

APACHES AS THESPIANS IN 1876

By JOHN P. CLUM

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“OLYMPIC Theater! A Novel Attraction! Wild Apaches of Arizona! Stirring Tableaux! Under the direction of Mr. John P. Clum, Ex-Indian Agent. Friday and Saturday Evenings, September 8th and 9th, and Saturday Matinee.” These phrases are excerpts from an announcement by the manager of the Olympic Theatre at Saint Louis, Missouri, for the week ending September 9, 1876.

When I was appointed agent for the Apaches in 1874 they were reputed to be the most desperate, treacherous and blood-thirsty tribe within the United States. “The Apache is a savage of the lowest type” was the initial sentence in the annual report for 1878 submitted by General August V. Kautz, commanding the Department of Arizona. While this and similar contemporaneous pronouncements against the Apaches were unwarranted, nevertheless, from a retrospective viewpoint, the plan to take a party of these nomadic Indians in 1876 direct from their trails and fastnesses within the (then) remote mountain areas of Arizona and transform them, as if by magic, into valiant actors upon the stages of first class theatres in some of our largest cities to the eastward, looms as an exceedingly ambitious and daring undertaking. And yet, while this enterprise was in course of incubation, I well remember that the feature of greatest concern was that of necessary funds to transport our aboriginal theatrical troupe from the isolated trails of Arizona to the great centers of population in the East.

Prior to the adoption of the civil service plan it was doubtless true that the majority of civil government appointees entertained a more or less justifiable fear of being

unceremoniously separated from their respective jobs, and the matter of a *potent political pull* was of paramount importance. My personal status in this particular was at least unique, for the reason that, although my political backing was practically *nil*, during the greater part of the latter half of my administration as Indian Agent at San Carlos my resignation was on file at the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

There were two principal causes for this unusual situation. In the first place certain weaknesses in the "policy" of the Indian Bureau pertaining to the direction of the affairs of the Apaches persistently discouraged any inclination I might have had to remain permanently in charge at San Carlos. The second and more important reason was that with my resignation on file at Washington I felt entirely free at all times to exercise my best judgment in connection with my duties and responsibilities as agent, conscious of the fact that my superior officers at the Department of the Interior were in a position either to approve my official conduct and methods, or promptly to accept my resignation and appoint my successor.

And so it happened that my theatrical venture with the Apaches was a direct sequence of this *habit of resigning*. My original resignation as agent was submitted on February 27, 1876, just two years subsequent to the date of my appointment. About six weeks later—April 6, 1876, the outbreak of the Chiricahua Apaches occurred. On May 3, instead of being relieved, I received telegraphic orders to remove the Chiricahuas to San Carlos. This important assignment was accomplished during the month of June. Although this removal added 325 individuals to the population of the San Carlos reservation we were still happily able to report "all quiet on the western front."

That being the national centennial year the citizens of Tucson arranged for a somewhat elaborate celebration on

the Fourth of July and I cheerfully accepted their invitation to be present on that occasion. The Fourth of July celebration passed into history, but no successor for my job had been announced, whereupon there arose in my mind the very pertinent question—"where do we go from here?"

The idea of taking some of the Apaches on a tour of "the states" was not new with me. For nearly a year I had felt that much good would result if I were allowed to take representatives of the several bands on a trip through our great country to the eastward—at least as far as Washington. In fact I had applied to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for authority to make such a trip, but permission was withheld for the reason that no funds were available with which to meet the expenses involved.

However, the proposition had appealed to me so strongly that now, with the added lure of the Centennial Exposition at Philadelphia, I determined not to allow the matter of *mere money* to stand in our way—particularly as conditions upon the reservation indicated that this was an opportune time for undertaking the trip. My administration was so well organized and the mass of the Apaches were so friendly disposed toward said administration that I felt confident peace and harmony would prevail until the arrival of my successor. Furthermore, if influential members of the several bands accompanied me, these would serve in the nature of hostages—pledging the orderly conduct of their people during our absence. In fact, as soon as the leaders among the Apaches displayed their sympathy with, and their interest in the proposed tour I did not hesitate to exert myself in making the trip possible.

