or separate opinion; all were united in the general cause, and as ready to follow where Matonabee led, as he appeared to be ready to lead, according to the advice of an old Copper Indian, who had joined us on our first arrival at the river where this bloody business was first proposed.

Never was reciprocity of interest more generally regarded among a number of people, than it was on the present occasion by my crew, for not one was a moment in want of any thing that another could spare; and if ever the spirit of disinterested friendship expanded the heart of a Northern Indian, it was here exhibited in the most extensive

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tenfive meaning of the word. Property of every kind that could be of general use now ceafed to be private, and every one who had any thing which came under that defcription, feemed proud of an opportunity of giving it, or lending it to thofe who had none, or were moft in want of it.

The number of my crew was fo much greater than that which five tents could contain, and the warlike manner in which they were equipped fo greatly fuperior to what could be expected of the poor Efquimaux, that no lefs than a total mafacre of every one of them was likely to be the cafe, unlefs Providence fhould work a miracle for their deliverance.

The land was fo fituated that we walked under cover of the rocks and hills till we were within two hundred yards of the tents. There we lay in ambufh for fome time, watching the motions of the Efquimaux; and here the Indians would have advifed me to ftay till the fight was over, but to this I could by no means confent; for I confidered that when the Efquimaux came to be furprifed, they would try every way to efcape, and if they found me alone, not knowing me from an enemy, they would probably proceed to violence againft me when no perfon was near to affift. For this reafon I determined to accompany them, telling them at the fame time, that I would not have any hand in the murder they were about to commit, unless

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unless I found it necessary for my own safety. The Indians were not displeased at this proposal; one of them immediately fixed me a spear, and another lent me a broad bayonet for my protection, but at that time I could not be provided with a target; nor did I want to be encumbered with such an unnecessary piece of lumber.

While we lay in ambush, the Indians performed the last ceremonies which were thought necessary before the engagement. These chiefly consisted in painting their faces; some all black, some all red, and others with a mixture of the two; and to prevent their hair from blowing into their eyes, it was either tied before and behind, and on both sides, or else cut short all round. The next thing they considered was to make themselves as light as possible for running; which they did, by pulling off their stockings, and either cutting off the sleeves of their jackets, or rolling them up close to their arm-pits; and though the musketoes at that time were so numerous as to surpass all credibility, yet some of the Indians actually pulled off their jackets and entered the lists quite naked, except their breech-cloths and shoes. Fearing I might have occasion to run with the rest, I thought it also advisable to pull off my stockings and cap, and to tie my hair as close up as possible.

By the time the Indians had made themselves thus completely frightful, it was near one o'clock in the morning

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ing of the seventeenth ; when finding all the Esquimaux quiet in their tents, they rushed forth from their ambuscade, and fell on the poor unsuspecting creatures, unperceived till close at the very eves of their tents, where they soon began the bloody massacre, while I stood ~~never~~ in the rear.

In a few seconds the horrible scene commenced ; it was shocking beyond description ; the poor unhappy victims were surprised in the midst of their sleep, and had neither time nor power to make any resistance ; men, women, and children, in all upward of twenty, ran out of their tents stark naked, and endeavoured to make their escape ; but the Indians having possession of all the land-side, to no place could they fly for shelter. One alternative only remained, that of jumping into the river ; but, as none of them attempted it, they all fell a sacrifice to Indian barbarity !

The shrieks and groans of the poor expiring wretches were truly dreadful ; and my horror was much increased at seeing a young girl, seemingly about eighteen years of age, killed so near me, that when the first spear was stuck into her side she fell down at my feet, and twisted round my legs, so that it was with difficulty that I could disengage myself from her dying grasps. As two Indian men pursued this unfortunate victim, I solicited very hard for her life ; but the murderers made no reply till they had  
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stuck both their spears through her body, and transfixed her to the ground. They then looked me sternly in the face, and began to ridicule me, by asking if I wanted an Esquimaux wife; and paid not the smallest regard to the shrieks and agony of the poor wretch, who was twining round their spears like an eel! Indeed, after receiving much abusive language from them on the occasion, I was at length obliged to desire that they would be more expeditious in dispatching their victim out of her misery, otherwise I should be obliged, out of pity, to assist in the friendly office of putting an end to the existence of a fellow-creature who was so cruelly wounded. On this request being made, one of the Indians hastily drew his spear from the place where it was first lodged, and pierced it through her breast near the heart. The love of life, however, even in this most miserable state, was so predominant, that though this might justly be called the most merciful act that could be done for the poor creature, it seemed to be unwelcome, for though much exhausted by pain and loss of blood, she made several efforts to ward off the friendly blow. My situation and the terror of my mind at beholding this butchery, cannot easily be conceived, much less described; though I summed up all the fortitude I was master of on the occasion, it was with difficulty that I could refrain from tears; and I am confident that my features must have feelingly expressed how sincerely I was affected at the barbarous scene I then witnessed.

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nessed; even at this hour I cannot reflect on the transactions of that horrid day without shedding tears.

The brutish manner in which these savages used the bodies they had so cruelly bereaved of life was so shocking, that it would be indecent to describe it; particularly their curiosity in examining, and the remarks they made, on the formation of the women; which, they pretended to say, differed materially from that of their own. For my own part I must acknowledge, that however favourable the opportunity for determining that point might have been, yet my thoughts at the time were too much agitated to admit of any such remarks; and I firmly believe, that had there actually been as much difference between them as there is said to be between the Hottentots and those of Europe, it would not have been in my power to have marked the distinction. I have reason to think, however, that there is no ground for the assertion; and really believe that the declaration of the Indians on this occasion, was utterly void of truth, and proceeded only from the implacable hatred they bore to the whole tribe of people of whom I am speaking.

