

the East Indies were governed by a department or state called the board of control in conjunction with the court of directors of the East India Company. In 1858 this double government was abolished, and the entire administration of the British empire in India was assumed by the crown, and all the powers formerly exercised by the East India Company and the board of control were transferred to a fifth principal secretary of state. The secretary for India is responsible for everything connected with the Indian Government at home and abroad; the whole of the Indian revenues are at his disposal, and the governor-general of India is subject to his control. To assist him in his labours, and to act as a check upon the exercise of his otherwise arbitrary administrative powers, this secretary has the aid of a council of state for India, consisting of fifteen persons, of which, however, he is the president. The members of the council for India cannot sit in the House of Commons.

The duties of the other members of the ministry can be briefly dismissed. The chancellor of the exchequer at present exercises all the powers which formerly devolved upon the treasury board; he has the entire control of all matters relating to the receipt and expenditure of public money; he frames the annual estimates of the sums required to defray the expenditure of government in every branch of the public service; and it is his duty to lay before the country the annual statement of the estimated expenses of government and of the ways and means by which it is proposed to defray those charges, including the imposition or remission of taxes. The first lord of the admiralty (since the abolition of the office of lord high admiral), with the aid of the junior lords who are called the lords of the admiralty, conducts the administration of the entire naval force of the empire both at home and abroad, and is responsible to parliament for all his political proceedings; as the admiralty is but an executive board, it is, however, subject on certain matters—the number of men required for the naval service, the distribution of the fleet, the strength of foreign squadrons, &c.—to the control of the cabinet. The president of the board of trade takes cognizance of all matters relating to trade and commerce, and has to protect the mercantile interests of the United Kingdom; until 1864 it was not necessary for the president to have a seat in the cabinet, but since that date he has always been a cabinet minister in order to insure for his advice on commercial matters a due consideration; in 1867 the office of vice-president of the board was abolished. The chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster exercises jurisdiction over all matters of equity relating to lands held of the crown in right of the duchy of Lancaster; the office is, however, practically a sinecure, and is usually filled by a leading statesman whose time is at the service of the Government for the consideration of such important questions as do not come within the province of other departments. In 1852 the public works and buildings of Great Britain were for the first time placed under the control of a responsible minister of the crown, and were assigned to the charge of the commissioners of woods and forests; but in 1851 the department of public works was separated from the woods and forests and erected into a board under the name of the office of her majesty's works and public buildings. The first commissioner of works is the head of the board, and in his hands is placed the custody of the royal palaces and parks and of all public buildings not specially assigned to the care of other departments. Since the establishment of his office the first commissioner has frequently had a seat in the cabinet. The duties of the postmaster-general, of the president of the local government board, and of the minor members of the administration are so obvious from the titles of the offices they hold as not to call for any special mention.

The prime minister is responsible for the distribution of the chief offices of government between the two Houses of Parliament. Owing to the development of the House of Commons within the present century it is now considered advisable that a larger proportion of cabinet ministers should have seats in that chamber than was formerly the case. In the first cabinet of George III. only one of its members was in the House of Commons and thirteen in the House of Lords. In 1783 Mr Pitt was the sole cabinet minister in the Commons. In 1801 four cabinet ministers were in the Commons and five in the Lords. In 1804 Mr Pitt and Lord Castlereagh were, out of a cabinet of twelve, the only ministers in the Commons. In the Grenville ministry ("All the Talents"), of a cabinet of eleven, seven were in the Lords and four in the Commons. In 1809, of Mr Perceval's cabinet, six were peers and four commoners. In 1812, of Lord Liverpool's cabinet, ten were peers and four commoners. In 1818, out of a cabinet of fourteen, six were commoners; and in 1822, out of a cabinet of fifteen, nine were peers. Since the Reform Act of 1832, however, the leading members of Government have been more equally apportioned between the two Houses.

See May, *Constitutional History of England*; Cox, *Institutions of the English Government*; Alpheus Todd, *On Parliamentary Government*; Cooke, *History of Party*. (A. C. E.)

