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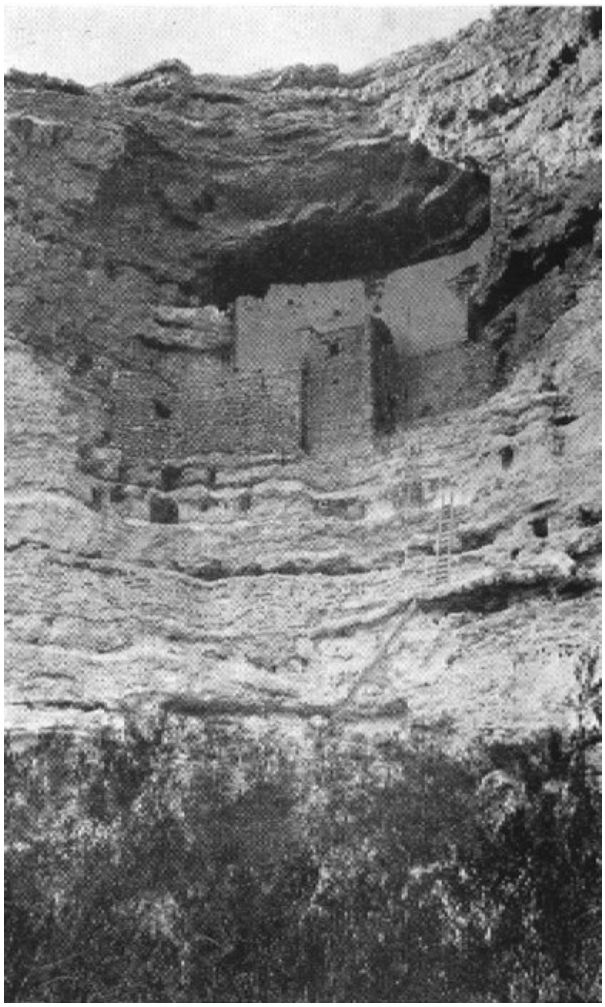

Montezuma's Castle, the ruined cliff dwelling on Beaver Creek between the Coconino and Prescott National Forests, Arizona

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THROUGH OUR UNKNOWN SOUTHWEST

THE WONDERLAND OF THE UNITED STATES—LITTLE KNOWN AND UNAPPRECIATED—THE HOME OF THE CLIFF DWELLER AND THE HOPI, THE FOREST RANGER AND THE NAVAJO,—THE

LURE OF THE PAINTED DESERT

BY

AGNES C. LAUT

Author of *The Conquest of the Great Northwest*, *Lords of the North* and *Freebooters of the Wilderness*

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THROUGH OUR UNKNOWN SOUTHWEST

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INTRODUCTION

I am sitting in the doorway of a house of the Stone Age—neolithic, paleolithic, troglodytic man—with a roofless city of the dead lying in the valley below and the eagles circling with lonely cries along the yawning caverns of the cliff face above.

My feet rest on the topmost step of a stone stairway worn hip-deep in the rocks of eternity by the moccasined tread of foot-prints that run back, not to A. D. or B. C., but to those post-glacial æons when the advances and recessions of an ice invasion from the Poles left seas where now are

deserts; when giant sequoia forests were swept under the sands by the flood waters, and the mammoth and the dinosaur and the brontosaur wallowed where now nestle farm hamlets.

Such a tiny doorway it is that Stone Man must have been obliged to welcome a friend by hauling him shoulders foremost through the entrance, or able to speed the parting foe down the steep stairway with a rock on his head. Inside, behind me, is a little dome-roofed room, with calcimined walls, and squared stone meal bins, and a little, high fireplace, and stone pillows, and a homemade flour mill in the form of a flat *metate* stone with a round grinding stone on top. From [Pg ii] the shape and from the remnants of pottery shards lying about, I suspect one of these hewn alcoves in the inner wall was the place for the family water jar.

On each side the room are tiny doorways leading by stone steps to apartments below and to rooms above; so that you may begin with a valley floor room which you enter by ladder and go halfway to the top of a 500-foot cliff by a series of interior ladders and stone stairs. Flush with the floor at the sides of these doors are the most curious little round "cat holes" through the walls —"cat holes" for a people who are not supposed to have had any cats; yet the little round holes run from room to room through all the walls.

On some of the house fronts are painted emblems of the sun. Inside, round the wall of the other houses, runs a drawing of the plumed serpent—"Awanya," guardian of the waters—whose presence always presaged good cheer of water in a desert land growing drier and drier as the Glacial Age receded, and whose serpent emblem in the sky you could see across the heavens of a starry night in the Milky Way. Lying about in other cave houses are stone "bells" to call to meals or prayers, and cobs of corn, and prayer plumes—owl or turkey feathers. Don't smile and be superior! It isn't a hundred years ago since the common Christian idea of angels was feathers and wings; and these Stone People lived—well, when *did* they live? Not later than 400 A. D., for that was when the period of desiccation, or drought from the recession of the glacial waters, began.

Ruins of South House, one of the great communal dwellings of Frijoles Cañon, after excavation

"The existence of man in the Glacial Period is established," says Winchell, the great western [Pg iii] geologist, "that implies man during the period when flourished the large mammals now extinct. In short, there is as much evidence pointing to America as to Asia as the primal birthplace of man." Now the ice invasion began hundreds of thousands of years ago; and the last great recession is set at about 10,000 years; and the implements of Stone Age man are found contemporaneous with the glacial silt.

There is not another section in the whole world where you can wander for days amid the houses and dead cities of the Stone Age; *where you can literally shake hands with the Stone Age*.

Shake hands? Isn't that putting it a little strong? It doesn't sound like the dry-as-dust dead collections of museums. It may be putting it strong; but it is also meticulously and simply—true. A few doors away from the cave-house where I sit, lies a little body—no, not a mummy! We are not in Egypt. We are in America; but we often have to go to Egypt to find out the wonders of America. Lies a little body, that of a girl of about eighteen or twenty, swathed in otter and beaver skins with leg bindings of woven yucca fiber something like modern burlap. Woven cloth from 20,000 to 10,000 B. C.? Yes! That is pretty strong, isn't it? 'Tis when you come to consider it; our European ancestors at that date were skipping through Hyrcanian Forests clothed mostly in the [Pg iv] costume Nature gave them; Herbert Spencer would have you believe, skipping round with simian gibbering monkey jaws and claws, clothed mostly in apes' hair. Yet there lies the little lady in the cave to my left, the long black hair shiny and lustrous yet, the skin dry as parchment still holding the finger bones together, head and face that of a human, not an ape, all well preserved owing to the gypsum dust and the high, dry climate in which the corpse has lain.