When the Indians had completed the murder of the poor Esquimaux, seven other tents on the East side the river immediately engaged their attention: very luckily, however, our canoes and baggage had been left at a little distance up the river, so that they had no way of crossing

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crossing to get at them. The river at this part being little more than eighty yards wide, they began firing at them from the West side. The poor Esquimaux on the opposite shore, though all up in arms, did not attempt to abandon their tents; and they were so unacquainted with the nature of fire-arms, that when the bullets struck the ground, they ran in crowds to see what was sent them, and seemed anxious to examine all the pieces of lead which they found flattened against the rocks. At length one of the Esquimaux men was shot in the calf of his leg, which put them in great confusion. They all immediately embarked in their little canoes, and paddled to a shoal in the middle of the river, which being somewhat more than a gun-shot from any part of the shore, put them out of the reach of our barbarians.

When the savages discovered that the surviving Esquimaux had gained the shore above mentioned, the Northern Indians began to plunder the tents of the deceased of all the copper utensils they could find; such as hatchets, bayonets, knives, &c. after which 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, constantly clashing their spears against each other, and frequently calling out *tima!* *tima!* \*! by way of derision to the poor surviving Esqui-

*Tima* in the Esquimaux language is a friendly word similar to *what cheer?*

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maux, who were standing on the shoal almost knee-deep in water. After parading the hill for some time, it was agreed to return up the river to the place where we had left our canoes and baggage, which was about half a mile distant, and then to cross the river again and plunder the seven tents on the East side. This resolution was immediately put in force; and as ferrying across with only three or four canoes \* took a considerable time, and as we were, from the crookedness of the river and the form of the land, entirely under cover, several of the poor surviving Esquimaux, thinking probably that we were gone about our business, and meant to trouble them no more, had returned from the shoal to their habitations. When we approached their tents, which we did under cover of the rocks, we found them busily employed tying up bundles. These the Indians seized with their usual ferocity; on which, the Esquimaux having their canoes lying ready in the water, immediately embarked, and all of them got safe to the former shoal, except an old man, who was so intent on collecting his things, that the Indians coming upon him before he could reach his canoe, he fell a sacrifice to their fury: I verily believe not less than twenty had a hand in his death, as his whole body was like a cullender. It is here necessary to observe that the spies,

\* When the fifteen Indians turned back at the Stony Mountains, they took two or three canoes with them; some of our crew that were sent a-head as messengers had not yet returned, which occasioned the number of our canoes to be so small.

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when on the look-out, could not see these seven tents, though close under them, as the bank, on which they stood, stretched over them.

It ought to have been mentioned in its proper place, that in making our retreat up the river, after killing the Esquimaux on the West side, we saw an old woman sitting by the side of the water, killing salmon, which lay at the foot of the fall as thick as a shoal of herrings. Whether from the noise of the fall, or a natural defect in the old woman's hearing, it is hard to determine, but certain it is, she had no knowledge of the tragical scene which had been so lately transacted at the tents, though she was not more than two hundred yards from the place. When we first perceived her, she seemed perfectly at ease, and was entirely surrounded with the produce of her labour. From her manner of behaviour, and the appearance of her eyes, which were as red as blood, it is more than probable that her sight was not very good; for she scarcely discerned that the Indians were enemies, till they were within twice the length of their spears of her. It was in vain that she attempted to fly, for 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

but stabbed her in many parts very remote from those which are vital.

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It may appear strange, that a person supposed to be almost blind should be employed in the business of fishing, and particularly with any degree of success; but when the multitude of fish is taken into the account, the wonder will cease. Indeed they were so numerous at the foot of the fall, that when a light pole, armed with a few spikes, which was the instrument the old woman used, was put under water, and hauled up with a jerk, it was scarcely possible to miss them. Some of my Indians tried the method, for curiosity, with the old woman's staff, and seldom got less than two at a jerk, sometimes three or four. Those fish, though very fine, and beautifully red, are but small, seldom weighing more (as near as I could judge) than six or seven pounds, and in general much less. Their numbers at this place were almost incredible, perhaps equal to any thing that is related of the salmon in Kamtschatka, or any other part of the world. It does not appear that the Esquimaux have any other method of catching the fish, unless it be by spears and darts; for no appearance of nets was discovered either at their tents, or on any part of the shore. This is the case with all the Esquimaux on the West side of Hudson's Bay; spearing in Summer, and angling in Winter, are the only methods they have yet devised to catch fish, though at

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times their whole dependance for support is on that article

When

When the Esquimaux who reside near Churchill River travel in Winter it is always from lake to lake, or from river to river, where they have formed magazines of provisions, and heaps of moss for firing. As some of those places are at a considerable distance from each other, and some of the lakes of considerable width, they frequently pitch their tents on the ice, and instead of having a fire, which the severity of the climate so much requires, they cut holes in the ice within their tents, and there sit and angle for fish; if they meet with any success, the fish are eaten alive out of the water; and when they are thirsty, water, their usual beverage, is at hand.

When I first entered into the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company, it was as Mate of one of their sloops which was employed in trading with the Esquimaux; I had therefore frequent opportunities of observing the miserable manner in which those people live. In the course of our trade with them we frequently purchased several seal-skin bags, which we supposed were full of oil; but on opening them have sometimes found great quantities of venison, seals, and sea-horse paws, as well as salmon; and as these were of no use to us, we always returned them to the Indians, who eagerly devoured them, though some of the articles had been perhaps a whole year in that state; and they seemed to exult greatly in having so over-reached us in the way of trade, as to have sometimes one third of their bargain returned.

