



they were distributed every few days by the police or soldiers, who kept account of them. Whoever received one of these sticks must return it within five or ten days, with a load of provisions. If one was held beyond the stipulated time the police would call the delinquent warrior to account. In case he did not respond, they could come and destroy his tent or take away his weapons. When all the sticks had been returned, they were reissued to other men; and so the council lodge was supported.

It was the custom that no man who had not distinguished himself upon the war-path could destroy the home of another. This was a necessary qualification for the office of an Indian policeman. These policemen must also oversee the hunt, lest some individuals should be well provided with food while others were in want. No man might hunt independently. The game must be carefully watched by the game scouts, and the discovery of a herd reported at once to the council, after which the time and manner of the hunt were publicly announced.

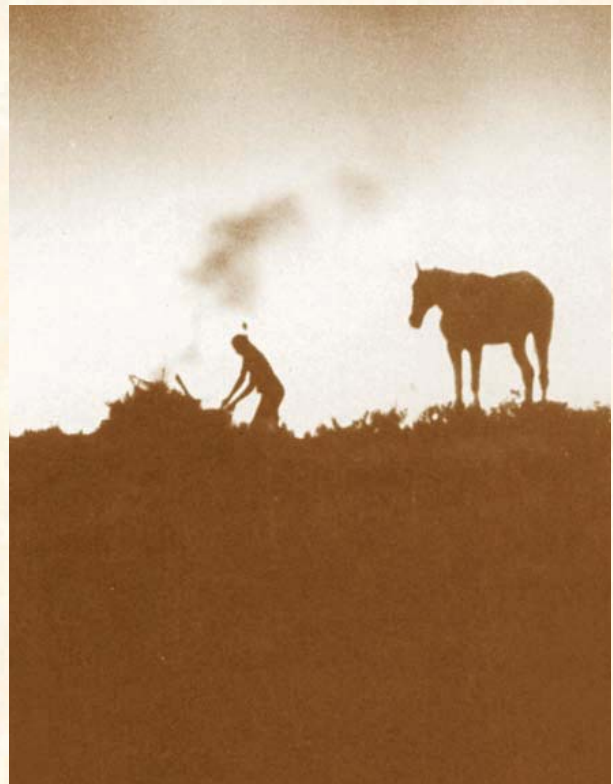
There were two kinds of scouts, for hunting and for war. In one sense every In-



George Catlin, *Buffalo Hunt under the Wolf-Skin Mask*

dian was a scout; but there were some especially appointed to serve for a certain length of time. An Indian might hunt every day, besides the regularly organized hunt; but he was liable to punishment at any time. If he could kill a solitary buffalo or deer without disturbing the herd, it was allowed. He might also hunt small game.

In the movable town under such a government as this, there was apt to be inconvenience and actual suffering, since a great body of people were supported only by the daily hunt. Hence there was a constant disposition to break up into smaller parties, in order to obtain food more easily and freely. Yet the wise men of the Dakotas would occasionally form large bands of from two to five thousand people, who camped and moved about together for a period of some months. It is apparent that so large a body could not be easily supplied with the nec-



A scout could send a message as far as sixty miles away with a smoke signal