MINK. The genus *Putorius*, belonging to the family *Mustelidae* or Weasel-like animals (see *MAMMALIA*, vol. xv. p. 440), contains a few species called Minks, distinguished from the rest by slight structural modifications, and

especially by semiaquatic habits. They form the subgenus *Lutreola* of Wagner, the genus *Vison* of Gray. As in other members of the genus, the dental formula is $i \frac{3}{3}, c \frac{1}{1}, p \frac{3}{3}, m \frac{1}{1}$; total 34. They are distinguished from the Polecats, Stoats, and Weasels, which constitute the remainder of the group, by the facial part of the skull being narrower and more approaching in form that of the Martens, by the pre-molar teeth (especially the first of the upper jaw) being larger, by the toes being partially webbed, and by the absence of hair in the intervals between the naked pads of the soles of the feet. The two best-known species, so much alike in size, form, colour, and habits that although they are widely separated geographically some zoologists question their specific distinction, are *P. lutreola*, the *Nörz* or *Sumpf-otter* (Marsh-Otter) of eastern Europe, and *P. vison*, the Mink of North America. The former inhabits Finland, Poland, and the greater part of Russia, though not found east of the Ural mountains. Formerly it extended westward into central Germany, but it is now very rare, if not extinct, in that country. The latter is found in places which suit its habits throughout the whole of North America. Another form, *P. sibiricus*, from eastern Asia, of which much less is known, appears to connect the true Minks with the Polecats.

The name may have originated in the Swedish *maenk* applied to the European animal. Captain John Smith, in his *History of Virginia* (1626), at p. 27, speaks of "Martins, Powlecats, Weasels, and Minks," showing that the animal must at that time have been distinguished by a vernacular appellation from its congeners. By later authors, as Lawson (1709) and Pennant (1784), it is often written "Minx." For the following description, chiefly taken from the American form (though almost equally applicable to that of Europe) we are mainly indebted to Elliott Coues's *Fur-bearing Animals of North America*, 1877.

