

## PREFACE

This edition of *Los Comanches* is intended as a contribution to the study of the language and history of New Mexico. Though much has been written concerning the history and language of our Territory, much remains to be done. Many documents are almost inaccessible, in spite of the diligent labors of many of our New Mexico students. It is hoped that this study may be of interest and utility to the student, whether the history or the language of New Mexico are being studied, and that it may inspire New Mexicans to study their history, a history so romantic and so full of interest and importance, if we are to investigate history in a critical manner. So rare are many of the documents, dealing with the early history of New Mexico, that very few people know, that our early annals, the conquest and settlement of New Mexico by Juan de Oñate, in 1598 (22 years before the Pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth Rock!) are written in the verse of the language of Castile, and indeed the very existence of this famous epic poem, is known only to a few.<sup>1</sup>

The original plan was simply to give to New Mexico scholars an accessible text of our play, but the interest which many of our New Mexico friends have shown in the work has urged us to go into a further study, giving an account of the Comanche depredations in New Mexico and other facts of great interest and importance, which have to do with our play.

In the notes, the author was often tempted to enter into philological discussions, but he has endeavored to avoid them, since all matters touching New Mexican Spanish dialect will

<sup>1</sup>The full title of this famous New Mexico Epic, is, *Historia de la Nueva Mexico. Del Capitan Gaspar de Villagra*. It is in 34 Cantos, and treats of the geography, conquest, and early settlers of New Mexico. Vide, Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, pages 112-115. This priceless gem, whether one views it from a historical or a literary standpoint, should be known to all New Mexicans, thousands of whom can read it in the original Spanish of the Golden Age, and it is my intention to publish it, with an English translation in the near future. The original edition was published at Alcalá de Henares in 1610, or five years after the appearance of Part I of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*.

be treated in detail in a forthcoming study, *The Phonology and Morphology of New Mexican Spanish*.

In closing, the pleasant duty remains to me, to thank all those who generously assisted me in my work, especially Mr. Amado Chaves, of Santa Fe, N. M., the possessor of the ms. of Los Comanches, who kindly allowed me to publish his ms.; Mr. Eusebio Chacón of Trinidad, Colo., who placed at my disposal, two most rare and valuable works concerning the early history of New Mexico, namely, Pino's "Noticias históricas y estadísticas sobre la antigua provincia del Nuevo México," and the Álvarez ms.; and Father F. M. Troy of Old Albuquerque, who kindly offered me his assistance in looking through the Old Church Archives of the Church of San Felipe de Neri.

A. M. E.

University of New Mexico,  
December, 1907.

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## INTRODUCTION

### I

#### THE COMANCHE INDIANS.

The Comanches are a tribe of American Indians, usually classified as belonging to the Shoshonean family. When first known early in the 18th century, they occupied and roamed throughout a region extending from the sources of the Colorado river on the north to the Arkansas and Missouri rivers on the east, and south to New Mexico and Texas, and even as far as Durango, Mexico. According to their traditions, they came from the west, gradually pushing out other Indian tribes, until with other Indians, which they subdued, they came to occupy the region just mentioned. In their language, they called themselves, *nanni* (live people). The Kansas called them *Padoucas*, a name adopted by the French, and the Spaniards called them, *Comanches* or *Cumanchis*.<sup>1</sup>

The Comanches are first heard of in the beginning of the 18th century. In 1719 the French under D'Ustine visited them, and in 1724 Bourgmont found some Comanche bands in the head waters of the Platte and Kansas rivers. The first appearance in history of the Comanches, however, was in New Mexico in 1716, when during Governor Martinez' absence in western New Mexico, where he was conducting an expedition against the Moguis, they attacked, with the help of the Yutas, Taos and the Tehua towns. Their forces were defeated by Captain Serra and most of the Comanches and Yutas were taken prisoners.<sup>2</sup> From this first appearance in New Mexico in 1716 until the middle of the XIXth century, the Comanches were the terrible foe of the New Mexicans.

Only two years after this first appearance and defeat the Comanches were again committing depredations in New Mexico, and Governor Valverde marched against them in 1719, with a force of 105 Spaniards and many Indians. He explored in this expedition, Kansas and Colorado, but was unable to punish the enemy.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In New Mexican Spanish, this is usually pronounced, *cumanchi*. For the change of the final *e* to *i*, vide, E. C. Hills, *New Mexican Spanish*, page 712, (3).