Our chief handicap was the lack of necessary funds. In this extremity the plan of giving entertainments with the Apaches was suggested. Instantly the enterprise captivated the romantic imaginations and adventurous spirits of two young friends and myself. The appearance of

a group of Apaches always attracted a crowd even in Arizona—provided the Indians were not on the war-path. The ranchers and townsfolk evinced unfeigned curiosity and interest whenever I appeared on the trails or in the villages with an escort of Indians, and less than two months previous fully two-thirds of the entire population of Tucson assembled on the old military plaza in that ancient pueblo to witness an Apache war-dance given by members of the company of Apache Police then with me en route to Apache Pass. In view of these circumstances we felt assured that there were thousands of people in the East who would gladly pay a small fee to obtain a glimpse of the spectacular, picturesque and wooly-wild West as portrayed by the only, original, genuine representatives of the fierce Apaches direct from their mountain fastnesses in Arizona. All we needed was sufficient funds to transport our Ambulatory Apache Aggregation from their crude wicki-ups in the West to the flashing footlights in the East. We clearly envisioned vast throngs besieging the theatres where we were advertised to appear, and ourselves speedily advancing into the millionaire class as a result of the amazing returns from the box-offices. Furthermore, we would automatically loom as public benefactors—philanthropists, for the reason that we would be affording the Indians the desired benefits of a tour through the vast camping grounds of the pale-face, while contenting ourselves with the problematical returns from the “gate.” The more we discussed the proposition the more enthusiastic and optimistic we became. I may state *now* that the sanguine mental attitude on the part of my two friends and myself was largely due to the fact that we were young and robust—and *inexperienced in the show business*. Our lack of experience and caution, from a cold business viewpoint, is illustrated by the fact that, although a brief announcement of the slaughter of the gallant Custer and his entire command by the Sioux on June 25th had

reached Arizona, we did not stop to consider the inevitable reaction of this tragedy at the North upon the people of the East, and that in all probability the entire country would be swept by a wave of extreme prejudice against all of the so-called *savage tribes of the West*.

After mature deliberation our optimistic trio decided that a cash capital of \$5,000. would be required to place the enterprise upon a *paying basis*. One of my friends had some real money (more dollars than sense *in this investment*) and he was so confident of the success of the enterprise that he offered to provide one-half of the necessary capital if the other friend and myself would dig up the balance. This was done. The die was cast, and about the middle of July, 1876, I found myself designated as the manager of a troupe of Apache Thespians, backed by a cash capital of \$5,000. with which to carry on until we should reach a "paying basis." The fact that I had not obtained leave of absence for myself, or permission to remove the Indians so far from their reservation did not cause the least hesitation or delay in the execution of our plans.

Inasmuch as we lacked proper authority from the Indian Bureau, it seemed desirable that, if possible, we should obtain a word of approval from the governor of Arizona which we might exhibit as a sort of identification card and certificate of honorable intentions. Accordingly, on July 15th I addressed a letter to Governor Safford, reminding him of my desire to take some of the most influential Apaches on a tour of "the states" in order that they might better comprehend the magnitude of our country, the vastness of our population and the achievements of our civilization by personal observation and contact, while at the same time many eastern people would have opportunity to acquire a more accurate understanding of the general character of the Apaches, and—as we hoped—a more friendly attitude toward them, and that if the trip was undertaken I hoped to be serving the Indians, the territory and the general govern-

Olympic Theatre!

A NOVEL ATTRACTION.

Friday and Saturday Evenings, September 8th & 9th,

And Saturday Matinee.

Only appearances of members of the Famous Indian Tribes of

WILD APACHES

OF ARIZONA.

Under the direction of Mr. J. P. Clum, Ex-Indian Agent,
numbering

Sixteen Stalwart Braves and Four Squaws

Without doubt the Finest Specimen of the Aborigine ever seen
in this city.

The entertainment will consist of a series of

Stirring Tableaux,

Intensely and accurately illustrative of

Indian Modes & Customs

Never before so faithfully set forth.

FIRST TABLEAU.

THE INDIANS IN FULL COSTUMES.

Introductory remarks by Mr. J. P. Clum.

SECOND TABLEAU.

AN INDIAN ENCAMPMENT.

The Surprise! The Fight! Thrilling Hand-to-Hand
Combat! Taking of the Scalp! Triumph of the Whites!

THIRD TABLEAU.

AN INDIAN COUNCIL OF WAR.

Speeches in the Indian Language by the noted Braves & Chiefs.

FOURTH TABLEAU.

Indian Woman Mourning the Death of her Husband.

FIFTH TABLEAU.

Grand War Dance. Preparing for the War-Path.

OVERTURE.

ORCHESTRA

PART SECOND—FIRST TABLEAU.

INDIAN TELEGRAPHIC SYSTEM.

SECOND TABLEAU.

White Encamped. The Indian Attack.
Capture of the Hunter. Taking of the Scalp.
Securing the Prisoner to the Stake.
His Torture. Indian Scalp Dance.

THIRD TABLEAU.

Indian Police Regulations. Arresting a Renegade.

FINAL TABLEAU.

The Indian at Home, and at Peace.

Squaws engaged in Domestic Labor. Social Games. The whole
concluding with A SOCIAL DANCE.

INDIAN MATINEE, SATURDAY

At Reduced Prices, 50 and 25 Cents, to all parts of the house.

Monday, Sept. 11, 1876, opening of the Regular Fall and Winter
Season.

