

though they were at first

Having observed some
supposed that gunpowder,
their bodies. One of these
to their hands, gave them
He was first flayed from
but this chemical essay,
failure. They have since
-arms, and when they are
made of them.

warlike tribe of Indians, in
duced by the Spaniards, but
resent day. They lead a
ent wars with their neigh-
uscular, robust and active.
skill in managing horses,
alry. They have harassed
those unwelcome intruders
t to the Aracanians, have
tered by the Castilian inva-
ounded by the Rio Grande
Abipones, who are divided
headed by a chief, whom
from the Spaniards. This
a of government or military
n after the arrival of the
ommon cause against the
often involved in desperate
rs have been greatly dimin-
well as by the measles and
s also checked by a barba-
among the women, of killing

ong the Abipones, except by
the bow and spear. The
edonian pike, and is a most
both ends, so that if one be
immediately turned against
they grease the points, that
they also possess a few mus-
n. They also use a weapon
eather, and fastened together
apidly, and dart at an object
edition is always preceded by

a drinking festival, in which copious draughts of mead are swal-
lowed; and the drunker they get, the more wisdom is supposed to
be in their councils. Whatever is determined upon in these bac-
chanalian orgies is always religiously executed after they become
sober. On their march, each man has three horses, riding one and
driving the others, so that he has always a fresh horse. When
they attack the Spaniards, they put their horses to a gallop and
rush upon them with all the speed they can exert; the attack is
made not in close ranks, but in a scattering manner and in various
parties, so that the enemy finds himself assailed in front, flank
and rear. They strike a single blow, and then leap back quickly,
to avoid a blow in return. They can turn their horses round in
circles with surprising swiftness, and hold the animal in perfect
command; they have all the expertness of a professed tumbler,
and practise every sort of gyration and evolution upon the horse's
back, sometimes hanging under his belly, and thus by continually
changing their position, avoid every shot that is aimed at them.

These savages are capable of enduring great fatigue. On their
marches, they pass the day and the night in the open air, and are
either parched with heat or drenched with rain for many days
together. They expose their bare heads to the burning sun; if
wide rivers or lakes are to be crossed, they need neither bridge
nor boat; when the water is no longer fordable, they leap from
their horses, strip off their clothes, and holding them above the
water, on the point of their spears, swim across, leading their
horses by the bridle. They use a prodigious number of trumpets,
horns and other uncouth instruments, which they sound on going
to battle; and these horrid clangors, with the terrific appearance
they give themselves by painting, strike great dismay into the
Spaniards.

The Jesuit Dobrizhoffer, who lived many years among these
Indians, thus speaks of the extreme dread in which they held their
neighbors. "How often have I seen the Spanish settlements
thrown into the greatest terror by a mere flying report that the
Abipones were coming. In an instant every man imagined a
troop of these ferocious savages, with blackened faces, mounted
on swift horses, rushing to the attack with horrid shouts and the
alarm of trumpets, brandishing an enormous spear in their right
hands, laden with bundles of arrows, breathing fire and slaughter,
and with their ferocious eyes threatening death and destruction!
You might see crowds of people running up and down, bewailing
their fate, while not an enemy was nigh. Not only women and
children, but men distinguished by military titles, took refuge
within the stone-walls of the churches, or skulked into hidden