<sup>2</sup>Vide Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, pages 234-235.

<sup>3</sup>Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, page 236.

No important attacks of the Comanches are recorded for five years, but in 1724, they mercilessly attacked the Apaches at Jicarilla, forced them to give up half of their women and children, burned the place, and killed all but 69 men, two women and three boys.<sup>1</sup>

For more than 20 years after this no definite accounts are recorded concerning the Comanches, but it is probable that their guerilla warfare was continued. In 1746 they made a raid on Pecos, killing 12 persons, and other marauding expeditions were conducted against Galisteo and other small settlements. This created a popular clamor for a campaign against the Comanches, and in 1747, Governor Códallo with 500 soldiers and allied Indians, surprised them near Abiquiní, killed 107, and captured 206 of their numbers, and 1,000 horse. The campaign was continued with vigor and in 1748, the governor defeated the Comanches again, near Pecos.<sup>2</sup> Two months after this last expedition, Governor Códallo gave a friendly reception to 600 Comanches, at Taos, on their assurances that they had not taken part in these wars, but during the same year, a junta was held at Santa Fé, at the viceroy's orders, to determine whether or not, the Comanches should be allowed to attend the Taos fairs. All admitted the treachery of the Comanche, but since, they always brought meat, skins, horses, etc., to Taos to trade, and since their coming to Taos, would bring them under Christian influence, it was decided, that they should be allowed to attend the fairs.<sup>3</sup>

The Comanches, however, continued their depredations, making a raid on Galisteo, their favorite place for attack. In 1751, Governor Cachupín marched against them, burned a "tular" where they concealed themselves, captured 44 and killed 101 of them. These unimportant defeats did not drive the Comanches away, and their attacks on the small settlements did not cease.

In 1760 they made a raid on Taos, killed many men and carried off 50 women. This created a general indignation against the dreaded foe and Governor Valle organized a strong force to punish them. He marched nearly 200 leagues, but failed to accomplish his purposes. A year later, they returned to Taos, just as if nothing at all had happened, for the purpose

<sup>1</sup>Bancroft, *ut supra*, page 239.

<sup>2</sup>Vide Bancroft, *ut supra*, page 249.

of trading, but they were not admitted. In December of the same year, however, they returned in large numbers, insisting on trading privileges. Governor Urrisola hastened to Taos with a small force and after many wrangles and quarrelsome negotiations a desperate battle ensued, where 400 of the Comanche warriors were left dead on the field.<sup>1</sup> This victory and terrible defeat of the Comanches at Taos was thought to be conclusive, but the Comanches were by no means conquered.

In 1771 Governor Mendinueta concluded a treaty with the Comanches, and urged the people to observe the conditions of the treaty, lest the Comanches would again begin their depredations. We do not know definitely, how long this treaty was observed, but the Comanches were attacking the Spanish settlements again in 1776 or earlier. In 1777 they were routed, together with their Apache allies, by Governor Mendinueta, and 30 of them killed.

A most merciless attack on Tomé in 1777, however, was one of the most terrible and brutal raids of the Comanches, that has been recorded.<sup>2</sup>

I have no account of the attack and the horrible massacre of Tomé other than the narrative of Lummis, which I suppose, is correct; but in the records of the Church of San Felipe in Old Albuquerque, there is found among the old burial records, a brief narrative of this merciless attack, together with the names of the persons buried, by the Franciscan friar of Old Albuquerque who went down to Tomé to bury the dead. The record reads thus: "En este libro de Difuntos de esta Parroquia de Sn Phelipe Neri de Albuquerque, Diosesises de Durango, en veinte y seis dias de mes de mayo de mil setecientos setenta y siete años, di sepultura (sagrada?) en la capilla de nuestra Sa. de la Concepcion de Tomé a los siguientes, a José Miguel Pino" [Here follows a long list of the dead, etc., numbering 21 and including two members of the Pino family.] The last words of the record read thus: "Todos los muertos murieron sin resebir los (últimos?) sacramentos, por la biolencia de sus muertes que fué a manos de los enemigos Cumanches, aunque acaeció que el día anterior se avían con-

<sup>1</sup>Vide Bancroft, *ut supra*, page 257.