This method of preserving their food, though it effectually guards it from the external air, and from the flies, does not prevent putrefaction entirely, though it renders its progress very slow. Pure train oil is of such a quality that it never freezes solid in the coldest Winters; a happy circumstance for those people, who are condemned to live in the most rigorous climate without the assistance of fire. While these magazines last, they have nothing more to do when hunger assails them, but to open one of the bags, take out a side of venison, a few seals, sea-horse paws, or some half-rotten salmon, and without any preparation, sit down and make a meal; and the lake or river by which they pitch their tent, affords them water, which is their constant drink. Besides the extraordinary food already mentioned, they have several

When the Indians had plundered the seven tents of all the copper utensils, which seemed the only thing worth their

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veral other dishes equally disgusting to an European palate; I will only mention one, as it was more frequently part of their repast when I visited their tents, than any other, except fish. The dish I allude to, is made of the raw liver of a deer, cut in small pieces of about an inch square, and mixed up with the contents of the stomach of the same animal; and the farther digestion has taken place, the better it is suited to their taste. It is impossible to describe or conceive the pleasure they seem to enjoy when eating such unaccountable food: nay, I have even seen them eat whole handfuls of maggots that were produced in meat by fly-blows; and it is their constant custom, when their noses bleed by any accident, to lick their blood into their mouths, and swallow it. Indeed, if we consider the inhospitable part of the globe they are destined to inhabit, and the great distresses to which they are frequently driven by hunger in consequence of it, we shall no longer be surprised at finding they can relish any thing in common with the meanest of the animal creation, but rather admire the wisdom and kindness of Providence in forming the palates and powers of all creatures in such a manner as is best adapted to the food, climate, and every other circumstance which may be incident to their respective situations.

It is no less true, that these people, when I first knew them, would not eat any of our provisions, sugar, raisins, figs, or even bread; for though some of them would put a bit of it into their mouths, they soon spit it out again with evident marks of dislike; so that they had no greater relish for our food than we had for theirs. At present, however, they will eat any part of our provisions, either fresh or salted; and some of them will drink a draught of porter, or a little brandy and water; and they are now so far civilized, and attached to the English, that I am persuaded any of the Company's servants who could habituate themselves to their diet and manner of life, might now live as secure under their protection, as under that of any of the tribes of Indians who border on Hudson's Bay.

They live in a state of perfect freedom; no one apparently claiming the superiority over, or acknowledging the least subordination to another, except

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their notice, they threw all the tents and tent-poles into the river, destroyed a vast quantity of dried salmon, musk-oxen flesh, and other provisions; broke all the stone kettles; and, in fact, did all the mischief they possibly could to distress the poor creatures they could not murder, and who were standing on the shoal before mentioned, obliged to be woeful spectators of their great, or perhaps irreparable loss.

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After the Indians had completed this piece of wantonness we sat down, and made a good meal of fresh salmon, which were as numerous at the place where we now rested, as they were on the West side of the river. When we had finished our meal, which was the first we had enjoyed for many hours, the Indians told me that they were again ready to assist me in making an end of my survey. It was then about five o'clock in the morning of the seventeenth, the sea being in sight from the North West by West to the North East, about eight miles distant. I therefore set instantly about commencing my survey, and pursued it to the mouth of the river, which I found all the way so full of shoals and falls that it was not navigable even for a boat, and that it emptied itself into the sea over a ridge or bar.

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except what is due from children to their parents, or such of their kin as take care of them when they are young and incapable of providing for themselves. There is, however, reason to think that, when grown up to manhood, they pay some attention to the advice of the old men, on account of their experience.

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The tide was then out; but I judged from the marks which I saw on the edge of the ice, that it flowed about twelve or fourteen feet, which will only reach a little way within the river's mouth. The tide being out, the water in the river was perfectly fresh; but I am certain of its being the sea, or some branch of it, by the quantity of whalebone and seal-skins which the Esquimaux had at their tents, and also by the number of seals which I saw on the ice. At the mouth of the river, the sea is full of islands and shoals, as far as I could see with the assistance of a good pocket telescope. The ice was not then broke up, but was melted away for about three quarters of a mile from the main shore, and to a little distance round the islands and shoals.

By the time I had completed this survey, it was about one in the morning of the eighteenth; but in those high latitudes, and at this season of the year, the Sun is always at a good height above the horizon, so that we had not only day-light, but sun-shine the whole night: a thick fog and drizzling rain then came on, and finding that neither the river nor sea were likely to be of any use, I did not think it worth while to wait for fair weather to determine the latitude exactly by an observation; but by the extraordinary care I took in observing the courses and distances when I walked from Congecathawhachaga, where I had two good observations, the latitude may be depended upon within twenty miles at the utmost. For the sake of form,

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however, after having had some consultation with the Indians, I erected a mark, and took possession of the coast, on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Having finished this business, we set out on our return, and walked about twelve miles to the South by East, when we stopped and took a little sleep, which was the first time that any of us had closed our eyes from the fifteenth instant, and it was now six o'clock in the morning of the eighteenth. Here the Indians killed a musk-ox, but the moss being very wet, we could not make a fire, so that we were obliged to eat the meat raw, which was intolerable, as it happened to be an old beast.

Before I proceed farther on my return, it may not be improper to give some account of the river, and the country adjacent; its productions, and the animals which constantly inhabit those dreary regions, as well as those that only migrate thither in Summer, in order to breed and rear their young, unmolested by man. That I may do this to better purpose, it will be necessary to go back to the place where I first came to the river, which was about forty miles from its mouth.

Beside the stunted pines already mentioned, there are some tufts of dwarf willows; plenty of *Wishacumpuckey*, (as the English call it, and which they use as tea); some jacka-

A Plan of the

# COPPER-MINE RIVER,

Surveyed by

SAMUEL HEARNE

July 1771.



Longitude 122° 32' West of Greenwich

jackasheypuck, which the natives use as tobacco; and a few cranberry and heathberry bushes; but not the least appearance of any fruit.

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The woods grow gradually thinner and smaller as you approach the sea; and the last little tuft of pines that I saw is about thirty miles from the mouth of the river, so that we meet with nothing between that spot and the sea-side but barren hills and marshes.