Mr. C. W. BARRY

in his New Location, **ECHOES.**

Chas. E. Ware & Co. Printers, N. E. cor. Fifth and Chestnut Sts.

ment. I also advised the governor that funds necessary to cover the expense involved had been provided by myself and two friends. Following is the governor's reply:

"Territory of Arizona,
Executive Department,
Tucson, Arizona, July 19, 1876.

"Mr. John P. Clum,
Tucson, Arizona.

"Dear sir:

"I have received your letter informing me of your contemplated trip through the eastern states with a party of your Apache Indians and asking my opinion as to the propriety of so doing. In reply I have to say that the project appears to me commendable in the highest degree. I know of your efforts to obtain an appropriation from the government for this purpose and much regret you have been unable to obtain such aid.

"I concur heartily in the undertaking and believe it will be conducive of great good. Your Apaches will never appreciate the immensity of our domain, the enterprise and culture of our people and the advantages of peace until they have mingled with and learned civilized people by actual contact and practical association.

"Your contemplated trip will therefore be of great benefit to the Indians, and at the same time give the people of the East a true illustration of the character of the Apache Indians.

"Wishing you success in the undertaking, I am,

"Very sincerely yours,

"A. P. K. SAFFORD,
Governor."

The next important step was the selection of the personnel of our party. There were then about 4,500 Indians on the San Carlos reservation and we had decided to limit our group of thespians to twenty, but finally added two boys to this number. This was a matter of vital importance, demanding the utmost discretion in the selection of each member with a view to attaining the principal objectives, namely: the influence to be exerted by the members of this party

after their return to the reservation; the material required to assure the success of our proposed entertainments; securing a combination that would maintain harmony among themselves, while at the same time endeavoring to avoid as far as possible, any feeling of disappointment that would embitter any more or less ambitious candidates who might be left behind. This responsibility devolved entirely upon me, because my two associates in the enterprise were strangers to the Apaches.

The result was that our party of Apache tourists included Eskim-in-zin, chief of the Arivaipas, and his wife; Tah-zay (son of Cochise), chief of the Chiricahuas; Diablo, chief of the Coyotereros, and his son—five or six years of age; Sagully, chief of the Yumas, and his wife; Casadora, a sub-chief of the Pinals, and his wife; Captain Jim of the agency Indian police force, and his wife. Ten athletic young braves and a boy about twelve years of age completed the group.

The journey from San Carlos to the railroad station at El Moro, Colorado, was no minor undertaking in itself. The transportation provided for this part of the trip consisted of one large and substantial farm wagon drawn by four horses, one two-seated light wagon drawn by two horses, and a two-seated covered wagon drawn by four horses—with myself as the Jehu presiding over the reins in the last named conveyance.

Our camp equipment was exceedingly limited—merely a few cooking utensils, a supply of tin cups, tin plates, knives, forks and spoons, and one or two blankets for each individual—for although the weather was warm, we would attain elevations en route where the nights would be chilly enough. In those days we never thought of carrying tents. Likewise, our commissary supplies were reduced to the lowest terms. Only a few days' rations were carried as we planned to forage on the country through which we were to pass.

The broad mesa upon which the buildings of the San Carlos agency were located, presented a gala-day scene on July 29, 1876,—the date appointed for our departure upon the long trek in the direction of the rising sun. A great throng of more or less excited Apaches had assembled there to wave and shout a sincere *adieu* and *bon voyage*.

In connection with our enterprise the services of Marijildo, that loyal and efficient interpreter, were indispensable. Dr. S. B. Chapin, who had been the agency physician, decided to journey eastward with us. I also employed two teamsters. With these four men, the twenty-two Indians and myself, our party disclosed a grand total of twenty-seven. Our get-away was most auspicious. We followed up the Gila valley as far as Pueblo Viejo and then detoured to the overland stageroad, which led us into Silver City, New Mexico.

In my files I have found only one newspaper notice regarding our trip through Arizona and New Mexico. This notice was published in the Silver City Herald on Saturday, August 5, 1876, from which the following excerpts are quoted:

“John P. Clum, agent at the San Carlos agency, arrived here yesterday with his retinue of Apaches on his way east. This party represents the Arivaipa, Pinal, Coyotero and Chiricahua Apaches. There are sixteen men, four women and two boys. . . . Mr. Clum left San Carlos on Saturday last and it is his intention to make a tour through the East in order to acquaint the Indians with the extent and power of our nation, and to afford them that information which can be obtained only by contact with eastern enterprise and civilization. He has been careful to select young men of prominence and intelligence who will appreciate the visit and wield a proper influence on their return.

“For a year Mr. Clum has endeavored to obtain an appropriation for this purpose but to no effect. He has now decided to take them at his own expense and will give entertainments in some of the large cities illustrating the *true* character of these wild Indians both in time of peace and of

war. With the proceeds of these exhibitions he hopes to defray all expenses incurred in the tour.

