

# The First Navajo Indian Fair

## The Red Man's Love of Contest in the White Man's Game

by Frank Staplin



NAVAJO LEADER, NAVAJOS BLANKETS

**PARTIAL LIST EXHIBITS.**

General Exhibits	290
Corn Exhibits	185
Wheat Exhibits	73
Oats Exhibits	47
Meat Exhibits	90
Squash Exhibits	72
Pumpkin Exhibits	31
Potato Exhibits	30
Alfalfa Exhibits	24
Alfalfa Seed Exhibits	5
Bean Exhibits	203
Teams of Work Horses	60
Saddle Horses	45
Pretty Babies	60
Native Blankets	230
Germantown Blankets	25

**A**N EVENT of so much importance that in the future it may be looked back upon as a mile stone marking the beginning of a new era in the progress of the southwest was the first Navajo fair, which was held at Shiprock Agency, New Mexico, recently.

At Shiprock the past six years has been a period of preparation, a struggle for a position of advantage from which the ignorance and superstition of a barbarous people might be attacked and the influences which have fettered them might be obliterated, so that, freed from its bondage, the Navajo race might take its place among the useful and beneficial elements of the nation, contributing its share toward the industry and enjoying its proportion of the advantages embraced in the common stock.

How successful this preparation for and beginning of their civilization has been is soon apparent to the observer who visits Shiprock, becomes acquainted with the superintendent and his assistants and realizes what they are achieving.

How important the civilization of the Navajo is to that section of the country is also apparent when it is considered that there are some 30,000 of them scattered over a reservation in New Mexico, Arizona and Utah, which contains a larger area than all the New England states and includes thousands of acres of fine agricultural, mineral and timber lands, and is almost completely underlaid with coal. The increase of their productiveness means an increase in the output of the southwest. Their education and permanent settlement upon small homesteads will leave a large surplus of land to be sold to white settlers. Thus the work being carried on at Shiprock has many points which commend it to the people who are interested in the development of that section.

The holding of a fair this fall was not decided upon until about two weeks before it was held, and when the decision was reached it was so late in the season that it was necessary to arrange for it at once, thus less than two weeks' notice was given the Navajos by means of Indian police and messengers—barely time to gather up what they had on hand and bring it in without any preparation or opportunity to gather or make anything especially for exhibition.

Under these circumstances the amount and quality of the exhibits displayed was no less than remarkable. The extent to which they responded to the call to bring in their products was a surprise to Major Shelton, the Indian agent for this reservation, himself. He knew that they could and would make a very creditable showing.

Two hundred and ninety general exhibits were received and displayed, while several others arrived too late to be accepted. These exhibits contained from five to 60 articles each. Agricultural products formed the chief part of the exhibition, but by no means all, as the famous Navajo blanket was there in many styles and sizes, beautiful silver jewelry of various and unique designs, old blankets of great value, a few buffalo robes, valuable pieces of bead work and dozens of other products and curios, ancient and modern. Besides these general exhibits there was the live stock show, in which horses, milk cows, sheep and goats were numerous.

The sports consisted of foot races (the longest one five and one-half miles, in which 12 entered and four finished), horse races, games and amusements. Each evening the Navajos provided their own amusement by participating in several of their ancient sacred dances, which were both interesting and entertaining to the visitors.

cloth and re-weaving it into a very fine, close, tight blanket. There were also many fine chief's blankets, the famous blanket with the black-and-white cross stripes which were used by those Navajos who could afford them long before a white man ever saw them. But best and greatest of all was the fine collection of soft gray and black rugs made from the natural colors of wool without any dye whatever and the beautiful outline blankets, in which the Navajo has reached the highest perfection of the art. These blankets were judged by Frank Staplin, a Navajo blanket expert of Farmington, N. M., J. L. Parsons of Durango and Miss Emma Loomis, of the agency, and the first prize was awarded to a beautiful black, white and grey blanket of artistic design and remarkably even and close weave, shown in the center picture.

The Navajo silver jewelry is hand-hammered from Mexican dollars, which the traders procure for the Navajos, and many of the pieces are very beautiful in design and odd and exquisite as an ornament. The jewelry consists of rings, bracelets, neck chains, charms and many other articles. It should be remembered that none of the products raised at Shiprock under the supervision of the superintendent and employees were permitted to participate for prizes, but every prize went to reservation Navajos for products purely their own. The vegetables and other agricultural products of the agency are, however, worthy of special mention, as they formed a fine exhibit in themselves and included, besides the ordinary products of the section, many of the new vegetables brought from foreign lands by representatives of the department of agriculture.

Some of the Indian exhibits were brought no less than 70 miles in wagons and on horseback, by the interested owners, and one lot of 50 general exhibits, which deserves special mention, came from Sa-Noos-Te, the vicinity of F. L. Noel's trading post. This lot contained the prize-winning assortment of silver work and other prize winners.

