

throughout the country north, east and west of Norway House, on Lake Winnipeg, but which now abounds in that region. Though historic evidence, then, does not sustain the theory of the continental range of the bison, neither does it establish a contrary theory, nor invalidate the opinion of authors of eminence that it must have been well known to the ancient Mexicans, and was in all probability their milch and draught animal. Unquestionably one of the first white men to meet the animal in its native haunts was Cabaça de Vaca, one of the four survivors of the daring expedition of Francisco de Narvaez in 1528. This adventure was subsequently rivalled by the romantic folly of Coronado, who set out from New Mexico in 1541 in search of the fabulous city of Quivera. The historic interest which surrounds these adventures partly redeems them from the cruel disposition and greed which underlaid them. The "golden city of Quivera," like the Appalache of Narvaez and De Soto's El Dorado, was a delusion, and Coronado might have perished in his quest but for the countless herds which he passed through, "seeing nothing," as his reporter says, "but skies and bison for miles together."

Mr. Parkman, in his "Pioneers of France," makes mention of a wood-cut of the bison, which appeared in the "Singularités" of André Thevet, published in 1558, and which was probably the first of its kind. Others, again, have attributed the earliest accurate picture to Father Hennepin, who, over a century later, gave a rough print of the bison in his "New Discovery." The former writer doubtless drew the animal from description, and the latter from observation; and it is thus a question to whom the honour properly belongs. The famous and infamous Father, as everybody knows, was the first white man to ascend the Upper Mississippi; but seven years previously Père Marquette and the trader Joliet had descended it from the mouth of the Wisconsin to the Illinois country, and it is to the latter priest that we are indebted for the first graphic description of the bison. He represents it as resembling our domestic cattle. "They are not longer," he says, "but almost as big again, and more corpulent. The head is very large, the forehead flat, and a foot and a half broad between the horns, which are exactly like our cattle, except that they are black and much larger. Under the neck there is a kind of large crop hanging down, and in the back a pretty high hump. The whole head, the neck and part of the shoulders, are covered with a great mane like a horse's, which is at least a foot long, and renders them hideous, and, falling over their eyes, prevents them seeing before them. The rest of the body is covered with a coarse, curly hair like the wool of our sheep but much stronger and thicker. It falls in summer, and the skin is then as soft as velvet. At this time the Indians employ the skins to make beautiful robes, which they paint with various colours."

With the adventure of Marquette and Joliet, the animal fairly entered into north-west history, and became thenceforward an increasingly important element in exploration, pioneer settlement and trade. The success of every expedition into the western wilderness more or less depended upon it; and from the time that the brave and unfortunate La Salle met his death through a wretched squabble over some buffalo meat, unnumbered tragedies, with whites and savages for actors, have attended its chase down to recent days.

Since Père Marquette's narrative was written, the animal has been drawn and described so often that everyone is familiar with its form. By a common misnomer its relationship has been assigned to the buffalo of the old world. The identity of the Euro