<sup>2</sup>Prince and Haynes, merely mention this, while Bancroft says nothing about it. Lummis, (vide, A New Mexico David, pages 94-100), has a complete account, but does not mention the sources of his narrative.

fesado y conulgado en cumplimiento de Nuestra Sta. Madre Yglesia, y para qe conste lo firmé en (dicho?) día, mes y año ut supra. Fr. Andrés Garcia.

It was after this massacre of the people at Tomé at the hands of the Comanches, when not a person of the village was left to tell the tale, and numerous other attacks on the smaller Spanish villages that the inhabitants of New Mexico, became inflamed with indignation against the Comanches and the expedition of 1777 under the command of Don Carlos Fernández, which furnished the subject matter of the play *Los Comanches* (vide, II.) was planned. This is evidently the same expedition and victory over the Comanches, told by Mr. Amado Chaves, (vide, Amado Chaves, *The Defeat of the Comanches*), but the date is 1777 not 1717. Mr. Chaves states that the commanders and leaders of the expedition were Don Juan de Padilla, Carlos Fernández and Pedro Pino. This may be a true account, but according to Alvárez (vide ms., pages 19-20) the leader in the battle was Don Carlos, presumably, Don Carlos Fernández, and the same leader appears as the commander of the Spanish troops in the play *Los Comanches*. According to the Alvárez ms. (vide supra) and also as Mr. Chaves' states, this famous battle of Don Carlos and defeat of the Comanches took place near Las Orejas del Conejo, between el arroyo Don Carlos and the Colorado river, i. e., on the Staked Plains near the sources of the Colorado river. The Comanches were surprised by the Spaniards in the early morning, and according to Alvarez, the battle lasted all day long.<sup>2</sup> The defeat of the Comanches was terrible, and hundreds were taken prisoners and brought to Santa Fé. It is the story of this disastrous defeat that furnishes the subject matter for the play *Los Comanches*. The account of Mr. Chaves (if the date is corrected), the narrative of Alvarez in manuscript and the story as narrated in *Los Comanches* are the only accounts I know of this battle.

It was thought that this defeat would forever end the Comanche depredations in New Mexico, but this was not the case. The Comanches who fled and escaped from the battle of Don Carlos in 1777 (or 1778) informed their comrades of the terrible disaster, and the Comanches gathered from all

<sup>1</sup>Vide, Amado Chaves, ut supra, 7 and 9.

<sup>2</sup>Alvarez ms., page 20, "Se dice que la batalla duró desde cosa de las diez de la mañana hasta la oración."

parts for revenge. Early in 1778, Juan Bautista de Anza, a native of Sonora, and a man well versed in Indian affairs, became political and military governor of New Mexico. Hearing of new raids by the Comanches his first military enterprise was a vigorous campaign in 1779 against them. He marched north and east for some 300 miles, with a force of 645 men. He met the enemy in a fierce struggle which ended in disaster for the Comanches. Here, the famous Comanche chief Cuerno Verde (who appears in *Los Comanches*) was killed, together with his eldest son, four chiefs, his high-priest and 32 famous warriors.<sup>1</sup>

This ended the Comanche troubles for all time. After this defeat, no important attacks on New Mexican villages are recorded.

So much for the history of the Comanches in New Mexico. We will now give an extract from Pino's work (vide Bibliography), which gives a good idea of their manners and customs.

#### CAPÍTULO DÉCIMO QUINTO OF PINO'S WORK, PAGES 82-85.

##### SEC. I.

Naciones de Gentiles que rodean las Provincias de Nuevo Mexico, Etc.

Es imposible poder enumerar las diversas naciones y su total de individuos de cada una de las que rodean la parte que habitamos. Al principio de aquel descubrimiento, se dieron á conocer por los nombres de Piros, Oneres, Tiguanas, Suñis, Gemes, Picuris, Pecos, Thaos, Theguas, Thanos, dando algunas el nombre á varios pueblos de la provincia, como se advierte en el capítulo de la población.

