

unbearable in those regions! The food was scarcely better, as they commonly had for their only dish one paltry fish, cooked in clear water and to be divided among the four or five of their party; and this, too, was a charitable offering made by the Savages, some one of the Frenchmen awaiting, at the water's edge the return of the fishermen's Canoes, as poor beggars wait for alms at Church doors. A kind of moss growing on the rocks often served them in place of a good meal. They would put a handful of it into their kettle, which would thicken the water ever so little, forming a kind of foam or slime, like that of snails, and feeding their imaginations more than their bodies.<sup>1</sup> Fish-bones, which are carefully saved as long as fish are found in plenty, also served to beguile their hunger in time of need. There was nothing, even to pounded bones, which those poor starvelings did not turn to some account. Many kinds of wood, too, furnished them food. The bark of the Oak, Birch, Linden or white-wood, and that of other trees, when well cooked and pounded, and then put into the water in which fish had been boiled, or else mixed with fish-oil, made them some excellent stews. They ate acorns with more relish and greater pleasure than attend the eating of chestnuts in Europe, yet even of those they did not have their fill. Thus passed the first Winter.

In the Spring and Summer, thanks to some little game, they eked out a living with less difficulty, killing from time to time Ducks, Bustards, or Pigeons, which furnished them delightful banquets; while Raspberries and other similar small fruits served them as choice refreshments. Corn and bread are entirely unknown in those countries.

When the second Winter came, the Frenchmen, having observed how the Savages carried on their fishing, resolved to

<sup>1</sup>This was probably the *tripe de roche* (*Umbilicaria Dillenti*), one of the edible species of lichen, growing upon rocks in Canada. It is often mentioned by early explorers. Perrot (Tailhan's ed., p. 52) describes it as "a sort of gray moss, dry, which has no flavor of its own, tasting only of the soil, and of the soup in which it is cooked; without it, most of the families would die of hunger." Father André (*Relation* of 1671) says of it: "It is necessary to close one's eyes when one begins to eat it." Charlevoix (*Journal Historique*, p. 332) mentions it in similar terms.—*Jes. Relations*, xxxv, p. 292.