The general course of the river is about North by East; but in some places it is very crooked, and its breadth varies from twenty yards to four or five hundred. The banks are in general a solid rock, both sides of which correspond so exactly with each other, as to leave no doubt that the channel of the river has been caused by some terrible convulsion of nature; and the stream is supplied by a variety of little rivulets, that rush down the sides of the hills, occasioned chiefly by the melting of the snow. Some of the Indians say, that this river takes its rise from the North West side of Large White Stone Lake, which is at the distance of near three hundred miles on a straight line; but I can scarcely think that is the case, unless there be many intervening lakes, which are supplied by the vast quantity of water that is collected in so great an extent of hilly and mountainous country: for were it otherwise, I should imagine that the multitude of small rivers, which must empty themselves into the main stream in the course of so  
great

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great a distance, would have formed a much deeper and stronger current than I discovered, and occasioned an annual deluge at the breaking up of the ice in the Spring, of which there was not the least appearance, except at Bloody Fall, where the river was contracted to the breadth of about twenty yards. It was at the foot of this fall that my Indians killed the Esquimaux; which was the reason why I distinguished it by that appellation. From this fall, which is about eight miles from the sea-side, there are very few hills, and those not high. The land between them is a stiff loam and clay, which, in some parts, produces patches of pretty good grass, and in others tallish dwarf willows: at the foot of the hills also there is plenty of fine scurvy-grass.

The Esquimaux at this river are but low in stature, none exceeding the middle size, and though broad set, are neither well-made nor strong bodied. Their complexion is of a dirty copper colour; some of the women, however, are more fair and ruddy. Their dress much resembles that of the Greenlanders in Davis's Straits, except the women's boots, which are not stiffened out with whale-bone, and the tails of their jackets are not more than a foot long.

Their arms and fishing-tackle are bows and arrows, spears, lances, darts, &c. which exactly resemble those made use of by the Esquimaux in Hudson's Straits, and which

which have been well described by Crantz ; but, for want of good edge-tools, are far inferior to them in workmanship. Their arrows are either shod with a triangular piece of black stone, like slate, or a piece of copper ; but most commonly the former.

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The body of their canoes is on the same construction as that of the other Esquimaux, and there is no unnecessary prow-projection beyond the body of the vessel ; these, like their arms and other utensils, are, for the want of better tools, by no means so neat as those I have seen in Hudson's Bay and Straits. The double-bladed paddle is in universal use among all the tribes of this people.

Their tents are made of parchment deer-skins in the hair, and are pitched in a circular form, the same as those of the Esquimaux in Hudson's Bay. These tents are undoubtedly no more than their Summer habitations, for I saw the remains of two miserable hovels, which, from the situation, the structure, and the vast quantity of bones, old shoes, scraps of skins, and other rubbish lying near them, had certainly been some of their Winter retreats. These houses were situated on the South side of a hill ; one half of them were under-ground, and the upper parts closely set round with poles, meeting at the top in a conical form, like their Summer-houses or tents. These tents,

See Hist. of Greenland, vol. i. p. 132—156.

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when inhabited, had undoubtedly been covered with skins; and in Winter entirely overspread with the snow-drift, which must have greatly contributed to their warmth. They were so small, that they did not contain more than six or eight persons each; and even that number of any other people would have found them but miserable habitations.

Their household furniture chiefly consists of stone kettles, and wooden troughs of various sizes; also dishes, scoops, and spoons, made of the buffalo or musk-ox horns. Their kettles are formed of a pepper and salt coloured stone; and though the texture appears to be very coarse, and as porous as a drip-stone, yet they are perfectly tight, and will sound as clear as a China bowl. Some of those kettles are so large as to be capable of containing five or six gallons; and though it is impossible these poor people can perform this arduous work with any other tools than harder stones, yet they are by far superior to any that I had ever seen in Hudson's Bay; every one of them being ornamented with neat mouldings round the rim, and some of the large ones with a kind of flute-work at each corner. In shape they were a long square, something wider at the top than bottom, like a knife-tray, and strong handles of the solid stone were left at each end to lift them up.

Their hatchets are made of a thick lump of copper, about five or six inches long, and from one and a half to two inches square; they are bevelled away at one end like a mortice-

mortice-chissel. This is lashed into the end of a piece of wood about twelve or fourteen inches long, in such a manner as to act like an adze: in general they are applied to the wood like a chissel, and driven in with a heavy club, instead of a mallet. Neither the weight of the tool nor the sharpness of the metal will admit of their being handled either as adze or axe, with any degree of success.

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The men's bayonets and women's knives are also made of copper; the former are in shape like the ace of spades, with the handle of deers horn a foot long, and the latter exactly resemble those described by Crantz. Samples of both these implements I formerly sent home to James Fitzgerald, Esq. then one of the Hudson's Bay Committee.

Among all the spoils of the twelve tents which my companions plundered, only two small pieces of iron were found; one of which was about an inch and a half long, and three eighths of an inch broad, made into a woman's knife; the other was barely an inch long, and a quarter of an inch wide. This last was rivetted into a piece of ivory, so as to form a man's knife, known in Hudson's Bay by the name of *Mokeatoggan*, and is the only instrument used by them in shaping all their wood-work.

Those people had a fine and numerous breed of dogs, with sharp erect ears, sharp noses, bushy tails, &c. ex-

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actly

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actly like those seen among the Esquimaux in Hudson's Bay and Straits. They were all tethered to stones, to prevent them, as I suppose, from eating the fish that were spread all over the rocks to dry. I do not recollect that my companions killed or hurt one of those animals; but after we had left the tents, they often wished they had taken some of those fine dogs with them.

Though the dress, canoes, utensils, and many other articles belonging to these people, are very similar to those of Hudson's Bay, yet there is one custom that prevails among them—namely, that of the men having all the hair of their heads pulled out by the roots—which pronounces them to be of a different tribe from any hitherto seen either on the coast of Labradore, Hudson's Bay, or Davis's Straits. The women wore their hair at full length, and exactly in the same stile as all the other Esquimaux women do whom I have seen.