Después se han descubierto, entre otras, las siguientes: Apaches, Gileños, gente traicionera cruel, ladrona y siempre en cueros. Idem Laneros, lo mismo. Idem mescaleros, no tan malos. Idem Carlanes, tampoco son tan malos como los Gileños; andan vestidos y son muy copulientos. Idem Lipanes, muy guerreros y diestros en el manejo del fusil. Todos son Apaches con estos diferentes nombres provinciales, aunque jamás fijan residencia ni sociedad.

Llanparicas; quiere decir en su lengua, come yerbas, Los

<sup>1</sup>Vide Bancroft, page 264, and note. The statement of Pino and other authors concerning Cuerno Verde's death in 1783, etc., is unfounded. Cf. Bancroft, page 267 and note.

Ancavistis, quiere decir gente colorada. Los Cuechunticas, comedores de cíbolos. Los Juipis, gente del palo. Los Mures, capitanes grandes. Los Chaguaguanos, ignoro lo que quiere decir. Los pasuchis, Cahiguas, Aas-orjones, Jumanas, Cumpes, Pananas,<sup>1</sup> Canceres, Guasachis. Quedan incisos en estas naciones los yutas, con quienes tenemos paz: lo mismo con los navajoes y honrados Comanches, que son las tres naciones más poderosas y que han puesto la provincia en el mayor riesgo de perderse.

## SEC. II.

### IDEA DEL COMANCHE.

Es conocido en todos aquellos países por su robusta y gallarda presencia, aire marcial y franco, y vestir honesto [particularmente las mugeres] y por otras calidades que le recomiendan.

**Sus Vestidos.** Son todos de pieles curtidas, los finos para camisas y los gordos para ropa de los hombres. Gastan estos un camisón blanco ó color de yesca que baja hasta cerca de la rodilla, pantallón del mismo corte que el nuestro, y zapato bien hecho, observándose que ningún Comanche anda descalzo. En la cabeza traen un plumaje, y los colores de las plumas y altura suelen ser la señal de distinción en grados.—Las mugeres usan de túnicos más largos con mangas hasta la muñeca y cerrados hasta el pescuezo, los zapatos suben hasta esconderse bajo del túnico; de modo que sólo la cara y manos deja ver la Comancha, y cuando tiene que caminar, cubre el cútis con almagra para librarlo del aire y del sol.<sup>2</sup>—Los Camisones y túnicos suelen estar bordados con varias figuras de rosas, claveles, animales, etc.; cuyos hermosos matices son de puas de puercos-espín en lugar de seda: también por estos bordados se distinguen sus personajes. El cabello de los Comanches cae en trenzas, con mucha gracia, hasta cerca de los muslos, y por lo regular es bermejo (rubio lacio). Las Comanchas andan pelonas.

**Su religión.** Confesan un Ser Supremo, á quien llaman Niatpo [mi padre]; mas no le tributan culto señalado. Tienen

<sup>1</sup>Las habitaciones de los Pananas son cuevas bajo de tierra y algunas casas cubiertas de paja ó zacate, yerba, muy asendá: son distintos en el arma de fuego, tienen almaceñas de balas, pólvora, etc., ministradas por los Estados-Unidos. Cosechan maíz, frijoles, hortalizas, etc.

<sup>2</sup>Las Comanchas son rubias y hermosas.

sus adivinos, que se distinguen con el nombre de pujacantes, que es lo mismo que si dijieran hechizeros, porque hacen relaciones del modo con que las mugeres hermosas juntan en los montes alrededor de sí los venados y demás cacerías y ellos lo hacen también. No faltan entre los Comanches quienes se burlean de estas relaciones y sus autores, señalándolos con el dedo como á embusteros.

**Su gobierno.** Viene á ser el de una república, reunida más por la necesidad que por las leyes, porque si le faltase su unión, sería acometida de todos las naciones que le rodean, con quienes jamás ha querido hacer paz ni alianza; el mando está repartido en capitanes subalternos; del que por su talento y valor es nombrado general en jefe, que los gobierna militarmente.<sup>1</sup>—Suelen tener los hombres de calidad hasta siete mugeres, número que parece es entre ellos el permitido. El aduherido en la casada es castigado con pena de muerte; lo mismo la prostitución pública. Sus casamientos se celebran por cambios de regalos. El novio presenta al padre de la novia caballos ó relaciones ciertas de acciones de guerra y la recibe, cuyo día se celebra con danzas públicas por los vecinos y allegados parientes.