In my collection, I have bits of cloth taken from a body which archæologists date not later than 400 A. D. nor earlier than 8,000 B. C., and bits of corn and pottery from water jars, placed with

the dead to sustain them on the long journey to the Other World. For the last year, I have worn a pin of obsidian which you would swear was an Egyptian scarab if I had not myself obtained it from the ossuaries of the Cave Dwellers in the American Southwest.

Come out now to the cave door and look up and down the cañon again! To right and to left for a height of 500 feet the face of the yellow *tufa* precipice is literally pitted with the windows and doors of the Stone Age City. In the bottom of the valley is a roofless dwelling of hundreds of rooms—"the cormorant and the bittern possess it; the owl also and the raven dwell in it; stones of emptiness; thorns in the palaces; nettles and brambles in the fortresses; and the screech owl shall rest there."

Listen! You can almost hear it—the fulfillment of Isaiah's old prophecy—the lonely "hoo-hoo-hoo" [Pg v]
of the turtle dove; and the lonelier cry of the eagle circling, circling round the empty doors of the upper cliffs! Then, the sharp, short bark-bark-bark of a fox off up the cañon in the yellow pine forests towards the white snows of the Jemez Mountains; and one night from my camp in this cañon, I heard the coyotes howling from the empty caves.

Below are the roofless cities of the dead Stone Age, and the dancing floors, and the irrigation canals used to this day, and the stream leaping down from the Jemez snows, which must once have been a rushing torrent where wallowed such monsters as are known to-day only in modern men's dreams.

Far off to the right, where the worshipers must always have been in sight of the snowy mountains and have risen to the rising of the desert sun over cliffs of ocher and sands of orange and a sky of turquoise blue, you can see the great Kiva or Ceremonial Temple of the Stone Age people who dwelt in this cañon. It is a great concave hollowed out of the white pumice rock almost at the cliff top above the tops of the highest yellow pines. A darksome, cavernous thing it looks from this distance, but a wonderful mid-air temple for worshipers when you climb the four or five hundred ladder steps that lead to it up the face of a white precipice sheer as a wall. What sights the priests must have witnessed! I can understand their worshiping the rising sun as the first rays came over the cañon walls in a shield of fire. Alcoves for meal, for incense, for water urns, mark [Pg vi]
the inner walls of this chamber, too. Where the ladder projects up through the floor, you can descend to the hollowed underground chamber where the priests and the council met; a darksome, eerie place with *sipapu*—the holes in the floor—for the mystic Earth Spirit to come out for the guidance of his people. Don't smile at that idea of an Earth Spirit! What do we tell a man, who has driven his nerves too hard in town?—To go back to the Soil and let Dame Nature pour her invigorating energies into him! That's what the Earth Spirit, the Great Earth Magician, signified to these people.

Curious how geology and archæology agree on the rise and evanishment of these people. Geology says that as the ice invasion advanced, the northern races were forced south and south till the Stone Age folk living in the roofless City of the Dead on the floor of the valley were forced to take refuge from them in the caves hollowed out of the cliff. That was any time between 20,000 B.C. and 10,000 B.C. Archæology says as the Utes and the Navajo and the Apache—Asthapascan stock —came ramping from the North, the Stone Men were driven from the valleys to the inaccessible cliffs and mesa table lands. "It was not until the nomadic robbers forced the pueblos that the Southwestern people adopted the crowded form of existence," says Archæology. Sounds like an explanation of our modern skyscrapers and the real estate robbers of modern life, doesn't it? [Pg vii]

Then, as the Glacial Age had receded and drought began, the cave men were forced to come down from their cliff dwellings and to disperse. Here, too, is another story. There may have been a great cataclysm; for thousands of tons of rock have fallen from the face of the cañon, and the rooms remaining are plainly only back rooms. The Hopi and Moki and Zuñi have traditions of the "Heavens raining fire;" and good cobs of corn have been found embedded in what may be solid lava, or fused adobe. Pajarito Plateau, the Spanish called this region—"place of the bird people," who lived in the cliffs like swallows; but thousands of years before the Spanish came, the Stone Age had passed and the cliff people dispersed.

What in the world am I talking about, and where? That's the curious part of it. If it were in Egypt, or Petræ, or amid the sand-covered columns of Phrygia, every tourist company in the world would be arranging excursions to it; and there would be special chapters devoted to it in the supplementary readers of the schools; and you wouldn't be—well, just *au fait*, if you didn't know; but do you know this wonder-world is in America, your own land? It is less than forty miles from the regular line of continental travel; $6 a single rig out, $14 a double; $1 to $2 a day at the ranch house where you can board as you explore the amazing ancient civilization of our own American Southwest. This particular ruin is in the Frijoles Cañon; but there are hundreds, [Pg viii]
thousands, of such ruins all through the Southwest in Colorado and Utah and Arizona and New Mexico. By joining the Archæological Society of Santa Fe, you can go out to these ruins even more inexpensively than I have indicated.

A general passenger agent for one of the largest transcontinental lines in the Northwest told me that for 1911, where 60,000 people bought round-trip tickets to our own West and back—pleasure, not business—over 120,000 people bought tickets for Europe and Egypt. I don't know whether his figures covered only the Northwest of which he was talking, or the whole continental traffic association; but the amazing fact to me was the proportion he gave—*one* to our own wonders, to *two* for abroad. I talked to another agent about the same thing. He thought that the average tourist who took a trip to our own Pacific Coast spent from $300 to $500, while the average tourist who went to Europe spent from $1,000 to $2,000. Many European tourists went at $500; but so many others spent from $3,000 to $5,000, that he thought the average spendings of the tourist to Europe should be put at $1,000 to $2,000. That puts your proportion at a still more disastrous discrepancy—thirty million dollars *versus* one hundred and twenty million. *The Statist* of London places the total spent by Americans in Europe at nearer three hundred million dollars than one hundred and twenty million.