"If he meets neither misfortune nor accident we believe this adventure will result in more benefit to the Indians and to the people at large than anything we have yet done for them."

This record shows that we were a full week traveling from the agency to Silver City—and I recall that the entire journey by wagon from San Carlos to El Moro occupied nearly four weeks. From Silver City we drove to the Rio Grande river and followed up that valley to old Albuquerque, where we crossed the river and proceeded by the most direct route to old Las Vegas, and from there we followed the old Santa Fe Trail to Trinidad, Colorado—the easternmost outpost of the early Spanish adventurers. At this point we were delighted to learn that we were only four miles from the railway station at El Moro. The fact that *it took us nearly a month to drive from the agency to the depot* indicates that even as late as 1876 San Carlos was a remote and isolated locality.

However, this somewhat tedious journey to the railroad was not without its compensations. There were many far-flung and inspiring scenic vistas as we passed valley and mesa and mountain in that semi-arid region of the Southwest. There was an invigorating tonic in the fresh, clean, rare atmosphere, and the wide, open spaces impressed a sense of boundless freedom—at the same time inviting a more intimate communion with Nature that was both exhilarating and uplifting. Also, happily, we had robust health and the vigor of youth which enabled us to appreciate and enjoy these picturesque and romantic features to the utmost, and to minimize the less agreeable experiences.

Our plan to forage on the country as we traveled proved most satisfactory. At convenient intervals I purchased a small steer or a couple of sheep which were speedily killed and dressed by the Indians. Other supplies were obtained from the merchants in the towns through which we passed.

For the most part the Indians enjoyed the trip and maintained their normal spirit of good humor, so that when we arrived at El Moro all the members of our expedition *were still on cordial speaking terms*—which is not always true of more civilized parties at the end of a journey of this character.

We had at least one very uncomfortable experience en route. A rain of cloudburst proportions overtook us one afternoon in the Rio Grande valley and continued for several hours. We were drenched. Cooking was impossible. Our supper consisted of cold beans—*straight*, and we passed the night in an exceedingly damp and disagreeable fashion.

It will be proper to record here our solitary clash with the minions of the law en route. This occurred at old Albuquerque. We camped for the night in the suburbs of that venerable city and while our herders slept our horses invaded an adjacent corn field and munched and trampled some of the growing corn. The next morning I was haled before the austere Alcalde, who evinced an unfriendly spirit as soon as he learned that we were Apaches from the wilds of Arizona, and without hesitation he assessed the damages to the corn at *veinte pesos* and demanded immediate payment thereof. When I protested that the amount seemed excessive his honor flung at me his fiercest war-like glare, pounded upon a volume of the statutes and shouted from the bench, "*La ley es la ley!*", at the same time threatening to summons the entire population of the city, if necessary, to enforce the judgment of the honorable court. This bit of comedy appealed so keenly to my sense of humor that I prolonged and accentuated the horse-play a bit by designedly contributing to the irritation of the high and mighty Alcalde, although I had no desire to avoid payment for the damage our horses had done to the innocent Mexican's corn. Finally the twenty good American dollars were delivered into the custody of the court, the cantankerous Alcalde was pacified and we Apaches were permitted to go on our way rejoicing.

Another wayside incident may prove of interest as illustrating the fact that the Apaches in our party had no conception of the vast area of the United States, or of the millions of the paleface race then occupying those sections of our country we were about to visit. In a general way the frontiersmen and the pioneer settlers knew something of the tragic fate of all the Indian tribes that had opposed the white men in their resistless advance from Plymouth Rock to the Rocky Mountains, and, judging the future by the past, they were confident that sooner or later the Apaches must yield to their prowess—hence they were impatient at the persistent resistance offered by these redskins of the mountains.

But the Apaches had no hint of the sad tragedies which, through the passing decades, had overtaken tribe after tribe of the aborigines who had formerly held sway over that vast territory stretching from the big sea on the east to the big mountains on the west. To the Apaches the white men were always intruders, and as a rule, aggressors. Because at first, these intruders had appeared in small numbers the Apaches doubted the boasted "man-power" of the paleface, and, therefore, they felt equal to the task of opposing—and even of destroying those adventurous pioneers who came from time to time to spy out their country and to appropriate whatever pleased them for the time being, or promised advantage or profit for the future.

In a general way the personal observations of the Apaches had been confined to southeastern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico and northern Chihuahua and Sonora, where there were comparatively few white settlers. On this trip we had passed through the eastern half of Arizona and across the entire territory of New Mexico, and had observed that the country was still undeveloped and but sparsely settled. We had been traveling eastward nearly a month and were now approaching the Colorado line without having

seen any substantial evidences of the alleged progress and prowess of the white race.

