



In Buffalo Park, Wainwright, Alberta.

buffalo sold for 2d. a pound in Winnipeg. The warm thick buffalo robe saved the life of many an early settler in a western blizzard. The hide formed the tires of his Red River cart in a country where iron was unknown. On the long trek across the prairie, buffalo meat, pemmican and wild fowl were his chief articles of food.

How many buffalo there were at one time on this continent can only be vaguely computed. The range of the species covered more than one-third of the entire northern half of the continent. Alvar Nunez Cabeza, a Spanish explorer, later known as "Cabeza de Vaca" or "Cattle Cabeza," who was shipwrecked on the Gulf Coast, west of the mouth of the Mississippi in 1530, reports seeing buffalo in large numbers in his wanderings through Texas. Samuel Argoll, an English navigator, in 1621 found "a great store of cattle as big as kine" near the head of the Potomac, probably only a few miles away from the site of the present city of Washington. Col. W. Byrd, who surveyed the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia in 1729, writes of the fortunate killing of a buffalo which Providence threw in their way just as provisions began to fail, adding feelingly: "It was the more welcome because it was change of diet. We had lived upon Venison and Bear till our stomachs loathed them almost as much as the Hebrews of old did their Quails." Other early explorers report finding buffalo in large numbers in the

Carolinas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Illinois and Louisiana. Roughly speaking its range extended from the Atlantic Coast, west across the Alleghenies to the Mississippi, south to its mouth and north to the southern shore of Lake Erie. But the land across the Mississippi, the Great Plains of the West, indeed the whole country from the Rio Grande north to Great Slave Lake, was the true stamping ground of the buffalo. Here it found its natural home and multiplied to countless numbers. In Canada the buffalo was apparently never east of the prairie country. Its range seems to have been from Winnipeg to the foothills though Dr. Richard-

son, author of "Fauna Boreali-Americana," states that they crossed the Rockies following the pass where later the Canadian Pacific was to lay its railway, in sufficient numbers to constitute a feature of the fauna of the western side of the range.

Herds Blackened the Plains.

According to Hornaday, the geographical centre of the distribution of the species up to 1800 was south Central Nebraska; from 1800 up to the time of disappearance, the Black Hills of Southwestern Dakota. The herds of the east probably counted their buffalo by hundreds but the herds of the west by tens and even hun-



An Indian Buffalo Hunt.