Of the 3,700,000 people who went to the Seattle Exposition, it is a pretty safe guess that not [Pg ix]
100,000 Easterners out of the lot saw the real West. What did they see? They saw the Exposition, which was like any other exposition; and they saw Western cities, that are imitations of Eastern cities; and they patronized Western hotel rotundas and dining places, where you pay forty cents for Grand Junction and Hood River fruit, which you can buy in the East for twenty-five; and they rode in the rubberneck cars with the gramophone man who tells Western variations of the same old Eastern lies; and they came back thoroughly convinced that there was no more real West.

And so 120,000 Americans yearly go to Europe spending a good average of $1,000 apiece. We scour the Alps for peaks that everybody has climbed, though there are half a dozen Switzerlands from Glacier Park in the north to Cloudcroft, New Mexico, with hundreds of peaks which no one has climbed and which you can visit for not more than fifty dollars for a four weeks' holiday. We tramp through Spain for the picturesque, quite oblivious of the fact that the most picturesque bit of Spain, about 10,000 years older than Old Spain, is set right down in the heart of America with turquoise mines from which the finest jewel in King Alphonso's crown was taken. We rent a "shootin' box in Scotland" at a trifling cost of from $1,200 to $12,000 a season, because game is "so scarce out West, y' know." Yet I can direct you to game haunts out West where you can shoot a grizzly a week at no cost at all but your own courage; and bag a dozen wild turkeys before [Pg x]
breakfast; and catch mountain trout faster than you can string them and pose for a photograph; and you won't need to lie about the ones that got away, nor boast of what it cost you; for you can do it at two dollars a day from start to finish. It would take you a good half-day to count up the number of tourist and steamboat agencies that organize sightseeing excursions to go and apostrophize the Sphinx, and bark your shins and swear and sweat on the Pyramids. Yet it would be a safe wager that outside official scientific circles, there is not a single organization in America that knows we have a Sphinx of our own in the West that antedates Egyptian archæology by 8,000 years, and stone lions older than the columns of Phrygia, and kings' palaces of 700 and 1,000 rooms. Am I yarning; or dreaming? Neither! Perfectly sober and sane and wide awake and just in from spending two summers in those same rooms and shaking hands with a corpse of the Stone Age.

A young Westerner, who had graduated from Harvard, set out on the around-the-world tour that was to give him that world-weary feeling that was to make him live happy ever afterwards. In Nagasaki, a little brown Jappy-chappie of great learning, who was a prince or something or other of that sort, which made it possible for Harvard to know him, asked in choppy English about "the gweat, the vely gweat anti-kwatties in y'or Souf Wes'." When young Harvard got it through his head that "anti-kwatties" meant antiquities, he rolled a cigarette and went out for a smoke; but it [Pg xi]
came back at him again in Egypt. They were standing below the chin of an ancient lady commonly called the Sphinx, when an English traveler turned to young America. "I say," he said; "Yankeedom beats us all out on this old dame, doesn't it? You've a carved colossus in your own West a few trifling billion years older than this, haven't you?" Young America, with a weakness somewhere in his middle, "guessed they had." Then looking over the old jewels taken from the ruins of Pompeii, he was asked, "how America was progressing excavating her ruins;" and he heard for the first time in his life that the finest crown jewel in Europe came from a mine just across the line from his own home State. The experience gave him something to think about.

The incident is typical of many of the 120,000 people who yearly trek to Europe for holiday. *We have to go abroad to learn how to come home.* We go to Europe and find how little we have seen of America. It is when you are motoring in France that you first find out there is a great "Camino Real" almost 1,000 miles long, much of it above cloud line, from Wyoming to Texas. It's some European who has "a shootin' box" out in the Pecos, who tells you about it. Of course, if you like spending $12,000 a year for "a shootin' box" in Scotland, that is another matter. There are various ways of having a good time; but when I go fishing I like to catch trout and not be a sucker. [Pg xii]

Spite of the legend, "Why go to Europe? See America first," we keep on going to Europe to see America. Why? For a lot of reasons; and most of them lies.

Some fool once said, and we keep on repeating it—that it costs more to go West than it does to go to Europe. So it does, if "going West" means staying at hotels that are weak imitations of the Waldorf and the Plaza, where you never get a sniff of the real West, nor meet anyone but traveling Easterners like yourself; but if you strike away from the beaten trail, you can see the real West, and have your holiday, and go drunk on the picturesque, and break your neck mountain climbing, and catch more trout than you can lie about, and kill as much bear meat as

you have courage, at less expense than it will cost you to stay at home. From Chicago to the backbone of the Rockies will cost you something over $33 or $50 one way. You can't go halfway across the Atlantic for that, unless you go steerage; and if you go West "colonist," you can go to the backbone of the Rockies for a good deal less than thirty dollars. Now comes the crucial point! If you land in a Western city and stay at a good hotel, expenses are going to out-sprint Europe; and you will not see any more of the West than if you had gone to Europe. Choose your holiday stamping ground, Sundance Cañon, South Dakota; or the New Glacier Park; or the Pecos, New Mexico; or the White Mountains, Arizona; or the Indian Pueblo towns of the Southwest; or the White Rock Cañon of the Rio Grande, where the most important of the wonderful prehistoric remains exist; and you can stay at a ranch house where food and cleanliness will be quite as good as at the Waldorf for from $1.50 to $2 a day.