This situation furnished the framework for the wayside incident referred to. The day's journey had not been tiresome, the evening meal had been disposed of with keen relish, and now the Indians were gathered about their community camp fire smoking cigarettes and relating experiences of a more or less thrilling nature. I had already spread my blankets on the ground and was lying there contemplating the glories of that August night, the drive we were about to make over the Raton range—and our near approach to the railroad. I was abruptly recalled from these very pleasing ruminations when Marijildo came over from the circle of Indians and with evident concern told me that Tah-zay "was not talking right." Tah-zay was the elder son of Cochise, the famous head chief of the Chiricahuas, who had been a terror to all who had ventured to intrude within the range of his territory until a treaty of peace was arranged between him and General Howard in the fall of 1872. Cochise died in 1874 and Tah-zay succeeded his father as head chief of the Chiricahuas. And now Marijildo told me this young chief had been boasting to his traveling companions of the wonderful prowess of his people; that he had been relating in detail several deadly battles which had occurred prior to the treaty made with General Howard,—in each of which the Chiricahuas had triumphed valiantly over their pale face foes, and that Tah-zay had concluded his vivid and spirited recital by declaring with evident pride and confidence that it was a good thing the treaty had been made with his father four years before, otherwise there would have been very few white people left alive at the time he was speaking.

"Don't be alarmed," I said to Marijildo. "Let Tah-zay enjoy his dream a little longer if it pleases him. In a couple of days we will be on the railroad, and then very soon we will see something of homes and farms and villages and

cities of the white man's country. Doubtless these exhibits will prove a revelation to the boastful young chief."

At El Moro we reached what the Apaches called the "pesh-bè-tin"—the road of iron. It was but natural that the Indians should manifest genuine interest in the railroad—and particularly in the locomotives, and yet there was no undue excitement when we boarded the train. However, soon after the train started a couple of the women began crying. When I asked the reason they said they feared they would never see San Carlos again. As long as we were traveling with the wagons amid the mesas and the mountains they remained unconcerned, but now that we were on a railway train bound for Washington—with the mountains behind us and the vast plains ahead of us—they were alarmed. But they very soon recovered their accustomed equanimity and the entire party made the trip to Philadelphia and return like veteran tourists.

I endeavored to observe carefully the effect of the first contact with civilization upon the several members of our party as we passed through Pueblo and Denver and Kansas City and climbed to the summit of the dome of the city hall at Saint Louis and were finally quartered in Cincinnati. Then as we stood in a balcony from the second story of our hotel and looked down upon the congested traffic in the street below I asked the Indians what they thought of the country and the villages of the pale face race. Es-kim-in-zin protested that he was unable to express his feelings, and, waving his hand about his head, he said that all the very wonderful sights made him "dizzy." Tah-zay was silent. He did not know what Marijildo had told me concerning his wayside boasting, and so I could ask him in an innocent way if he did not think his father had acted wisely in making peace with the white men. The young Chiricahua chief was still proud of his people, but he admitted that he now realized how unequal their fight had been. The anticipated



WASHINGTON, D. C. - September, 1876.

THE AUTHOR AND HIS THESPIANS

benefits of this trip were already apparent. I was much gratified—little dreaming that the stalwart and genial Tah-zay would never return to the country and the people he loved so well.

If the Indians were immensely interested in what they saw in the populous and busy camps of the white men, it must also be recorded that the pale-faces were quite as much interested in the presence of this company of "wild" Apaches fresh from the remote waste places of Arizona. And this interest was keenly accentuated by thoughts of the recent fatal conflict between General Custer's command and the Sioux—for be it remembered that if there was any tribe of Indians in the country at that time *whose reputation as desperate and deadly warriors exceeded that of the Sioux, it was the Apaches of Arizona.*

And thus it happened that whenever we appeared upon the streets of the large cities we were speedily surrounded by a milling throng of curious people, each one eager to obtain an intimate view of these Indians. Although the extermination of Custer and his brave comrades had aroused a popular sentiment against the Indians in general, I am glad to be able to testify that no demonstration of a hostile character occurred during our visit to the several states—notwithstanding the fact that *the active services of the police were frequently necessary to enable us to pass through the crowds* that blocked our progress in the streets of the big cities.

While we were traveling with the wagons and camping in the open air the Indians cooked and ate as they had always been accustomed to do in and about their native wicki-ups, but as soon as we were embarked on the railroad and entered the cities of the middle West the necessity for a complete readjustment of our "table manners" was imperative—and this readjustment was thrust upon us with heartless abruptness. But the Apaches demonstrated their ability to

"rise to the occasion," and very soon they were able to sit comfortably at the table, eat their food from plates and handle their knives and forks with reasonable ease and commendable accuracy.

