

and the mounted warriors rode out in a body to surround and slaughter the herd. The women followed close after them to strip the hides from the fresh carcasses and cut out the choice portion of the meat and tallow and bring it into camp. Here the meat was cut into thin strips and hung upon frames of horizontal poles to dry, while the tallow was stripped off in flakes. In the dry prairie atmosphere one day is usually sufficient to cure the meat, without the aid of salt or smoke. When thus dried it is known as "jerked beef." While the meat is fresh, for the first day or two the camp is a scene of constant feasting, the juicy steaks or the sweet ribs being kept broiling over the coals in one tipi or another until far into the night. It is the harvest home of the prairie tribes. As soon as the meat is dry, the tipis are taken down and packed into the wagons along with the meat, and one family after another starts for home until in a short time the great camp is a thing of the past.

The jerked beef or venison is commonly prepared for eating by being boiled until reasonably tender. In eating, the Indian takes a strip thus cooked, dips one end into a soup made by dissolving some salt in warm water, takes the portion thus salted between his teeth, and saws off enough for a mouthful with a knife held in his other hand. Between mouthfuls he takes bites from a strip of dried tallow placed in the dish with the meat.

For pemmican the jerked beef or other meat is toasted over a fire until crisp and is then pounded into a hash with a stone hammer. In the old times a hole was dug in the ground and a buffalo hide was staked over so as to form a skin dish, into which the meat was thrown to be pounded. The hide was that from the neck of the buffalo, the toughest part of the skin, the same used for shields, and the only part which would stand the wear and tear of the hammers. In the meantime the marrow bones are split up and boiled in water until all the grease and oil come to the top, when it is skimmed off and poured over the pounded beef. As soon as the mixture cools, it is sewed up into skin bags (not the ordinary painted parflèche cases) and laid away until needed. It was sometimes buried or otherwise cached. Pemmican thus prepared will keep indefinitely. When prepared for immediate use, it is usually sweetened with sugar, mesquite pods, or some wild fruit mixed and beaten up with it in the pounding. It is extremely nourishing, and has a very agreeable taste to one accustomed to it. On the march it was to the prairie Indian what parched corn was to the hunter of the timber tribes, and has been found so valuable as a condensed nutriment that it is extensively used by arctic travelers and explorers. A similar preparation is in use upon the pampas of South America and in the desert region of South Africa, while the canned beef of commerce is an adaptation from the Indian idea. The name comes from the Cree language, and indicates something mixed with grease or fat. (*Lacombe.*)