When at the sea-side, (at the mouth of the Copper River,) besides seeing many seals on the ice, I also observed several flocks of sea-fowl flying about the shores; such as, gulls, black-heads, loons, old wives, ha-ha-wie's, dunter geese, arctic gulls, and willicks. In the adjacent ponds also were some swans and geese in a moulting state, and in the marshes some curlews and plover; plenty of hawks-eyes, (*i. e.* the green plover,) and some yellow-legs; also several other small birds, that visit those Northern parts in the  
Spring

Spring to breed and moult, and which doubtless return Southward as the fall advances. My reason for this conjecture is founded on a certain knowledge that all those birds migrate in Hudson's Bay; and it is but reasonable to think that they are less capable of withstanding the rigour of such a long and cold Winter as they must necessarily experience in a country which is so many degrees within the Arctic Circle, as that is where I now saw them.

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That the musk-oxen, deer, bears, wolves, wolvarines, foxes, Alpine hares, white owls, ravens, partridges, ground-squirrels, common squirrels, ermins, mice, &c. are the constant inhabitants of those parts, is not to be doubted. In many places, by the sides of the hills, where the snow lay to a great depth, the dung of the musk-oxen and deer was lying in such long and continued heaps, as clearly to point out that those places had been their much-frequented paths during the preceding Winter. There were also many other similar appearances on the hills, and other parts, where the snow was entirely thawed away, without any print of a foot being visible in the moss; which is a certain proof that these long ridges of dung must have been dropped in the snow as the beasts were passing and repassing over it in the Winter. There are likewise similar proofs that the Alpine hare and the partridge do not migrate, but remain there the whole year: the latter we found in considerable flocks among the tufts of willows which grow near the sea.

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It is perhaps not generally known, even to the curious, therefore may not be unworthy of observation, that the dung of the musk-ox, though so large an animal, is not larger, and at the same time so near the shape and colour of that of the Alpine hare, that the difference is not easily distinguished but by the natives, though in general the quantity may lead to a discovery of the animal to which it belongs.

I did not see any birds peculiar to those parts, except what the Copper Indians call the "Alarm Bird," or "Bird of Warning." In size and colour it resembles a Cobadekooock, and is of the owl genus. The name is said to be well adapted to its qualities; for when it perceives any people, or beast, it directs its way towards them immediately, and after hovering over them some time, flies round them in circles, or goes a-head in the same direction in which they walk. They repeat their visits frequently; and if they see any other moving objects, fly alternately from one party to the other, hover over them for some time, and make a loud screaming noise, like the crying of a child. In this manner they are said sometimes to follow passengers a whole day. The Copper Indians put great confidence in those birds, and say they are frequently apprized by them of the approach of strangers, and conducted by them to herds of deer and musk-oxen; which, without their assistance, in all probability, they never could have found.

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The Esquimaux seem not to have imbibed the same opinion of those birds; for if they had, they must have been apprized of our approach toward their tents, because all the time the Indians lay in ambush, (before they began the massacre,) a large flock of those birds were continually flying about, and hovering alternately over them and the tents, making a noise sufficient to awaken any man out of the soundest sleep.

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After a sleep of five or six hours we once more set out, and walked eighteen or nineteen miles to the South South East, when we arrived at one of the copper mines, which lies, from the river's mouth about South South East, distant about twenty-nine or thirty miles.

This mine, if it deserve that appellation, is no more than an entire jumble of rocks and gravel, which has been rent many ways by an earthquake. Through these ruins there runs a small river; but no part of it, at the time I was there, was more than knee-deep.

The Indians who were the occasion of my undertaking this journey, represented this mine to be so rich and valuable, that if a factory were built at the river, a ship might be ballasted with the oar, instead of stone; and that with the same ease and dispatch as is done with stones at Churchill River. By their account the hills were entirely composed of that metal, all in handy lumps, like  
a heap

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a heap of pebbles. But their account differed so much from the truth, that I and almost all my companions expended near four hours in search of some of this metal, with such poor success, that among us all, only one piece of any size could be found. This, however, was remarkably good, and weighed above four pounds \*. I believe the copper has formerly been in much greater plenty; for in many places, both on the surface and in the cavities and crevices of the rocks, the stones are much tinged with verdigrise.

It may not be unworthy the notice of the curious, or undeserving a place in my Journal, to remark, that the Indians imagine that every bit of copper they find resembles some object in nature; but by what I saw of the large piece, and some smaller ones which were found by my companions, it requires a great share of invention to make this out. I found that different people had different ideas on the subject, for the large piece of copper above mentioned had not been found long before it had twenty different names. One saying that it resembled this animal, and another that it represented a particular part of another; at last it was generally allowed to resemble an Alpine hare couchant: for my part, I must confess that I could not see it had the least resemblance to any thing to which they compared it. It would be endless to

This piece of Copper is now in the possession of the Hudson's Bay Company.

enumerate

enumerate the different parts of a deer, and other animals, which the Indians say the best pieces of copper resemble: it may therefore be sufficient to say, that the largest pieces, with the fewest branches and the least drofs, are the best for their use; as by the help of fire, and two stones, they can beat it out to any shape they wish.