**Su ocupación.** Es la caza del cíbolo, venado, etc., de que hacen acopios para curar su carne y comerla hecha cecina en el invierno, cuando la nieve les obliga á mantenerse debajo de techo, como sucede en la misma estación que en España. Curten las pieles de un modo admirable. Sólo ellos poseen el secreto de los simples más activos para curtir con pelo, sin él y de muchos modos, toda suerte de gamuzas, las que sirven en sus tiendas de Campaña en lugar de lona y resisten mejor que esta todos los intemperies.

**Sus llantos por los difuntos.** Si son de calidad, van envueltos al sepulcro con los mejores pieles curtidos: encima les ponen todos los arneses de guerra de su uso, además de los instrumentos de su oficio, como la alesna si hacia zapatos, etc.: es acompañado el cadáver por todos sus parientes con un llanto noble y lastimoso. Las viudas, mientras llevan el cadáver de sus maridos, se hieren ó rajan con cuchillos ó peder-

<sup>1</sup>Hace como veinte años que uno de estos jefes, nombrado Maya, puso á un hijo suyo en la escuela de la capital, encomendado al teniente D. Vicente Troncoso, (después de hacer la paz con nosotros). Muerto Maya, reclamó su nacion al joven para que fuese á los ensayos de la guerra. Se le entregó sabiendo leer, y en el día ocupa el lugar de su padre y ama de corazón á los Españoles.

nales el rostro, hasta quedar desfiguradas. Matan todos los caballos [puncos en su idioma] que había montado el diablo: se regalán algunos á los que sin ser parientes se acercan á aumentar el llanto: los hijos (llamados tíncos) se guardan por algunos días de concurrir á las fiestas y placeres, y el tibihnsumcat (le quería mucho) que es el saludo al en contrarse con los parientes, éstos, etc.

Sus campañas. Ninguna de las demás naciones se atreve á medir sus fuerzas con la Comancha; aun aliados han sido vencidos repetidas veces: no admite cartel y lo da á los vencidos. Pretere la muerte, por no sujetarse al más mínimo acto de humillación: en las acciones de guerra jamás acomete con ventaja ni traición: sino siempre cara á cara y después de haber hecho la señal con sus pitos. Aunque su principal arma es la flecha (patca), usa de la lanza y armas de fuego, como nuestros soldados, y de una táctica siempre variada que impone en todos sus movimientos.

Las guerras que han tenido con nosotros han sido siempre tenaces y sangrientas: ponían en mucho cuidado á la provincia, hasta el año de 1783, que el gobernador D. Juan Bautista de Anza trató de escañarlos. Salíó en persona después de haber dado todas las disposiciones para una acción decisiva, y la logró, venciendo más de treinta capitanes [ninguno quiso cartel] y hasta su general en jefe Tabivo naritgante [hermoso y valiente] nombrado Cuerno Verde pereció en esta memorable campaña, en lo que hicieron las tropas nuestras prodigios de valor.

Desde aquella fecha se mantienen en paz y buena armonía con nosotros, cumpliendo con el mayor esmero todo el contenido de los tratados; bien que lo mismo procuráramos observar por nuestra parte por no ofender su delicadeza.<sup>1</sup>

## II.

### THE PLAY LOS COMANCHES.

Los Comanches is a Spanish popular heroic dramatic composition of the last half of the 18th century. The date of its composition cannot be definitely settled until the question of the authorship, and the dates of the battle or battles which

<sup>1</sup>Tan satisfechos estamos de su buena fé, que los veinte soldados que me escoltaron hasta la villa de Altamira, y mis dos criados, acordamos hiciesen su regreso para el Nuevo México, por entre esta nación, si se hallase alguna partida en las inmediaciones de Coahuila, para verificarlo con más seguridad y menos rodeo.