The success of the first Navajo fair, which the unappreciative neighboring public had supposed would consist of a few pony races and chicken fights, but which turned out to be an exhibit of agricultural products which probably equalled any other ever made in the county, for quality, and contained at least five times the quantity, is due entirely to the work of Major W. T. Shelton, the superintendent at Shiprock. It is true the Navajos were producing most of these articles long before they ever saw or heard of Shelton, but they were not producing as much, as well, nor as fine a quality as they have been since coming into contact with the influence of the institution which he has founded. Neither could they have been induced to have brought together their most valuable and cherished personal effects for public inspection but for the confidence which this agency has awakened within them.

We have therefore seen the first beneficial effects of education and proper example upon this neglected people. The changes which have been wrought upon those coming in contact with this institution have been so rapid and sweeping that it challenges credulity. The difference between them and the Navajos on some other parts of the reservation is so marked that they would not be taken for the same people, and it is these differences that commend the policies and practices initiated by Mr. Shelton at this institution and places it in favorable contrast with other government and private Indian schools.

### CUSTOMS MEN PUZZLED

It took five men and three women at the custom house and the silk buyer of a Louisville department store to fix the value of a kimono

which arrived at the office of the surveyor of customs for appraisement.

It was a dainty silken thing, lavender in color, which lay on the table of Cashier Thomas for two hours. The garment was sent to the custom house by the postmaster at Somerset, Ky., who received it a few days ago through the mail from Japan. He did not send in the address of the owner.

This was aggravating to the young women experts called in. "I know every woman in Somerset," one said, "and I'd just like to know who is going to wear that."

For half an hour it puzzled Surveyor Taylor and two or three of his men assistants to discover just what the garment was.

"It looks to me like the court gown of the queen of Zanzibar," said Clay Miller, who measures steamboats and superintends the loading of merchandise at the custom house depot.

"Don't you men know anything at all?" exclaimed one of the women clerks, pushing her way through the puzzled group. "Why, it's a kimono."

"What in thunder is a kimono?" inquired Deputy Sam Barber. "They don't have that kind of thing down in Bath county, where I came from."

Finally, when the officials decided that there was nothing dangerous about the garment, they started in fixing the value. It was estimated to be worth all the way from \$1.50 to \$150. The kimono was finally carried to a department store, where the silk

### CHAINED TO WHEELBARROW

In writing of the Schlüsselburg prison in McClure's, David Soakice tells of a prisoner who was chained to a wheelbarrow:

"Schedrin had been condemned to hard labor in the convict mines of Siberia and for an attempt to escape from there had been sentenced to be chained to a heavy wheelbarrow. When the order came for his transfer from Siberia to St. Petersburg, no conveyance could be found large enough to contain him, the wheelbarrow and the convoy of gendarmes. Yet, as the wheelbarrow had become a part of the prisoner, the gendarmes were afraid to leave it behind. It was therefore decided to place Schedrin with his convoy in one cart and the wheelbarrow behind in another. For several months, day and night, Schedrin and the gendarmes galloped through Siberia on a troika (a three-horsed cart or sledge), while another sped behind them, upon which the wheelbarrow reposed—causing the deepest amazement among the peasants in the villages through which they passed. Upon the arrival of the prisoner in SS. Peter and Paul he was once again chained to the barrow, and only after he had been six weeks in the Schlüsselburg was he finally detached from it and given freedom of movement within the narrow confines of his cell.

"When they unchained me," said Schedrin subsequently, "I could not get enough movement. I wanted to run and run, and it seemed to me that I could never stop. How strange it is that men who can enjoy perfect freedom of movement never realize the wonderful happiness that is theirs!"

### A SLAP AT OUR SENATE

One of the friends of Representative Martin of South Dakota was making a strenuous complaint to Mr. Martin about the manner in which committee assignments were given in the senate.

"A new senator, however able he may be, has no chance," said Mr. Martin's friend, "but if he's a thousand years old he can get the best committee job."

"That reminds me," said the South Dakota member, "of what Seth Bullock remarked to me when I took him over to the senate one time. After looking them over, Seth said: 'Gee, Martin! That looks like a soldiers' home in there.'"

### CHINESE GIRL IN AMERICA

A snap-shot of Miss Wu Ting Fang, taken while she was autoing recently, shows the young lady dressed quite in the style of the American girl, and apparently the same acute interest in the pleasant sport that her girl friends in Washington might feel. After all, it will be the women who will finally break down all barriers and make the whole world more nearly akin.

# TALES OF GOTHAM AND OTHER CITIES

## Taft's Visit Stirs Up Bowery Tramps



**NEW YORK.**—Since President Taft visited the Bowery and addressed 300 of "the boys," more energy has been shown by the hoboes who haunt the resorts of the notorious thoroughfares than ever before in his history. There is not a man, woman, or child along the thoroughfare who will admit he or she was not at the president's side. Nearly 2,000 white collars sent by a Brooklyn laundry the next day aided the men of the Bowery to show they appreciated the visit.