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Before Churchill River was settled by the Hudson's Bay Company, which was not more than fifty years previous to this journey being undertaken, the Northern Indians had no other metal but copper among them, except a small quantity of iron-work, which a party of them who visited York Fort about the year one thousand seven hundred and thirteen, or one thousand seven hundred and fourteen, purchased; and a few pieces of old iron found at Churchill River, which had undoubtedly been left there by Captain Monk. This being the case, numbers of them from all quarters used every Summer to resort to these hills in search of copper; of which they made hatchets, ice-chisfels, bayonets, knives, awls, arrow-heads, &c.\* The many paths

\* There is a strange tradition among those people, that the first person who discovered those mines was a woman, and that she conducted them to the place for several years; but as she was the only woman in company, some of the men took such liberties with her as made her vow revenge on them; and she is said to have been a great conjurer. Accordingly when the men had loaded themselves with copper, and were going to return, she refused to accompany them, and said she would sit on the mine till she sunk into the ground, and that the copper should sink with her. The next year, when the men went for more copper, they found her sunk up to the waist, though still  
alive,

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paths that had been beaten by the Indians on these occasions, and which are yet, in many places, very perfect, especially on the dry ridges and hills, is surprising; in the vallies and marshy grounds, however, they are mostly grown over with herbage, so as not to be discerned.

The Copper Indians set a great value on their native metal even to this day; and prefer it to iron, for almost every use except that of a hatchet, a knife, and an awl: for these three necessary implements, copper makes but a very poor substitute. When they exchange copper for iron-work with our trading Northern Indians, which is but seldom, the standard is an ice-chissel of copper for an ice-chissel of iron, or an ice-chissel and a few arrow-heads of copper, for a half-worn hatchet; but when they barter furs with our Indians, the established rule is to give ten times the price for every thing they purchase that is given for them at the Company's Factory. Thus, a hatchet that is bought at the Factory for one beaver-skin, or one cat-skin, or three ordinary martins' skins, is sold to

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alive, and the quantity of copper much decreased; and on their repeating their visit the year following, she had quite disappeared, and all the principal part of the mine with her; so that after that period nothing remained on the surface but a few small pieces, and those were scattered at a considerable distance from each other. Before that period they say the copper lay on the surface in such large heaps, that the Indians had nothing to do but turn it over, and pick such pieces as would best suit the different uses for which they intended it.

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those people at the advanced price of one thousand *per cent.*; they also pay in proportion, for knives, and every other smaller piece of iron-work. For a small brass kettle of two pounds, or two pounds and a half weight, they pay sixty martins, or twenty beaver in other kinds of furs \*. . If the kettles are not bruised, or ill-used in any other respect, the Northern traders have the conscience at times to exact something more. It is at this extravagant price that all the Copper and Dog-ribbed Indians, who traffic with our yearly traders, supply themselves with iron-work, &c.

From those two tribes our Northern Indians used formerly to purchase most of the furs they brought to the Company's Factory; for their own country produced very few of those articles, and being, at that time, at war with the Southern Indians, they were prevented from penetrating far enough backwards to meet with many animals of the furr kind; so that deer-skins, and

What is meant by Beaver in other kind of furs, must be understood as follows: For the easier trading with the Indians, as well as for the more correctly keeping their accounts, the Hudson's Bay Company have made a full-grown beaver-skin the standard by which they rate all other furs, according to their respective values. Thus in several species of furs, one skin is valued at the rate of four beaver skins; some at three, and others at two; whereas those of an inferior quality are rated at one; and those of still less value considered so inferior to that of a beaver, that from six to twenty of their skins are only valued as equal to one beaver skin in the way of trade, and do not fetch one-fourth of the price at the London market. In this manner the term "Made Beaver" is to be understood.

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such furs as they could extort from the Copper and Dog-ribbed Indians, composed the whole of their trade; which, on an average of many years, and indeed till very lately, seldom or ever exceeded six thousand *Made Beaver per annum*.

At present happy it is for them, and greatly to the advantage of the Company, that they are in perfect peace, and live in friendship with their Southern neighbours. The good effect of this harmony is already so visible, that within a few years the trade from that quarter has increased many thousands of *Made Beaver* annually; some years even to the amount of eleven thousand skins\*. Beside  
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Since this Journal was written, the Northern Indians, by annually visiting their Southern friends, the Athapuscow Indians, have contracted the small-pox, which has carried off nine-tenths of them, and particularly those people who composed the trade at Churchill Factory. The few survivors follow the example of their Southern neighbours, and all trade with the Canadians, who are settled in the heart of the Athapuscow country: so that a very few years has proved my short-sightedness, and that it would have been much more to the advantage of the Company, as well as have prevented the depopulation of the Northern Indian country, if they had still remained at war with the Southern tribes, and never attempted to better their situation. At the same time, it is impossible to say what increase of trade might not, in time, have arisen from a constant and regular traffic with the different tribes of Copper and Dog-ribbed Indians. But having been totally neglected for several years, they have now sunk into their original barbarism and extreme indigence; and a war has ensued between the two tribes, for the sake of the few remnants of iron-work which was left among them; and the Dog-ribbed Indians were so numerous, and so successful, as to destroy almost the whole race of the Copper Indians.

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the advantage arising to the Company from this increase, the poor Northern Indians reap innumerable benefits from a fine and plentiful country, with the produce of which they annually load themselves for trade, without giving the least offence to the proper inhabitants.

Several attempts have been made to induce the Copper and Dog-ribbed Indians to visit the Company's Fort at Churchill River, and for that purpose many presents have been sent, but they never were attended with any success. And though several of the Copper Indians have visited Churchill, in the capacity of servants to the Northern Indians, and were generally sent back loaded with presents for their countrymen, yet the Northern Indians always plundered them of the whole soon after they left the Fort. This kind of treatment, added to the many inconveniencies that attend so long a journey, are great obstacles in their way; otherwise it would be as possible for them to bring their own goods to market, as for the Northern Indians to go so far to purchase them on their own account,

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While I was writing this Note, I was informed by some Northern Indians, that the few which remain of the Copper tribe have found their way to one of the Canadian houses in the Athapuscow Indians country, where they get supplied with every thing at less, or about half the price they were formerly obliged to give; so that the few surviving Northern Indians, as well as the Hudson's Bay Company, have now lost every shadow of any future trade from that quarter, unless the Company will establish a settlement with the Athapuscow country, and undersell the Canadians.

