



THE BUFFALO HUNT

FIFTY years ago the great level prairie, stretching from the Red River to the Rocky Mountains, presented a scene very different from the golden wheat fields of today. It was a vast, waving sea of brown grass over which roamed countless herds of buffaloes. The settlers were the descendants of the famous Red River colonists, who remained in the land their forefathers had chosen.

The buffalo had supplied the Indian of the plain with all his needs. Its meat was his daily food; its skin clothed him and covered his tent; its fat fed his fire through the bitter cold winter. So the settlers of the Red River colony followed the chase as the Indians had done.

Let us play the part of spectator in this great event of the year, the fall buffalo hunt, in which the whole family joins. What excitement there is when every man, woman, child and dog takes the trail that leads to the feeding ground of the buffalo herd. There are hunters garbed in their trappings of waist scarfs, moccasins and blue caps; prancing ponies so fleet for the hunt; miles of creaking carts which will bear home the winter's food and which now carry the scanty supplies until more are obtained; and women and children who must dress the meat and look after the camp.

After a journey of perhaps a hundred miles, when the scouts hastily bring in word that a great herd is feeding near, the straggling picnic becomes an active army. A leader is chosen whom all respect and obey. His laws are strictly enforced. No stray buffaloes are to be shot, lest the main herd take alarm; any thieving is severely dealt with, and no hunting is allowed on Sunday.