After the free distribution of laundry at the mission the men gazed at one another and waited for the next miracle.

"The men are just dazed, and that is the only term that expresses it," said J. T. Hunt, who has charge of the labor bureau of the mission. "They cannot realize the president of this country really came down here to talk with them."

As he was speaking a mild mannered six foot two of humanity, with a two days' stubble beard, came up to the desk and made an attempt at a bow.

"What is it, Jake?" asked Mr. Hunt. "Say, boss, it's this way," replied Jake. "I'm just going out to get a job if I have to take it off somebody. If the president comes down here to talk to us bums and tells us we got a chance, why, we're going to make good. He ought to know, hadn't he? Guess his word goes with me. If we are good enough for him to talk to I'm going to get busy!"

"That's the way it has been going all day," said Mr. Hunt. "I never saw men so deeply stirred. The visit of the president has put more ambition into them than they have ever before displayed. Just wait and I will show you."

Stepping before 50 or 60 men, all resplendent in new white collars, Mr. Hunt said to a man whose collar plainly was too tight and who was proud of his distress:

"Come here, Frank. Tell us just what you think and what the men are saying about the president's visit."

"We don't know what to say," said the man. "It's just knocked us clean out. The boys are clean crazy over it. Why, we never thought that the likes of the president cared nothing about us here."

"We're all Democrats, but here Mister Taft comes around and calls us boys and tells us we is as good as anybody. Say, the boys are going to go some now. Wish I could get one day's work and I'd get a necktie."

## Telephone Girl Scores Her Own Sex



**NEW YORK.**—Yes, I know they say that women have more patience than men, but that's just another of those "they say's," remarked a telephone girl on day duty at one of the uptown exchanges in an expansive half hour. "If women are more patient than men they certainly don't show it when they use the telephone."

"When some women give the number they want they expect to get their party instant, or quicker, and if they don't they immediately become catty about it."

"What is the matter, anyhow?" a woman asked me over her wire just about eight seconds after she'd given me the number she wanted. "Why don't you give me my party?"

"I was doing the best I could to get her the number she asked for, but the party didn't reply. I told her so. 'I don't believe anything of the sort!' she shouted into her phone."

## Affinity Trust at Missouri College



**ST. LOUIS.**—If you visit Columbia and see a man wearing a hunted look, dodging at the mere sight of a girl, don't put him down as a misanthrope, or a football hero trying to escape flattery, or a bashful professor. He may be only side-stepping his self-appointed affinity.

For the University of Missouri, leader in football and things intellectual, has an affinity club in good working order. It is composed of half a dozen young women who room at one of the popular boarding houses near the campus. Of course, the affinity idea itself is old and can't begin to compare with Uncle Joe Cannon as a space-getter in the newspapers. But the young women of the Affinity Club have added several brand-new wrinkles to the idea.

Each member of the club, as a requisite of membership, has selected

an affinity and has told his name to the other girls. The rules of the organization requires that she shall have had only the most distant speaking acquaintance with the Fortunate One—or the Victim, depending on the point of view. The choice is final; the rules prohibit changing affinities. Having made her choice, the young woman strives to obtain some marked recognition from her affinity. The penalty for failure is a "tubbing."

The open season for the affinities closed at Christmas. If before that time any member of the club did not succeed in having her affinity pay her some "special attention," she was to take a "tubbing" in the presence of the members who have "made good." And the water wasn't to be warm, either.

"Marked attention," as defined by the club, means an invitation to dance or to go to the theater or a request to call. A stroll on the campus wouldn't do.

One young woman appealed to the sister of the young man she had chosen. The sister told the affinity what a fine girl "So-and-So" was, and urged him to call on her. The brother remained obdurate.

## "Oh, You Kid!" Ditty Breaks Up Church



**CHICAGO.**—"Oh, you kid!" the stale ditty of the five-cent theaters and the vaudeville houses, was bashed into a sacred anthem in Geneva several nights ago with disastrous results to a prayer meeting at one of the churches.

Since then the pastor and the deacons have been searching for the irreverent member of the choir who annexed the phrase to the hymn with a lead pencil. With much indignation they asserted that he is a fit subject for conversion—of a muscular kind.

The pastor had preached a stirring little sermon and 10 to 12 of the laymen had given their testimony. From the sober looks of several young men and women on the back benches it looked as if converts were soon to be gathered in, when the spell and spirit of the meeting were broken by the words of the frivolous song.

The pastor had closed his exordium and had announced the solo. The young woman lifted her voice in song. She put so much fervor into the music itself that she followed the words blindly and sang the anthem exactly as it had been revised with pencil by a practical joker.

"I love my God," sang the soprano in swelling note. "I love my God," the singer repeated, putting on the crescendo for a climax. "I love my God, but, oh, you kid!"

The choir and congregation went into hysterics, the prospective converts gasped and then guffawed, and before order could be restored the shocked and scandalized pastor dismissed the meeting without waiting for the benediction.