

are formed into companies, with a head or principal leader, and other subordinate officers, and in organization and purposes resemble our volunteers. Their principal head is usually a well known brave, and when with the nation, traveling or hunting, they constitute the guard, scouts, &c. of the nation. They form the war parties, and often go to war upon their own hook, sometimes without the knowledge or consent of the chiefs. They are so numerous, and so well banded together, that the chiefs can do nothing with them.

In this case, about one third of them were mounted on horseback - the others were on foot - and the first intimation we had of their approach, was their shouts and yells, as they came over the plains, from the Choyure ^{tribe} village. They came as a war party; their horses were all painted in the most approved style - their manes and tails in various colors; and on the hips and shoulders, the rider had painted his "coos".

This "coos" is a history of the feats which the Indian has performed. Every scalp he may have taken, or enemy he has slain, is represented by a hand, or some other symbol, painted on his horse. Stealing horses is a great feat, and every horse that he has stolen is marked by an emblem somewhat resembling a horse's hoof.

All the Indians were painted in their war costume, and dressed in the best possible manner, armed, some with guns, some with lances, and others with bows and arrows. Their horsemen and footmen apparently mingled in a confused mass, but it could be seen there was order in all their movements. They would fire their guns, shoot their arrows, give a shout, make a charge, and then the horsemen from the centre would rush out around and through the footmen, indicating the manner of protecting their men when too closely pressed. These exhibitions of the wild and savage mode of warfare, are exciting beyond description, and when the

1. *Phragmites* (common reed) is a tall, grassy plant that grows in wetlands and along waterways. It is a native species and is often found in large, dense stands.