In the bright Arizona sunshine before their little square adobe houses Indian women are fashioning pottery into curious shapes

You can usually find the name of the ranch house by inquiries from the station agent where you get off. The ranch house may be of adobe and look squatty; but remember that adobe squattiness is the best protection against wind and heat; and inside, you will find hot and cold water, bathroom, and meals equal to the best hotels in Chicago and New York. In New York or Chicago, that amount would afford you mighty chancy fare and only a back hall room. I know of hundreds of such ranch houses all along the backbone of the Rockies. [Pg xiii]

Next comes the matter of horses and rigs. If you stay at one of the big hotels, you will pay from $5 to $10 a day for a rig, and $20 for a motor. Out at the ranch house, you can rent team, driver and double rig at $4; or a pony at $20 for a month, or buy a burro outright for from $5 to $10. Even if the burro takes a prize for ugliness, remember he also takes a prize for sure-footedness; and he doesn't take a prize for bucking, which the broncho often does. Figure up now the cost of a month's holiday; and I repeat—it will cost you less than staying at home. But if this total is still too high, there are ways of reducing the expense by half. Take your own tent; and $20 will not exceed "the grub box" contents for a month. Or all through the Rockies are deserted shacks, mining and lumber shanties, herders' cabins, horse camps. You can quarter yourself in one of these for nothing; and the sole expense will be "the grub box;" and my tin trunk for camp cooking has never cost me more than $50 a month for four people. Or best and most novel experience of all—along White Rock Cañon of the Rio Grande, in Mesa Verde Park, Colorado, are thousands of plastered caves, the homes of the cliff dwellers. You reach them by ladder. There is no danger of wolves, or damp. Camp in one of them for nothing wherever the water in the brook below happens to be good. Hundreds of archæologists, who come from Egypt, Greece, Italy, England, to visit these remains, spend their summer holiday this way. Why can't you? Or if you are not a good adventurer into the Unknown alone, then join the summer school that goes out to the caves from Santa Fe every summer. [Pg xiv]

Is it safe? That question to a Westerner is a joke. Safer, much safer, than in any Eastern city! I have slept in ranch cabins of the White Mountains, in caves of the cliff dwellers on the Rio Grande, in tents on the Saskatchewan; and I never locked a door, because there wasn't any lock; and I never attempted to bar the door, because there wasn't any need. Can you say as much of New York, or Chicago, or Washington? The question may be asked—Will this kind of a holiday not be hot in summer? You remember, perhaps, crossing the backbone of the Rockies some mid-summer, when nearly everything inside the pullman car melted into a jelly. Yes, it will be hot if you follow the beaten trail; for a railroad naturally follows the lowest grade. But if you go back to the ranch houses of the Upper Mesas and of foothills and cañons, you will be from 7,000 to 10,000 feet above sea level, and will need winter wraps each night, and may have to break the ice for your washing water in the morning—I did. [Pg xv]

Another reason why so many Americans do not see their own country is that while one species of fool has scared away holiday seekers by tales of extortionate cost, another sort of fool wisely promulgates the lie—a lie worn shiny from repetition—that "game is scarce in the West." "No more big game"—and your romancer leans back with wise-acre air to let that lie sink in, while he

clears his throat to utter another—"trout streams all fished out." In the days when we had to swallow logic undigested in college, we had it impressed upon us that one single specific fact was sufficient to refute the broadest generality that was ever put in the form of a syllogism. Well, then,—for a few facts as to that "no-game" lie!

In one hour you can catch in the streams of the Pecos, or the Jemez, or the White Mountains, or the Upper Sierras of California, or the New Glacier Park of the North, more trout than you can put on a string. If you want confirmation of that fact, write to the Texas Club that has its hunting lodge opposite Grass Mountain, and they will send you the picture of one hour's trout catch. By measurement, the string is longer than the height of a water barrel; and these were fish that didn't get away. [Pg xvi]

Last year, twenty-six bear were shot in the Sangre de Christo Cañon in three months.

Two years ago, mountain lions became so thick in the Pecos that hunters were hired to hunt them for bounty; and the first thing that happened to one of the hunters, his horse was throttled and killed by a mountain lion, though his little spaniel got revenge by treeing four lions a few weeks later, and the hunter got three out of the four.

Near Glorieta, you can meet a rancher who last year earned $3,000 of hunting bounty scrip, if he could have got it cashed.

In the White Mountains last year, two of the largest bucks ever known in the Rockies were trailed by every hunter of note and trailed in vain. Later, one was shot out of season by stalking behind a burro; but the other still haunts the cañons defiant of repeater.

From the caves of the cliff-dwellers along the Rio Grande, you can nightly hear the coyote and the fox bark as they barked those dim stone ages when the people of these silent caves hunted here.

The week I reached Frijoles Cañon, a flock of wild turkeys strutted in front of Judge Abbott's Ranch House not a gun length from the front door.

The morning I was driving over the Pajarito Mesa home from the cliff caves, we disturbed a herd of deer.

Does all this sound as if game was depleted? It is if you follow the beaten trail, just as depleted as it would be if you tried to hunt wild turkey down Broadway, New York; but it isn't if you know where to look for it. Believe me—though it may sound a truism—you won't find big game in hotel rotundas or pullman cars. [Pg xvii]

Or, if your quest is not hunting but studying game, what better ground for observation than the Wichita in Oklahoma? Here a National Forest has been constituted a perpetual breeding ground for native American game. Over twenty buffalo taken from original stock in the New York Park are there—back on their native heath; and there are two or three very touching things about those old furry fellows taken back to their own haunts. In New York's parks, they were gradually degenerating—getting heavier, less active, ceasing to shed their fur annually. When they were set loose in the Wichita Game Resort, they looked up, sniffed the air from all four quarters, and rambled off to their ancestral pasture grounds perfectly at home. When the Comanches heard that the buffalo had come back to the Wichita, the whole tribe moved in a body and camped outside the fourteen-foot fence. There they stayed for the better part of a week, the buffalo and the Comanches, silently viewing each other. It would have been worth Mr. Nature Faker's while to have known their mutual thoughts.

There is another lie about not holidaying West, which is not only persistent but cruel. When the worker is a health as well as rest seeker, he is told that the West does not want him, especially if he is what is locally called "a lung-er;" and there is just enough truth in that lie to make it persistent. It is true the consumptive is not wanted on the beaten trail, in the big general hotel, in the train where other people want draughts of air, but he can't stand them. On the beaten trail, he is a danger both to himself and to others—especially if he hasn't money and may fall a burden on the community; but that is only a half truth which is usually a lie. Let the other half be known! All through the West along the backbone of the Rockies, from Montana to Texas, especially in New Mexico and Arizona, are the tent cities—communities of health seekers living in half-boarded tents, or mosquito-wired cabins that can be steam-heated at night. There are literally thousands of such tent dwellers all through the Rocky Mountain States; and the cost is as you make it. If you go to a sanitarium tent city, you will have to pay all the way from $15 to $25 a week for house, board, nurse, medicine and doctor's attendance; but if you buy your own portable house and do your own catering, the cost will be just what you make it. A house will cost $50 to $100; a tent, $10 to $20. [Pg xviii]