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and have the same distance to bring them as the first proprietors would have had. But it is a political scheme of our Northern traders to prevent such an intercourse, as it would greatly lessen their consequence and emolument. Superstition, indeed, will, in all probability, be a lasting barrier against those people ever having a settled communication with our Factory; as few of them chuse to travel in countries so remote from their own, under a pretence that the change of air and provisions (though exactly the same to which they are accustomed) are highly prejudicial to their health; and that not one out of three of those who have undertaken the journey, have ever lived to return. The first of these reasons is evidently no more than gross superstition; and though the latter is but too true, it has always been owing to the treachery and cruelty of the Northern Indians, who took them under their protection.

It is but a few years since, that Captain Keeshies, who is frequently mentioned in this Journal, took twelve of these people under his charge, all heavy laden with the most valuable furs; and long before they arrived at the Fort, he and the rest of his crew had got all the furs from them, in payment for provisions for their support, and obliged them to carry the furs on their account.

On their arrival at Prince of Wales's Fort, Keeshies laid claim to great merit for having brought those strangers,  
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so richly laden, to the Factory, and assured the Governor that he might, in future, expect a great increase in trade from that quarter, through his interest and assiduity. One of the strangers was dubbed with the name of Captain, and treated accordingly, while at the Fort; that is, he was dressed out in the best manner; and at his departure, both himself and all his countrymen were loaded with presents, in hopes that they would not only repeat the visit themselves, but by displaying so much generosity, many of their countrymen would be induced to accompany them.

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There seems to be great propriety in the conduct of the Governor \* on this occasion; but however well-intended, it had quite the contrary effect, for Keeshies and the rest of his execrable gang, not content with sharing all the furs those poor people had carried to the Fort, determined to get also all the European goods that had been given to them by the Governor. As neither Keeshies nor any of his gang had the courage to kill the Copper Indians, they concerted a deep-laid scheme for their destruction; which was to leave them on an island. With this view, when they got to the proposed spot, the Northern Indians took care to have all the baggage belonging to the Copper Indians ferried across to the main, and having stripped them of such parts of their clothing as they

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thought worthy their notice, went off with all the canoes, leaving them all behind on the island, where they perished for want. When I was on my journey to the Fort in June one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, I saw the bones of those poor people, and had the foregoing account from my guide Matonabee; but it was not made known to the Governor for some years afterward, for fear of prejudicing him against Keeshies.

A similar circumstance had nearly happened to a Copper Indian who accompanied me to the Fort in one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two: after we were all ferried across Seal River, and the poor man's bundle of furs on the South-side, he was left alone on the opposite shore; and no one except Matonabee would go over for him. The wind at that time blew so hard, that Matonabee stripped himself quite naked, to be ready for swimming in case the canoe should upset; but he soon brought the Copper Indian safe over, to the no small mortification of the wretch who had the charge of him, and who would gladly have possessed the bundle of furs at the expence of the poor man's life.

When the Northern Indians returned from the Factory that year, the above Copper Indian put himself under the protection of Matonabee, who accompanied him as far North as the latitude 64°, where they saw some Copper Indians, among whom was the young man's father, into  
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whose hands Matonabee delivered him in good health, with all his goods safe, and in good order.

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Soon after we had left the Copper-mine, there came on a thick fog with rain, and at intervals heavy showers of snow. This kind of weather continued for some days; and at times it was so thick, that we were obliged to stop for several hours together, as we were unable to see our way, and the road was remarkably rocky and intricate.

At three o'clock in the morning of the twenty-second, Matonabee's brother and one of the Copper Indians, who had been first dispatched a-head from Congecathawhachaga, overtook us. During their absence they had not discovered any Indians who could have been serviceable to my expedition. They had, however, been at the Copper River, and seeing some marks set up there to direct them to return, they had made the best of their way, and had not slept from the time they left the river till they joined us, though the distance was not less than a hundred miles. When they arrived we were asleep, but we soon awakened, and began to proceed on our journey. That day we walked forty-two miles; and in our way passed Buffalo Lake: at night, we put up about the middle of the Stony Mountains. The weather was excessively hot and sultry.

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On the twenty-third, the weather continued much the same as on the preceding day. Early in the morning we set out, and walked forty-five miles the first day, during which the Indians killed several fine fat buck deer.

24th.

About one o'clock in the morning of the twenty-fourth, we stopped and took a little refreshment, as we had also done about noon the preceding day; but the Indians had been so long from their wives and families, that they promised not to sleep till they saw them, especially as we were then in sight of the hills of Congecathawhachaga, where we had left the last of them. After resting about an hour, we proceeded on our way, and at six in the morning arrived at Congecathawhachaga; when, to our great disappointment, we found that all our women had got set across the river before the Copper Indians left that part; so that when we arrived, not an Indian was to be found, except an old man and his family, who had arrived in our absence, and was waiting at the crossing-place with some furs for Matonabee, who was so nearly related to the old man as to be his son-in-law, having one of his daughters for a wife. The old man had another with him, who was also offered to the great man, but not accepted.

Our stay at this place may be said to have been of very short duration; for on seeing a large smoke to the Southward, we immediately crossed the river, and walked towards it,

when we found that the women had indeed been there some days before, but were gone; and at their departure had set the moss on fire, which was then burning, and occasioned the smoke we had seen. By this time the afternoon was far advanced; we pursued, however, our course in the direction which the women took, for their track we could easily discover in the moss. We had not gone far, before we saw another smoke at a great distance, for which we shaped our course; and, notwithstanding we redoubled our pace, it was eleven o'clock at night before we reached it; when, to our great mortification, we found it to be the place where the women had slept the night before; having in the morning, at their departure, set fire to the moss which was then burning.

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25th.

