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Nature seems to have made one of her large scale demonstrations in the americas of the power of adaptation of a single racial stock to the scale of climates ranging from torrid jungles of the tropics to the arctics the various members of the american indian race seem clearly to have come from a common origin the route by which they reached america from asia as suggested by anthropologists was by way of the beringian isthmus a decade or two ago a russian engineer has crossed from asia to america on the pack ice of the bering sea a distance of ninety miles if this is possible how how much more likely is it that it has been possible in earlier periods of the world's history as for example during or following the last ice age or at the time of an earlier ice age the american indian therefore provides a very remarkable opportunity to study both the capacity for adaptability to different environments and the variations that different environments can produce in a single racial stock that the indian of today is not in general a counterpart of the native resident at the time of the discovery of america by columbus is clearly demonstrated both by the skeletal material and by the early records

Our problem involved the location and study of groups of the original stock if such were to be found who were living in accordance with the tradition of their race and as little affected as might be possible by the influence of the white man at first thought it might seem impossible that such groups can exist but as a matter of fact there are still great areas of the american continent inhabited by the original stock living in areas still unexplored in order to find indians as little changed as possible by reason of their contact with the white man particularly with the white man's foods, went to northern canada to the region inside the rocky mountain range to study the indians of northern british columbia and the yukon territory since an aeroplane could not be used owing to the lack of a base of supplies for fuel for the return trip and since the mackenzie water route was impracticable an expedition could not go up the waterways through canals on the mackenzie river and its branches and return the same season the route selected was that which enters the territory from the north through the stikine river and its tributaries through the coast and cascade ranges of mountains and has its origin in the high western watershed of the rockies it was particularly desirable to reach a group of indians who could not obtain the animal life of the sea not even the running salmon these men do not enter the waterways draining to the arctic we used a high powered river transport specially designed for going up rapids on the stikine river to the end of navigation at telegraph creek at this point large quantities of modern foods are stored during the short open navigation season of the summer to be exchanged for furs during the long winter a Hudson bay post has been established at this point here a truck was chartered which took us over a trail at the foot of the rocky mountain divide to the headwaters of the river following north to the source of the stikine

two guides were engaged and a high powered scow chartered their roads for the month they were in a boat in the summer of 1933 to make contact with large bands of indians in the interior of the hudson bay company most of the indians of canada are nomadic wandering tribes following the moose and caribou in the necessary search to obtain their foods The rigorous winters reach seventy degrees below zero this precludes the possibility of maintaining dairy animals or growing seed cereals or fruits the diet of these indians is almost entirely limited to the wild animals of the chase this made a study of them exceedingly important the nature's laws and their skill in adapting themselves to the rigorous climate and very limited variety of foods and these often very hard to obtain have developed a skill in the art of living comfortably with rugged nature that has been approached by few other tribes in the world the sense of honor among these tribes is so strong that practically all cabins temporarily unoccupied due to the absence of the indians on their hunting trip were entirely unprotected by locks and the valuables belonging to the indians were left in plain sight the people were remarkably hospitable and where they had not been taken advantage of were very kind many of the women had never seen a white woman until they saw mrs price their knowledge of woodcraft as expressed in skill in building their cabins so that they would be kept comfortably warm and protected from the sub zero temperatures emphasized their community spirit when an indian and his family moved to a camp site on a lake or river they always girdled a few more trees than they would use for firewood so that there would be a plentiful supply of dry standing timber for future visitors to the camp

They lived in a country in which grizzly bears were common their pelts were highly prized and they captured many of them with baited pitfalls their knowledge of the use of different organs and tissues of the animals for providing a defense against certain of the affections of the body which we speak of as degenerative diseases was surprising when i asked an old indian through an interpreter why the indians did not get scurvy he replied promptly that that was a white man's disease i asked whether it was possible for the indians to get scurvy he replied that it was but said that the indians know how to prevent it and the white man does not when asked why he did not tell the white man how his reply was that the white man knew too much to ask the indian anything i then asked him if he would tell me he said he would if the chief said he might he went to see the chief and returned in about an hour saying that the chief said he could tell me because i was a friend of the indians and had come to tell the indians not to eat the food in the white man's store he took me by the hand and led me to a log where we both sat down he then described how when the indian kills a moose he opens it up and at the back of the moose just above the kidney there are what he described as two small balls in the fat these he said the indian would take and cut up into as many pieces as there were little and big indians in the family and each one would eat his piece they would eat also the walls of the second stomach by eating these parts of the animal the indians would keep free from scurvy which is due to the lack of vitamin c the indians were getting vitamin c from the adrenal glands and organs modern science has very recently discovered that the adrenal glands are the richest sources of vitamin c in all animal or plant tissues even the running salmon these men do not enter the waterways draining to the arctic we used a high powered river transport specially designed for going up rapids on the stikine river to the end of navigation at telegraph creek at this point large quantities of modern foods are stored during the short open navigation season of the summer to be exchanged for furs during the long winter a Hudson bay post has been established at this point here a truck was chartered which took us over a trail at the foot of the rocky mountain divide to the headwaters of the river following north to the source of the stikine

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