furnished the subject matter of this interesting dramatic narrative are definitely known.<sup>1</sup> If the battle which Mr. Chaves describes (Vide Amado Chaves, The Defeat of the Comanches in 1717), took place after the attack on Tomé in 1777, and not in 1717, and if (Vide supra I) as we have no reason to doubt, the Alvárez ms. is authentic, which states definitely that the expedition and battle were under the command of Don Carlos,<sup>2</sup> (pages 19-20, "Uno de los recientes hechos de armas de los Españoles se efectuó en el arroyo de Dn. Carlos, llamado Don Carlos, de quien el arroyo tomó el nombre. Los Comanches habían recientemente cometido algunas depredaciones en las poblaciones del norte de N. Méjico, y havian también, hacia poco tiempo cometido otras en el río abajo de donde se havian llevado mujeres de una familia cuyos descendientes reclaman parentesco con los Pinos"), we can be pretty sure in saying that the battle took place in 1777 or 1778. The attack on Tomé (vide supra, I.) was early in 1777. That this is the same event mentioned in the Alvárez ms. (see above) we do not doubt, since mention is made of the two members of the Pino family, etc. Furthermore, Cuerno Verde was killed in 1779 by de Anza (vide supra I, and Bancroft, page 264), so that the events narrated in Los Comanches must be placed after March, 1777, and before August, 1779.<sup>3</sup> The defeat of the Comanches by Don Carlos, etc., was, therefore, in 1777 or 1778, and undoubtedly this furnished most of the material for the play, Los Comanches. It is very probable, however, that the play was written after 1779 and events of the defeat of the Comanches by de Anza in 1779, were included by the enthusiastic author, in Don Carlos' battle. This question will be definitely settled when the lives of all the Spaniards mentioned in the play are all known. The Alvárez ms. speaks of an Alférez Peña, who took part in the battle of 1779, and he may be don José de la Peña, of Los Comanches, and may have

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Amado Chaves has informed me that the author of Los Comanches is Don Pedro Pino, of Santa Fé, one of the members of the expedition against the Comanches, with Don Carlos Fernández and Juan de Padilla.

<sup>2</sup>Don Carlos Fernández appears as the leader of the Spaniards in Los Comanches, but the other two men are not mentioned. Of Pino and the question of his authorship of our play, I have found no notices, other than the information of Mr. Chaves.

<sup>3</sup>Governor de Anza's victory over the Comanches was in August, 1779. (Vide Bancroft, page 265, note.)

fought also in 1777 with Don Carlos. In fact, the story as narrated in the play may be rigorously historical.

As to the exact date of the composition of the play, nothing can be definitely known until the author is known. If one of the members of the expedition as Mr. Chaves states, is the author,<sup>1</sup> we may be safe in saying that the play was written after 1777 and before 1800. It is possible, however, that the enthusiastic soldier wrote it on returning from his expeditions, hence we might venture to place the year of the composition of Los Comanches as the year 1780.

For the full description of the battles of 1777 of Don Carlos and 1779 of De Anza, the first of which furnishes the subject matter of our play, see above, I.

### III.

#### THE MS. AND CORRECTED TEXT.

The present edition of Los Comanches, is based on a single ms. While there are said to exist several mss. of the Comanches in New Mexico I have not succeeded in finding more than one. The ms. in question is in the possession of Mr. Arnado Chaves, through whose kindness our publication was made possible. The ms. probably dates from 1840-50. At the head of the ms. and at the end is the name of the copyist, J. J. Vigil, who states that he has made an exact copy: "Esta copia se ha hecho Verbatim et literatim, no he atentado corregir la ortografía ni aclarar ideas. J. J. Vigil." If this is true, our copyist had a very poor original, and evidently not the original ms. The Chaves ms. consists of fourteen leaves written on both sides, and numbered only on one side 1-14. The script is clear and not at all difficult to read.

Our edition is practically an exact reproduction. The errors for the most part are, those of a New Mexican copyist and treated in the notes. In a few instances slight changes were made, all of which are mentioned in the notes. A few verses still remain obscure, but, I have not wished to change them, thinking that it would be best to keep all that was possible of our ms.