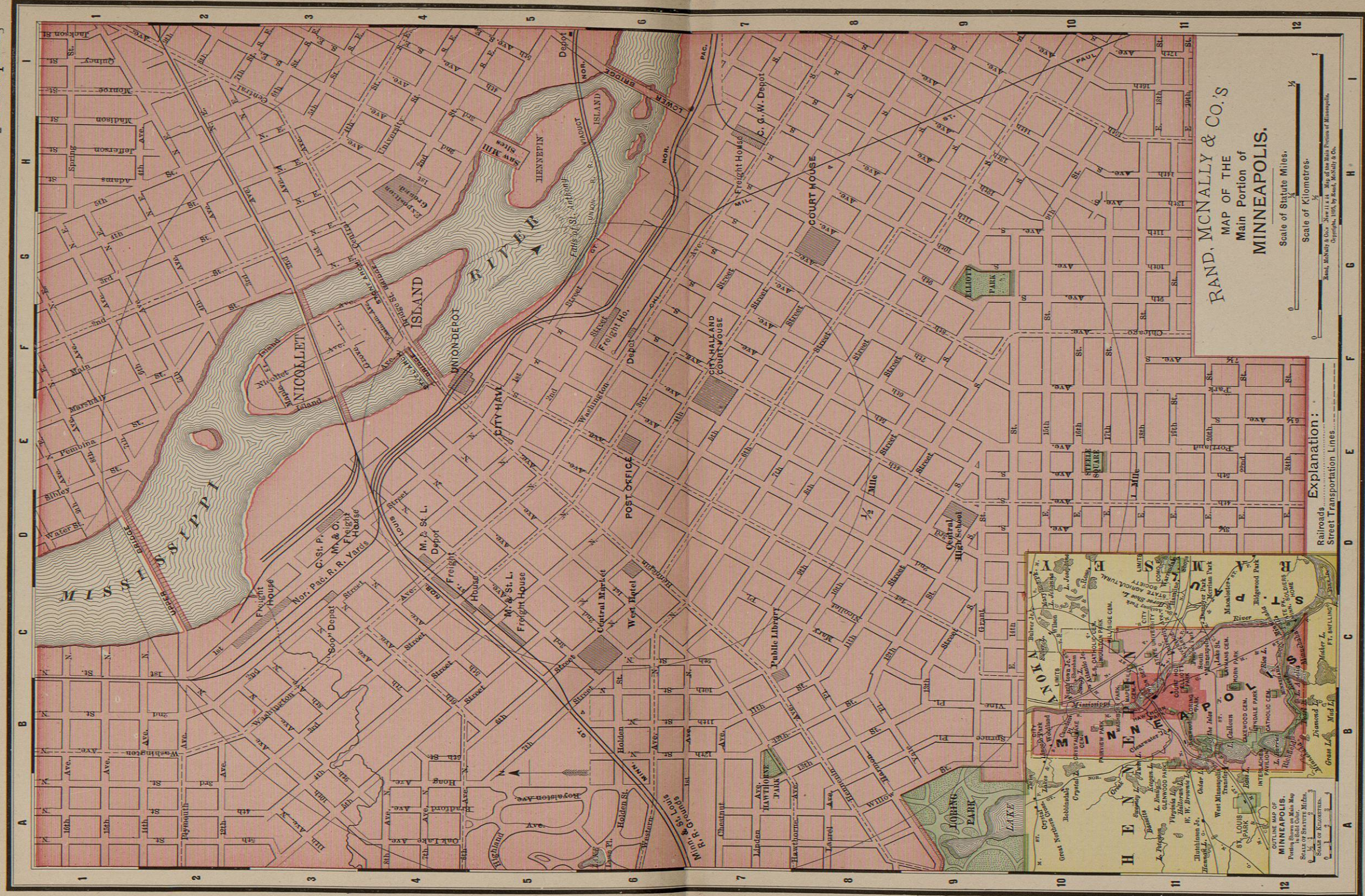
In size it much resembles the English Polecat,—the length of the head and body being usually from 15 to 18 inches, that of the tail to the end of the hair about 9 inches. The female is considerably smaller than the male. The tail is bushy, but tapering at the end. The ears are small, low, rounded, and scarcely project beyond the adjacent fur. The pelage consists of a dense, soft, matted under fur, mixed with long, stiff, lustrous hairs on all parts of the body and tail. The gloss is greatest on the upper parts; on the tail the bristly hairs predominate. Northern specimens have the finest and most glistening pelage; in those from southern regions there is less difference between the under and over fur, and the whole pelage is coarser and harsher. In colour, different specimens present a considerable range of variation, but the animal is ordinarily of a rich dark brown, scarcely or not paler below than on the general upper parts; but the back is usually the darkest, and the tail is nearly black. The under jaw, from the chin about as far back as the angle of the mouth, is generally white. In the European Mink the upper lip is also white, but, as this occasionally occurs in American specimens, it falls as an absolutely distinguishing character. Besides the white on the chin, there are often other irregular white patches on the under parts of the body. In very rare instances the tail is tipped with white. The fur, like that of most of the animals of the group to which it belongs, is an important article of commerce.

The principal characteristic of the Mink in comparison with its congeners is its amphibious mode of life. It is to the water what the other Weasels are to the land, or Martens to the trees, being essentially aquatic in its habits as the Otter, Beaver, or Musk-rat, and spending perhaps more of its time in the water than it does on land. It swims with most of the body submerged, and dives with perfect ease, remaining long without coming to the surface to breathe. It makes its nest in burrows in the banks of streams, breeding once a year about the month of April, and producing five or six young at a birth. Its food consists of frogs, fish, freshwater molluscs and crustaceans, as well as mice, rats, musk-rats, rabbits, and small birds. In common with the other animals of the genus, it has a very peculiar and disagreeable effluvia, which, according to Coues, is more powerful, penetrating, and lasting than that of any animal of the country except the Skunk. It also possesses the courage, ferocity, and tenacity of life of its allies. When taken young, however, it can be readily tamed, and lately Minks have been extensively bred in captivity in America both for the sake of their fur and for the purpose of using them in like manner as Ferrets in England, to clear buildings of rats. (W. H. F.)

MINNEAPOLIS, the county seat of Hennepin county, Minnesota, United States, and in 1880 the first city of the State as regards population, lies on both banks of the

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[Minneapolis.]



RAND, McNALLY & CO.'S
MAP OF THE
Main Portion of
MINNEAPOLIS.

Scale of Sixte Miles.
Scale of Kilometres.

Explanation:
Railroads
Street Transportation Lines

OUTLINE MAP OF
MINNEAPOLIS.
Position shown on Main Map.
SCALE OF SIXTEEN MILES.
SCALE OF KILOMETRES.