Still another baneful lie that keeps the American from seeing America first is that our New World West lacks "human interest;" lacks "the picturesqueness of the shepherds in Spain and Switzerland," for instance; lacks "the historic marvels" of church and monument and relic. [Pg xix]

If there be any degree in lies, this is the pastmaster of them all. Will you tell me why "the human interest" of a legend about Dick Turpin's head festering on Newgate, England, is any greater to Americans than the truth about Black Jack of Texas, whose head flew off into the crowd, when the support was removed from his feet and he was hanged down in New Mexico? Dick Turpin was a highwayman. Black Jack was a lone-hand train robber. Will you tell me why the outlaws of the

borderland between England and Scotland are more interesting to Americans than the bands of outlaws who used to frequent Horse-Thief Cañon up the Pecos, or took possession of the cliff-dwellers' caves on the Rio Grande after the Civil War? Why are Copt shepherds in Egypt more picturesque than descendants of the Aztecs herding countless moving masses of sheep on our own sky-line, lilac-misty, Upper Mesas? What is the difference in quality value between a donkey in Spain trotting to market and a burro in New Mexico standing on the plaza before a palace where have ruled eighty different governors, three different nations? Why are skeletons and relics taken from Pompeii more interesting than the dust-crumbled bodies lying in the caves of our own cliffs wrapped in cloth woven long before Europe knew the art of weaving? Why is the Sphinx more wonderful to us than the Great Stone Face carved on the rock of a cliff near Cochiti, New Mexico, carved before the Pharaohs reigned; or the stone lions of an Assyrian ruin more marvelous than the two great stone lions carved at Cochiti? When you find a church in England [Pg xx] dating before William the Conqueror, you may smack your lips with the zest of the antiquarian; but you'll find in New Mexico not far from Santa Fe ruins of a church—at the Gates of the Waters, Guardian of the Waters—that was a pagan ruin a thousand years old when the Spaniards came to America.

You may hunt up plaster cast reproduction of reptilian monsters in the Kensington Museum, London; but you will find the real skeleton of the gentleman himself, with pictures of the three-toed horse on the rocks, and legends of a Plumed Serpent not unlike the wary fellow who interviewed Eve—all right here in your own American Southwest, with the difference in favor of the American legend; for the Satanic wriggler, who walked into the Garden on his tail, went to deceive; whereas the Plumed Serpent of New Mexican legend came to guard the pools and the springs.

To be sure, there are 400,000 miles of motor roads in Europe; but isn't it worth while to climb a few mountains in America by motor? That is what you can do following the "Camino Real" from Texas to Wyoming, or crossing the mountains of New Mexico by the great Scenic Highway built for motors to the very snow tops.

An Indian girl of Isleta, New Mexico, carrying a water jar.

And if you take to studying native Indian life, at Laguna, at Acoma, at Taos, you will find yourself [Pg xxi] in such a maze of the picturesque and the legendary as you cannot find anywhere else in the wide world but America. This is a story by itself—a beautiful one, also in spots a funny one. For instance, one summer a woman of international fame from Oxford, England, took quarters in one of the pueblos at Santa Clara or thereabout to study Indian arts and crafts. One night in her adobe quarters, her orderly British soul was aroused by such a dire din of shouting, fighting, screams, as she thought could come only from some inferno of crime. She sprang out of bed and dashed across the *placito* in her nightdress to her guardian protector in the person of an old Indian. He ran through the dark to see what the matter was, while she stood in hiding of the wall

shadows curdling in horror of "bluggy deeds."

"Pah," said the old fellow coming back, "dat not'ing! Young man, he git marry an' dey—how you call?—chiv-ar-ee-heem."

"Then, what are you laughing at?" demanded the irate British dame; for she could not help seeing that the old fellow was literally doubling in suffocated laughter. "How dare you laugh?"

"I laugh, Mees," he sputtered out, "'cos you scare me so bad when you call, I jomp in my coat mistake for my pants. Dat's all."

It would pay to cultivate a little home sentiment, wouldn't it? It would pay to let a little daylight in on the abysmal blank regarding the wonder-land of our own world—wouldn't it?

I don't know whether the affectation recognized as "the foreign pose" comes foremost or hindermost as a cause of this neglect of the wonders of our own land. When you go to our own [Pg xxii] Western Wonder Land, you can't say you have been abroad with a great long capital A; and it is wonderful what a paying thing that pose is in a harvest of "fooleries." There is a well-known case of an American author, who tried his hand on delineating American life and was severely let alone because he was too—not abroad, but broad. He dropped his own name, assumed the pose of a grand dame familiar with the inner penetralia and sacred secrets of the exclusive circle of the American Colony in Paris. His books have "gone off" like hot cross buns. Before, they were broad. Now they are abroad; and, like the tourist tickets, they are selling two to one.

The stock excuse among foreign poseurs for the two to one preference of Europe to America is that "America lacks the picturesque, the human, the historic." A straightforward falsehood you can always answer; but an implied falsehood masking behind knowledge, which is a vacuum, and superiority, which is pretense—is another matter. Let us take the dire and damning deficiencies of America!

"America lacks the picturesque." Did the ancient dwelling of the Stone Age sound to you as if it lacked the picturesque? I could direct you to fifty such picturesque spots in the Southwest alone.

There is the Enchanted Mesa, with its sister mesa of Acoma—islands of rock, sheer precipice of yellow *tufa* for hundreds of feet—amid the Desert sand, light shimmering like a stage curtain, herds exaggerated in huge, grotesque mirage against the lavender light, and Indian riders, [Pg xxiii] brightly clad and picturesque as Arabs, scouring across the plain; all this reachable two hours' drive from a main railroad. Or there are the three Mesas of the Painted Desert, cities on the flat mountain table lands, ancient as the Aztecs, overlooking such a roll of mountain and desert and forest as the Tempter could not show beneath the temple. Or, there is the White House, an ancient ruin of Cañon de Chelly (Shay) forty miles from Fort Defiance, where you could put a dozen White Houses of Washington.