Another tribute I desire to record in favor of these representatives of the untutored redskins of the mountains of the Southwest is the fact that no complaints alleging rude and boisterous conduct or uncleanness on their part was made to me by those conducting the hotels and boarding houses where the Apaches were quartered in the several cities visited by us.

Finally the "moving accidents by flood and field" had been safely passed and the fateful period had arrived when the histrionic talents of our aboriginal actors and the financial outcome of our enterprise were to be put to the acid test in the initial entertainment to be given by the Indians. If I had not realized before the daring character of this undertaking, I did so to the last degree when I began to arrange the "plot" and to assign the "characters" and to instruct the individual Indians in the "roles" they were to enact in this drama of the Arizona frontier. The plan and purpose to rehearse this *raw material* in the exacting details of the several "tableaux" with such satisfactory results as would enable us to present the entire "spectacle" in a manner to attract and captivate an audience of *blase* theatre fans and thus transform these "wild" Apaches into "star actors" *in a single week*, was, indeed, such a bold ambition as only the most optimistic might hope to accomplish.

It should be stated, however, that the most difficult and serious feature of the play was made possible by the fact that Dr. Chapin, Marijildo (who was a Mexican) and myself represented the pale face foes of the Indians in the desperate mock fighting on the stage—and *the Apaches knew that we would play the game on the square*. But the overcoming of seemingly unsurmountable obstacles had been an inspiring feature of my job ever since I assumed the direc-

tion of the affairs of the Apaches—and so our rehearsals proceeded merrily with no thought of failure.

Our confidence in the intelligence, ability and loyal cooperation of our Apache actors was indicated by the fact that the date of our first appearance was announced when we were *just beginning the rehearsals*. Fortunately, the stage manager developed a sincere and sympathetic interest in our unique Wild West play and our “savage” players. He very soon appreciated that although we were all *raw recruits*, we were exceedingly anxious to present a really good show, and he gave us most valuable suggestions and assistance, for which I thanked him then—and thank him now.

We made our *debut* at Saint Louis, Missouri, and emerged from our premier performance without a single fatality—or even inciting an incipient riot. Fortunately I have preserved two exhibits of the literature announcing the birth of our “stage career”—a program and a press notice. I am, therefore, able to include in this narrative a facsimile of the program and a copy of the press notice. The program will serve to indicate the somewhat ambitious character of our entertainment.

The following is a copy of the press notice which was published in a Saint Louis morning paper on Saturday, September 9, 1876.

“OLYMPIC THEATRE

“Considering the popular feeling against the noble red man at present, the entertainment given at the Olympic theatre last night by the tribe of Apache Indians of Arizona, under the supervision of ex-Agent John P. Clum, was well patronized. The dress circle contained many ladies, the upper tier was crowded with the gamins of the city, and in the parquette were to be seen four Celestials, who sat near the stage and seemed to enjoy the performance as much as anybody. These Indians had only been in the city about a week and knew little or nothing of what a great city was, or even what a theatre was like until their arrival. They have only

had a few rehearsals, but even these have not fully convinced them that it is altogether proper and right that they should publicly exhibit their manners and customs or dance their war-dance behind the footlights. For a first effort they did very well last night, however, many of their tableaux being strikingly realistic as well as picturesque. The troupe numbers sixteen braves and four squaws, and when the curtain went up they appeared before the audience in full costumes. That is to say, they were naked from the waist up, but their chests, backs, arms, necks and faces were painted with all the colors of the rainbow. Mr. Clum introduced them in a brief speech, after which they retired to prepare for the second tableau. This represented an Indian encampment where the braves are surprised as they sing their peculiar and monotonous song around their campfire. A hand-to-hand combat ensues, resulting in the triumph of the palefaces. There was considerable fighting done, however, and when the knife of the white man gleamed in the face of the Indian, who was held in his strong embrace, the applause, especially from the galleries, was deafening. The third tableau was an Indian council of war, with speeches by the braves and chiefs. Of course the audience applauded each speech at the right point. The most ludicrous tableau of the whole performance, however, was that representing an Indian woman mourning the death of her husband. What was meant to be pathetic, and what is without doubt, affecting when done at the proper time and place, was really the funniest part of the show. An Indian woman comes out with an old blanket thrown over her head and shoulders, and kneeling on the ground shakes her head and utters the most dismal cries. To an American audience her voice conveys not the slightest emotion of grief, and when she boo-hoos they can only see a performance that causes their sides to shake with laughter. The fifth tableau disclosed the braves in a grand war-dance, which was one of the best things done during the evening. Part second changed the program by allowing the red man a victory over the paleface, the former making the attack. Included in this was the Indian scalp-dance. The final tableau showed the Indians at home, engaged in social games, and as happy and contented as any white man. The entire performance was enjoyable.