The Indians, finding that their wives were so near as to be within one of their ordinary day's walk, which seldom exceeded ten or twelve miles, determined not to rest till they had joined them. Accordingly we pursued our course, and about two o'clock in the morning of the twenty-fifth, came up with some of the women, who had then pitched their tents by the side of Cogead Lake.

From our leaving the Copper-mine River to this time we had travelled so hard, and taken so little rest by the way, that my feet and legs had swelled considerably, and I had become quite stiff at the ankles. In this situation I had

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so little power to direct my feet when walking, that I frequently knocked them against the stones with such force, as not only to jar and disorder them, but my legs also; and the nails of my toes were bruised to such a degree, that several of them festered and dropped off. To add to this mishap, the skin was entirely chafed off from the tops of both my feet, and between every toe; so that the sand and gravel; which I could by no means exclude, irritated the raw parts so much, that for a whole day before we arrived at the women's tents, I left the print of my feet in blood almost at every step I took. Several of the Indians began to complain that their feet also were sore; but, on examination, not one of them was the twentieth part in so bad a state as mine.

This being the first time I had been in such a situation, or seen any body foot-foundered, I was much alarmed, and under great apprehensions for the consequences. Though I was but little fatigued in body, yet the excruciating pain I suffered when walking, had such an effect on my spirits, that if the Indians had continued to travel two or three days longer at that unmerciful rate, I must unavoidably have been left behind; for my feet were in many places quite honey-combed, by the dirt and gravel eating into the raw flesh.

As soon as we arrived at the women's tents, the first thing I did, was to wash and clean my feet in  
warm

warm water; then I bathed the swelled parts with spirits of wine, and dressed those that were raw with Turner's cerate; soon after which I betook myself to rest. As we did not move on the following day, I perceived that the swelling abated, and the raw parts of my feet were not quite so much inflamed. This change for the better gave me the strongest assurance that rest was the principal thing wanted to effect a speedy and complete cure of my painful, though in reality very simple disorder, (foot-foundation,) which I had before considered to be an affair of the greatest consequence.

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Rest, however, though essential to my speedy recovery, could not at this time be procured; for as the Indians were desirous of joining the remainder of their wives and families as soon as possible, they would not stop even a single day; so that on the twenty-seventh we again began to move; and though they moved at the rate of eight or nine miles a day, it was with the utmost difficulty that I could follow them. Indeed the weather proved remarkably fine and pleasant, and the ground was in general pretty dry, and free from stones; which contributed greatly to my ease in walking, and enabled me to keep up with the natives.

27th.

On the thirty-first of July, we arrived at the place where the wives and families of my companions had been ordered to wait our return from the Copper-mine River. Here we found several tents of Indians; but those be-

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longing to Matonabee, and some others of my crew, had not arrived. We saw, however, a large smoke to the Eastward, which we supposed had been made by them, as no other Indians were expected from that quarter. Accordingly, the next morning, Matonabee sent some of his young men in quest of them, and on the fifth, they all joined us; when, contrary to expectation, a great number of other Indians were with them; in all, to the amount of more than forty tents. Among those Indians, was the man who Matonabee stabbed when we were at Clowey. With the greatest submission, he led his wife to Matonabee's tent, set her down by his side, and retired, without saying a word. Matonabee took no notice of her, though she was bathed in tears; and by degrees, after reclining herself on her elbow for some time, she lay down, and, sobbing, said, *see'd dinne, see'd dinne!* which is, My husband, my husband! On which Matonabee told her, that if she had respected him as such, she would not have run away from him; and that she was at liberty to go where she pleased. On which she got up, with seeming reluctance, though most assuredly with a light heart, and returned to her former husband's tent.

## C H A P. VII.

Remarks from the Time the Women joined us till our  
Arrival at the Athapuscow Lake.

*Several of the Indians sick.—Method used by the conjurers to relieve one man, who recovers.—Matonabee and his crew proceed to the South West.—Most of the other Indians separate, and go their respective ways.—Pass by White Stone Lake.—Many deer killed merely for their skins.—Remarks thereon, and on the deer, respecting seasons and places.—Arrive at Point Lake.—One of the Indian's wives being sick, is left behind to perish above-ground.—Weather very bad, but deer plenty.—Stay some time at Point Lake to dry meat, &c.—Winter set in.—Superstitious customs observed by my companions, after they had killed the Esquimaux at Copper River.—A violent gale of wind oversets my tent and breaks my quadrant.—Some Copper and Dog-ribbed Indians join us.—Indians propose to go to the Athapuscow Country to kill moose.—Leave Point Lake, and arrive at the wood's edge.—Arrive at Anawd Lake.—Transactions there.—Remarkable instance of a man being cured of the palsy by the conjurers.—Leave Anawd Lake.—Arrive at the great Athapuscow Lake.*

SEVERAL of the Indians being very ill, the conjurers, who are always the doctors, and pretend to perform great cures, began to try their skill to effect their recovery. Here it is necessary to remark, that they use no medicine either for internal or external complaints, but perform all their cures by charms. In ordinary cases, sucking the part affected, blowing, and singing to it; haugh-

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laughing, spitting, and at the same time uttering a heap of unintelligible jargon, compose the whole process of the cure. 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. The accumulation of so large a quantity of wind is at times apt to occasion some extraordinary emotions, which are not easily suppressed by a sick person; and as there is no vent for it but by the channel through which it was conveyed thither, it sometimes occasions an odd scene between the doctor and his patient; which I once wantonly called an engagement, but for which I was afterward exceedingly sorry, as it highly offended several of the Indians; particularly the juggler and the sick person, both of whom were men I much esteemed, and, except in that moment of levity, it had ever been no less my inclination than my interest to shew them every respect that my situation would admit.

I have often admired the great pains these jugglers take to deceive their credulous countrymen, while at the same time they are indefatigably industrious and persevering in their efforts to relieve them. 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. However  
laugh-