"But," your European protagonist declares, "I don't mean the ancient and the primeval. I mean the modern peopled hamlet type." All right! What is the matter with Santa Fe? Draw a circle from New Orleans up through Santa Fe to Santa Barbara, California; and you'll find old missions galore, countless old towns of which Santa Fe, with its twin-towered Cathedral and old San Miguel Church, is a type. Santa Fe, itself, is a bit of old Spain set down in mosaic in hustling, bustling America. There is the Governor's Palace, where three different nations have held sway; and there is the Plaza, where the burros trot to market under loads of wood picturesque as any donkeys in Spain; and there is the old Exchange Hotel, the end of the Santa Fe Trail, where Stephen B. Elkins came in cowhide boots forty years ago to carve out a colossal fortune. At one end of a main thoroughfare, you can see the site of the old Spanish Gareta prison, in the walls of [Pg xxiv] which bullets were found embedded in human hair. And if you want a little Versailles of retreat away from the braying of the burros and of the humans, away from the dust of street and of small talk—then of a May day when the orchard is in bloom and the air alive with the song of the bees, go to the old French garden of the late Bishop Lamy! Through the cobwebby spring foliage shines the gleam of the snowy peaks; and the air is full of dreams precious as the apple bloom.

What was the other charge? Oh, yes—"lacks the human," whatever that means. Why are legends of border forays in Scotland more thrilling than true tales of robber dens in Horse-Thief Cañon and the cliff houses of Flagstaff and the Frijoles, where renegades of the Civil War used to hide? Why are the multi-colored peasant workers of Brittany or Belgium more interesting than the gayly dressed peons of New Mexico, or the Navajo boys scouring up and down the sandy arroyos? Why is the story of Jack Cade any more "human" than the tragedy of the three Vermont boys, Stott, Scott and Wilson, hanged in the Tonto Basin for horses they did not steal in order that their assassins might pocket $5,000 of money which the young fellows had brought out from the East with them? Why are not all these personages of good repute and ill repute as famous to American folklore hunters as Robin Hood or any other legendary heroes of the Old World?

Driven to the last redoubt, your protagonist for Europe against America usually assumes the air of superiority supposed to be the peculiar prerogative of the gods of Olympus, and declares: "Yes [Pg xxv] —but America lacks the history and the art of the old associations in Europe."

"Lacks history?" Go back fifty years in our own West to the transition period from fur trade to frontier, from Spanish don living in idle baronial splendor to smart Yankeedom invading the old exclusive domain in cowhide boots! Go back another fifty years! You are in the midst of American feudalism—fur lords of the wilderness ruling domains the area of a Europe, Spanish Conquistadores marching through the desert heat clad *cap-à-pie* in burnished mail; Governor Prince's collection at Santa Fe has one of those cuirasses dug up in New Mexico with the bullet hole through the metal right above the heart. Another fifty years back—and the century war for a continent with the Indians, the downing of the old civilization of America before a sort of Christian barbarism, the sword in one hand, the cross in the other, and behind the mounted troops the big iron chest for the gold—iron chests that you can see to this day among the Spanish families of the Southwest, rusted from burial in time of war, but strong yet as in the centuries when guarded by secret springs such iron treasure boxes hid all the gold and the silver of some noble family in New Spain. When you go back beyond the days of New Spain, you are amid a civilization as ancient as Egypt's—an era that can be compared only to the myth age of the Norse Gods, when Loki, Spirit of Evil, smiled with contempt at man's poor efforts to invade the Realm of [Pg xxvi] Death. It was the age when puny men of the Stone Era were alternately chasing south before the glacial drift and returning north as the waters receded, when huge leviathans wallowed amid sequoia groves; and if man had domesticated creatures, they were three-toed horses, and wolf dogs, and wild turkeys and quail. Curiously enough, remnants of some sort of domesticated creatures are found in the cave men's houses, centuries before the coming of horses and cattle and sheep with the Spanish. The trouble is, up to the present when men like Curtis and dear old Bandelier and Burbank, and the whole staff of the Smithsonian and the School of Santa Fe have gone to work, we have not taken the trouble in America to gather up the prehistoric legends and ferret out their race meaning. We have fallen too completely in the last century under the blight of evolution, which presupposes that these cave races were a sort of simian-jawed, long-clawed, gibbering apes spending half their time up trees throwing stones on the heads of the other apes below, and the other half of their time either licking their chops in gore or dragging wives back to caves by the hair of their heads. You remember Kipling's poem on the neolithic man, and Jack London's fiction. Now as a matter of fact—which is a bit disturbing to all these accretions of pseudo-science—the remains of these cave people don't show them to have been simian-jawed apes at all. They had woven clothing when our ancestors were a bit liable to Anthony Comstock's [Pg xxvii] activities as to clothes. They had decorated pottery ware of which we have lost the pigments, and a knowledge of irrigation which would be unique in apes, and a technique in basketry that I never knew a monkey to possess. Some day, when the evolutionary piffle has passed, we'll study out these prehistoric legends and their racial meaning.

As to the "lack of art," pray wake up! The late Edwin Abbey declared that the most hopeful school of art in America was the School of the Southwest. Look up Lotave's mural drawings at Santa Fe, or Lungrun's wonderful desert pictures, or Moran's or Gamble's, or Harmon's Spanish scenes—then talk about "lack of *decadent* art" if you will, but don't talk about "lack of art." Why, in the ranch house of Lorenzo Hubbell, the great Navajo trader, you'll find a $200,000 collection of purely Southwestern pictures.

How many of the two to one protagonists of Europe know, for instance, that scenic motor highways already run to the very edge of the grandest scenery in America? You can motor now from Texas to Wyoming, up above 10,000 feet much of it, above cloud line, above timber line, over the leagueless sage-bush plains, in and out of the great yellow pine forests, past Cloudcroft—the sky-top resort—up through the orchard lands of the Rio Grande, across the very backbone of the Rockies over the Santa Fe Ranges and on north up to the Garden of the Gods and all the wonders of Colorado's National Park. With the exception of a very bad break in the White [Pg xxviii] Mountains of Arizona, you can motor West past the southern edge of the Painted Desert, past Laguna and Acoma and the Enchanted Mesa, past the Petrified Forests, where a deluge of sand and flood has buried a sequoia forest and transmuted the beauty of the tree's life into the beauty of the jewel, into bars and beams and spars of agate and onyx the color of the rainbow. Then, before going on down to California, you can swerve into Grand Cañon, where the gods of fire and flood have jumbled and tumbled the peaks of Olympus dyed blood-red into a swimming cañon of lavender and primrose light deep as the highest peaks of the Rockies.