There will be a matinee at two o'clock today and another performance in the evening, the last to be given in this city."

It is to be regretted that the *scalping acts* were included in our program, for I now firmly believe that this was wholly unwarranted—so far as the Apaches were concerned. A popular notion then prevailed—and still survives—assuming that in every *successful* combat between warriors of the redskin and paleface races, the victor invariably *crowned* his conquest by *lifting* the scalp of his fallen foe. While it is alleged that the exquisitely cruel act of scalping an enemy was a common practice among the Indians who roamed over the vast plains, as well as among some of the eastern tribes, I am now satisfied that the Apaches did not scalp their victims, at least I have never been confronted with competent evidence establishing a single act of this character. The very friendly and efficient stage manager at Saint Louis advised that our combat scenes should include the taking of the scalp in order to conform to the popular idea of the details of such deadly affairs. In the midst of our hectic preparations for the show the suggestion of the stage manager was adopted without due consideration. It was a serious mistake, and the only feature of our program not sustained by the facts. The research involved in the preparation of this story has brought the offending feature of our exhibition to my attention, and I make haste to set the record of the Apaches right in this particular.

We gave a good show—we even admitted that. In at least two tableaux we presented the “real stuff” with a dash of action and excitement that was enough to thrill even a bard-boiled frontiersman. *At each entertainment we shot and cut and killed each other* (in realistic stage fashion). *We delivered the goods.* But notwithstanding favorable comments from individuals and the press our theatrical venture did not prove a financial success. In such circumstances “post mortems” yield little satisfaction. However, it is doubtless true that we were the innocent victims of the unfriendly sentiment occasioned by the killing of Custer and

his command. Furthermore, we may have over-estimated the public confidence in our thoroughbred, untutored and unrestrained actors of the redskin race. During the scenes in which mock fighting occurred these "wild" Apaches, hideous in their war-paint, dashed and leaped about the stage firing rifles, flashing Bowie-knives and causing the painted forests and canyons of the scenery to echo with their savage, blood-curdling war whoops. Nothing but the foot-lights separated them from the audience, and it is not improbable that there were many who would have been glad to witness the spectacle if they had been confident that the Indians, wrought up to a high pitch of excitement by the realistic play, would not break from our control, go "wild" and see "red" and extend their raid across the foot-lights into the audience.

Whatever may have been the reason, we were persistently confronted with the disagreeable fact that each successive entertainment left us with less available cash on hand. And thus it happened that we quit the show business, packed up our fancy buckskin suits, beaded moccasins, Bowie-knives, etc., and proceeded to Washington to *view* the national capital and to *interview* the Great White Father. While there we explored the Capitol building and the White House, voyaged down the Potomac to Mount Vernon and detoured for a picnic in the mountains of Virginia. Of course, we had several conferences with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

However, our visit to Washington was sadly marred by the only tragedy of the trip—the death of the young Chiricahua chief, Tah-zay.* Young and strong as he was, Tah-zay fell ill with pneumonia, and although the best medical skill available was called to attend him he grew worse rapidly and died within a few days. The funeral services were conducted by Rev. J. E. Rankin of the First Congregational

* See Review for January, 1929.

Church of Washington. Among those attending the obsequies were Commissioner of Indian Affairs J. Q. Smith and General O. O. Howard, who, four years previous, had made the treaty of peace with Cochise—the dead Apache's father. The interment was made in the Congressional Cemetery. The illness and death of Tah-zay were not devoid of beneficial results, for the reason that they afforded the Indians with our party an opportunity to observe the civilized methods and customs of caring for the sick and preparing the dead for burial, as well as our funeral rites and ceremonies—all of which, under ordinary circumstances, were about the last things I would have thought of bringing to their particular attention.

When we stopped at Saint Louis I learned that Commissioner Smith was then in that city opening bids for certain Indian supplies. The coming of the Apaches had been widely broadcast by the press, and when I called upon the commissioner at his hotel I anticipated a proper official *panning* for having absented myself and the Indians from the reservation without permission from the Indian Bureau. But, on the contrary, Commissioner Smith greeted me cordially, inquired how the Apaches were enjoying their trip, and then, quite abruptly but with great earnestness, he said: "Mr. Clum, you are going back to San Carlos."

I told the commissioner frankly why I had resigned and that I had not expected to return to San Carlos as agent; that I was still hopeful that the entertainments we expected to give would prove satisfactory and beneficial to all concerned, and therefore my thoughts and plans were centered upon this enterprise. Commissioner Smith extended his best wishes for our success, but I suspected that he was reserving the right to doubt that our anticipations would be realized—from a financial viewpoint. It was not so long after this interview until the very unsatisfactory returns

from the box-offices had convinced me that the commissioner's doubts *had been well founded*.