The capitalization, punctuation, etc. of the ms. is very poor, and this I have ventured to correct in all cases. The

<sup>1</sup>Chaves, The defeat of the Comanches, page 9.

language I have left intact. All words which for the sake of the versification or other reasons, should be omitted, I have included in brackets, while all words or verses which I have introduced into the text, are included in parenthesis.

The play Los Comanches has been very popular in New Mexico. Up to some twenty years ago, it was produced in many parts of New Mexico, during the Christmas holidays or other important feast days. The popularity of the play during the last century is confirmed by the fact that very few New Mexicans over fifty years of age are not able to recite large portions of Los Comanches from memory.

### IV.

#### LANGUAGE AND VERSIFICATION.

The language of Los Comanches is the standard Spanish of the 18th century. The author of Los Comanches was not an Ercilla; in fact, not a learned man, as can be judged from his work. While the language is good Spanish, it is very simple, almost the language of the uneducated. At the same time there are passages which compare favorably with the verses of the Araucana and the language of the Golden Age. The opening lines are very good and the versification finished.

The fact that the original ms. was not printed, however may account for many poor passages in our play as we now have it. I do not believe, for instance, that the author of Los Comanches would confuse the pronouns vosotros and ustedes in the same sentence, as we find repeatedly in our ms. (See lines 146-150 and 235-245, etc.). These are undoubtedly the copyists' errors, if not our copyist the one before him or others, for in New Mexican Spanish vosotros is not used, hence, ustedes crept in here and there until the text of the ms. came to be in the present state of confusion in this respect.

As to dialectic peculiarities, these are also undoubtedly due to the New Mexican copyist. While the dialectic changes found in the ms. are very few, all are New Mexican Spanish forms, so that we are justified in attributing them, not to the author of the play, but to the copyists through whose hands the ms. has passed. Of course, a few forms may not only be necessarily New Mexican Spanish peculiarities, as indicated in the notes. As has been stated in the Preface, a complete study of the Phonology and Morphology of New Mexican



Spanish is now in the course of preparation by the author of this study, so that both here and in the notes, no serious study of the language of Los Comanches or New Mexican Spanish will be entered into.

The versification of our play is very good. It is in octosyllabic verses and the author adheres to this measure with almost perfect precision. There are found some four verses of nine syllables, only, and the verses of seven all end with an accented vowel in accordance with the Spanish rules of versification. Octosyllabic verse was common in the 16th and 17th centuries, (vide, Mira de Mesqua, Famosa Comedia del Escalvo del Demonio, Buchanan) and also in modern Castilian verse, (vide José Echegaray, El Gran Galeoto, Espinosa). The opening lines start with some regularity in rhymes, but soon the author entered into irregular assonance and blank verse. Good old Spanish romance is found in a large number of verses.

## V.

POPULAR VERSOS<sup>1</sup> ABOUT THE COMANCHES.

## 1.

El Apache y el Comanche  
Se citaron pa la guerra,  
Se citaron pa la guerra,  
El Apache gime y llora,  
Y el Comanche se le aferra,  
Y el Comanche se le aferra.

## 2.

El Comanche y la Comancha  
Se salieron á pasear,  
Se salieron á pasear,  
El Comanche lleva el arco,  
Y la Comancha el chimal,  
Y la Comancha el chimal.

<sup>1</sup>New Mexicans call verso, a short, (usually of four or six lines or verses) popular poetic composition on varied subjects and sung at dances and at home during social gatherings. The author of this study has collected some 800 of these "versos" which he expects to publish at some future time.

## 3.

El Comanche y la Comancha  
Fueron á buscar anole,  
Fueron á buscar anole;  
Del camino se volvieron,  
Se les olvidó el pinole,  
Se les olvidó el pinole.

## 4.

El Comanche y la Comancha  
Se fueron á presentar,  
Se fueron á presentar;  
Salieron primos hermanos,  
No se pudieron casar,  
No se pudieron casar.

## 5.

El Comanche y la Comancha  
Se fueron pa Santa Fé,  
Se fueron pa Santa Fé,  
A vender á sus hijitos  
Por azúcar y café,  
Por azúcar y café.

## 6.

El Comanche y la Comancha  
Se fueron á confesar  
Se fueron á confesar,  
Del camino se volvieron,  
Por que no sabian rezar  
Porque no sabian rezar.