In California, you can either motor up along the coast past all the old Spanish Missions, or go in behind the first ridge of mountains and motor along the edge of the Big Trees and the Yosemite and Tahoe. You can't take your car into these Parks; first, because you are not allowed; second, because the risks of the road do not permit it even if you were allowed.

Is it safe? As I said before, that question is a joke. I can answer only from a life-time knowledge of pretty nearly all parts of the West—and that from a woman's point of view. Believe me the days of "shootin' irons" and "faintin' females" are forever past, except in the undergraduate's salad dreams. You are safer in the cave dwellings of the Stone Age, in the Pajarito Plateau of the cliff "bird people," in the Painted Desert, among the Indians of the Navajo Reserve than you are in [Pg xxix] Broadway, New York, or Piccadilly, London. I would trust a young friend of mine—boy or girl—quicker to the Western environment than the Eastern. You can get into mischief in the West if

you hunt for it; but the mischief doesn't come out and hunt you. Also, danger spots are self-evident on precipices of the Western wilds. They aren't self-evident; danger spots are glazed and paved to the edges over which youth goes to smash in the East.

What about cost? Aye, there's the rub!

First, there's the steamboat ticket to Europe, about the same price as or more than the average round trip ticket to the Coast and back; but—please note, please note well—the agent who sells the steamboat ticket gets from forty to 100 per cent. bigger commission on it than the agent who sells the railroad tickets; so the man who is an agent for Europe can afford to advertise from forty to 100 per cent. more than the man who sells the purely American ticket.

Secondly, European hotel men are adepts at catering to the lure of the American sightseer. (Of course they are: it's worth one hundred to two hundred million dollars to them a year.) In the American West, everybody is busy. Except for the real estate man, they don't care one iota whether you come or stay.

Thirdly, when you go to Europe, a thousand hands are thrust out to point you the way to the interesting places. Incidentally, also, a thousand hands are thrust out to pick your pocket, or at least relieve it of any superfluous weight. In our West, who cares a particle what you do; or who will point you the way? The hotels are expensive and for the most part located in the most expensive zone—the commercial center. It is only when you get out of the expense zone away from commercial centers and railway, that you can live at $1 or $2 a day, or if you have your own tent at fifty cents a day; but it isn't to the real estate agent's interests to have you go away from the commercial center or expense zone. Who is there to tell you what or where to see off the line of heat and tips? Outside the National Park wardens and National Forest Rangers, there isn't anyone. [Pg xxx]

How, then, are you to manage? Frankly, I never knew of either monkeys or men accomplishing anything except in one way—just going out and doing it. Choose what you want to see; and go there! The local railroad agent, the local Forest Ranger, the local ranch house, will tell you the rest; and naturally, when you go into the wilderness, don't leave all your courtesy and circumspection and common-sense back in town. Equipped with those three, you can "See America First," and see it cheaply.

CHAPTER I [Pg 1]

THE NATIONAL FORESTS, A SUMMER PLAYGROUND FOR THE PEOPLE

If a health resort and national playground were discovered guaranteed to kill care, to stab apathy into new life, to enlarge littleness and slay listlessness and set the human spirit free from the nagging worries and toil-wear that make you feel like a washed-out rag at the end of a humdrum year—imagine the stampede of the lame and the halt in body and spirit; the railroad excursions and reduced fares; the disputations of the physicians and the rage of the thought-ologists at present coining money rejuvenating neurotic humanity!

Yet such a national playground has been discovered; and it isn't in Europe, where statisticians compute that Americans yearly spend from a quarter to half a billion dollars; and it isn't the Coast-to-Coast trip which the president of a transcontinental told me at least a hundred thousand people a year traverse. A health resort guaranteed to banish care, to stab apathy, to enlarge littleness, to slay listlessness, would pretty nearly put the thought-ologists out of commission. Yet such a summer resort exists at the very doors of every American capable of scraping together a few hundred dollars—$200 at the least, $400 at the most. It exists in that "twilight zone" of dispute and strong language and peanut politics known as the National Forests. [Pg 2]

In America, we have foolishly come to regard National Forests as solely allied with conservation and politics. That is too narrow. National Forests stand for much more. They stand for a national playground and all that means for national health and sanity and joy in the exuberant life of the clean out-of-doors. In Germany, the forests are not only a source of great revenue in cash; they are a source of greater revenue in health. They are a holiday playground. In America, the playground exists, the most wonderful, the most beautiful playground in the whole world—and the most accessible; but we haven't yet discovered it.

Of the three or four million people who have attended the Pacific Coast Expositions of the past ten years, it is a safe wage that half went, not to see the Exposition (for people from a radius round Chicago and Jamestown and Buffalo had already seen a great Exposition) but they went to

see the Exposition as an exponent of the Great West. How much of the Great West did they really see? They saw the Alaska Exhibit. Well—the Alaska Exhibit was afterwards shown in New York. They saw the special buildings assigned to the special Western States. Well—the special Western States had special buildings at the other expositions. What else of the purely West they saw, I shall give in the words of three travelers: [Pg 3]

"Been a great trip" (Two Chicagoans talking in duet). "We've seen everything and stopped off everywhere. We stopped at Denver and Salt Lake and Los Angeles and San Francisco and Portland and Seattle!"

"What did you do at these places?"

"Took a taxi and saw the sights, drove through the parks and so on. Saw all the residences and public buildings. Been a great trip. Tell you the West is going ahead."

"It has been a detestable trip" (A New Yorker relieving surcharged feelings). "It has been a skin game from start to finish, pullman, baggage, hotels, everything. And how much of the West have we really seen? Not a glimpse of it. We had all seen these Western cities before. They are not the West. They are bits of the East taken up and set down in the West. How is the Easterner to see the West? It isn't seeing it to go flying through these prairie stations. Settlement and real life and wild life are always back from the railroad. How are we to get out and see that unless we can pay ten dollars a day for guides? I don't call it *seeing* the mountains to ride on a train through the easiest passes and sleep through most of them. Tell us how we are to get out and see and experience the real thing?"