Soon after our arrival in Washington I called upon Commissioner Smith at his office in the Interior Department and advised him of the sad fate of our brief and hectic "stage career." His attitude was sympathetic, and he said that while he regretted the enterprise had resulted in financial loss to my two friends and myself, he hoped the experience had left me in a mood to withdraw my resignation and resume my duties as agent at San Carlos. During the period of Tah-zay's illness we had ample time to discuss all the dips, spurs and angles of the general situation in Arizona. Finally the commissioner proposed that if I would withdraw my resignation and resume charge of the 4,500 Apaches then on the San Carlos reservation that the Interior Department would petition Congress for an increase in my salary; that I would not be asked to undertake any more *foreign* expeditions for the purpose of removing other tribes to my reservation; that certain specified necessary agency equipment would be purchased; that in the execution of my official duties I would be given the fullest support by the officials of the Indian Bureau, and that because of the obvious benefits of the trip to the Apaches accompanying me, their visit would be approved and their expenses returning to the reservation would be paid by the Interior Department. Encouraged by these stipulations I withdrew my resignation and set about arranging for the return trip to San Carlos.

The following official communications are of interest in connection with the resignation submitted by me on February 27, 1876, which made it possible for me to invade the East with the Apache thespians:

TELEGRAM

“Washington, D. C.,
March 20, 1876.

“Agent Clum,
San Carlos, Arizona.

“Secretary Interior has accepted your resignation to take effect upon appointment of successor.

“J. Q. SMITH, *Commissioner.*”

“OFFICE OF INDIAN AFFAIRS

Washington, D. C.,
October 25, 1876.

“Mr. John P. Clum,
U. S. Indian Agent,
Washington, D. C.

“Sir: and in view of the further fact that *upon the request of this office you have withdrawn your resignation*, you will be allowed your actual and necessary traveling expenses in returning.

“Yours respectfully,
“S. A. GALPIN, *Acting Commissioner*”

Conspicuous mention should be made of the persistent good humor and harmony that prevailed among this little company of Apaches throughout the trip. It should be remembered that our party was composed of representatives of distinct bands of a nomadic race, which, until quite recently, had occupied widely separated hunting and camping grounds, and, therefore, the Coyoteros and the Arivaipas and the Chiricahuas had not had opportunity to establish intimate acquaintances and life-long friendships. In fact, several of the more prominent members of the party *were just getting acquainted with each other on this trip*, and yet in all the vicissitudes of that memorable visit to the East there was no wrangling among the members of our group. And—looking backward—I have always regarded it as most remarkable that we were able to make that long, tedious trek by team; to take those Indians so far from their homeland to meet conditions new and strange to them, without

developing a single instance which would indicate that any members of the group were inharmonious, hostile or antagonistic among themselves.

We experienced only one vicious outburst of hostility toward the Apaches en route, and this, I am pleased to say, expressed the attitude of only one man. The incident occurred while we were homeward bound. One evening as we were passing through a middle western state, a robust, black whiskered and grim visaged conductor entered the car in which the Indians were traveling. I chanced to be in the car at the time and was conversing with two or three other passengers near the door through which the conductor entered. He glanced savagely at the Indians and exclaimed: "The _____, I'd like to have every scalp hanging to my belt." "Why so?", I ventured to inquire, "have these Indians harmed you, or your family, or your friends?" "No," he snapped back, "they have not, but they are a bunch of blood-thirsty savages—the damned red devils, etc." After he had emitted a little more similar rough stuff I pointed to Es-kim-in-zin and mentioned some of the wrongs he had suffered at the hands of the white race; the cruel massacre of his family and friends; his imprisonment at hard labor in chains, etc., and then I added, "That man is an Indian—an Apache. You call him a 'blood-thirsty savage,' and yet he says he has no desire for revenge; that he wants to forget his past wrongs and live a good and useful life. *That's the kind of a savage he is*, and yet he has *always lived in the Arizona mountains*, while you have enjoyed the advantages of a *Christian civilization*. What do you mean by 'blood-thirsty?' *What kind of a savage are you?*" The menacing glance he flashed at me bespoke the hot blood of cruel barbarian forebears that surged in his veins. "Who has the tickets?" he snarled. I handed him the tickets and the incident was closed.

It was deemed worth while that the return trip should be made by way of Philadelphia in order that the Indians might have a glimpse of the Centennial Exposition. This was done, and then we proceeded direct to El Moro, Colorado, where the teams and teamsters were in readiness for the journey overland to San Carlos. And the morning after our arrival at El Moro the little caravan moved westward in charge of Marijildo and two other agency employes, while I returned once more to the East for the purpose of acquiring a young bride, who had consented to share with me the vicissitudes of life on an Arizona Indian reservation with 4,500 *other* "wild" Apaches.

Los Angeles, California.