"H'm, talk about seeing the West" (This time from a Texas banker). "Only time we got away from the excursion party was when a land boomster took us up the river to see an irrigation project. That wasn't seeing the West. That was a buy-and-sell proposition same as we have at home. What I want to know is how to get away from that. That boomster fellow was an Easterner, anyway." [Pg 4]

Which of these three really found the playground each was seeking? Not the duet that went round the cities in a sightseeing car and judged the West from hotel rotundas. Not the New Yorker, who saw the prairie towns fly past the car windows. Not the Texans who were guided round a real estate project by an Eastern land boomster. And each wanted to find the real thing—had paid money to find a holiday playground, to forget care and stab apathy and enlarge life. And each complained of the extortionate charges on every side in the city life. And two out of three went back a little disappointed that they had not seen the fabled wonders of the West—the big trees, the peaks at close range, the famous cañons, the mountain lakes, the natural bridges. When I tried to explain to the New Yorker that at a cost of one-tenth what the big hotels charge, you could go straight into the heart of the mountain western wilds, whether you are a man, woman, child, or group of all three—could go straight out to the fabled wonders of big trees and mountain lakes and snowy peaks—I was greeted with that peculiarly New Yorky look suggestive of Ananias and De Rougement.

One way of entering the desert is with wagons and tents, but unless it is the rainy season the tents are unnecessary

Sadder is the case of the invalid migrating West. He has come with high hopes looking for the national health resort. Does he find it? Not once in a thousand cases. If health seekers have money, they take a private house *in the city*, where the best of air is at its worst; but many invalids are scarce of money, and come seeking the health resort at great pecuniary sacrifice. Do they find it? Certainly not knocking from boarding house to boarding house and hotel to hotel, re-infecting themselves with their own germs till the very telephone booths have to be guarded. At one famous "lung" city where I stayed, I heard three invalids coughing life away along the corridor where my room happened to be. The charge for those stuffy rooms was $2 and $3 and $5 a day without meals. At a cost of $10 for train fare, I went out to one of the National Forests—the pass over the Divide 11,000 feet, the village center of the Forest 8,000 feet above sea level, the charge with meals at the hotel $10 a week. Better still, $10 for a roomy tent, $1.50 for a [Pg 5]

camp stove and as much or as little as you like for a fur rug, and the cost of meals would have been seventy-five cents a day at the hotel, seventy-five cents for life in air that was almost constant sunshine, air as pure and life-giving as the sun on Creation's first day. That altitude would probably not suit all invalids—that is for a doctor to say; but certainly, whether one is out for health or play, that regimen is cheaper and more life-giving than a stuffy hotel at $2, $3 and $5 a day for a room alone. [Pg 6]

It is incredible when you come to think of it. Here is a nation of ninety million people scouring the earth for a playground; and there is an undiscovered playground in its own back yard, the most wonderful playground of mountain and forest and lake in the whole world; a playground in actual area half the size of a Germany, or France, with wonders of cave and waterway and peak unknown to Germany or France. What are the railroads thinking about? If three million people visited an exposition to see the West, how many would yearly visit the National Forests if the railroads granted facilities, and the ninety million Americans knew how? It is absurd to regard the National Forests purely as timber; and timber for politics! They are a nation's playground and health resort; and one of these times will come a Peary or an Abruzzi discovering them. Then we'll give him a prize and begin going.

You will not find Newport; and you will not find Lenox; and you will not find Saratoga in the National Forests. Neither will you find a dress parade except the painter's brush with its vesture of flame in the upper alpine meadows. And you will not find gaping on-lookers to break down fences and report your doings, unless it be a Douglas squirrel swearing at you for coming too near his *cache* of pine cones at the foot of some giant conifer. There is small noise of things doing in the National Forests; but there is a great tinkling of waters; and there are many voices of rills with a roar of flood torrents at rain time, or thunder of avalanche when the snows come over a [Pg 7] far ridge in spray fine as a waterfall. In fair weather, you may spare yourself the trouble of a tent and camp under a stretch of sky hung with stars, resinous of balsams, spiced with the life of the cinnamon smells and the ozone tang. There will be lakes of light as well as lakes of water, and an all-day diet of condensed sunbeams every time you take a breath. Your bed will be hemlock boughs—be sure to lay the branch-end out and the soft end in or you'll dream of sleeping transfixed and bayoneted on a nine foot redwood stump. Sage brush smells and cedar odors, you will have without paying for a cedar chest. If you want softer bed and mixed perfumes, better stay in Newport.

The Forestry Department will not resent your coming. Their men will welcome you and help you to find camping ground.

Meanwhile, before the railroads have wakened up to the possibilities of the National Forests as a playground, how is the lone American man, woman, child, or group of all three, to find the way to the National Forests? What will the outfit cost; and how is the camper to get established?

Take a map of the Western States. Though there are bits of National Forests in Nebraska and Kansas and the Ozarks, for camping and playground purposes draw a line up parallel with the Rockies from New Mexico to Canada. Your playground is from that line westward. To me, there is a peculiar attraction in the forests of Colorado. Nearly all are from 8,000 to 11,000 feet above [Pg 8] sky-line—high, dry park-like forests of Engelmann spruce clear of brush almost as your parlor floor. You will have no difficulty in recognizing the Forests as the train goes panting up the divide. Windfall, timber slash, stumps half as high as a horse, brushwood, the bare poles and blackened logs of burnt areas lie on one side—Public Domain. Trees with two notches and a blaze mark the Forest bounds; trees with one notch and one blaze, the trail; and across that trail, you are out of the Public Domain in the National Forests. There is not the slightest chance of your not recognizing the National Forests. Windfall, there is almost none. It has been cleared out and sold. Of timber slash, there is not a stick. Wastage and brush have been carefully burned up during snowfall. Windfall, dead tops and ripe trees, all have been cut or stamped with the U. S. hatchet for logging off. These Colorado Forests are more like a beautiful park than wild land.

Come up to Utah; and you may vary your camping in the National Forests there, by trips to the wonderful cañons out from Ogden, or to the natural bridges in the South. In the National Forests of California, you have pretty nearly the best that America can offer you: views of the ocean in Santa Barbara and Monterey; cloudless skies everywhere; the big trees in the Sequoia Forest; the Yosemite in the Stanislaus; forests in the northern part of the State where you could dance on the stump of a redwood or build a cabin out of a single sapling; and everywhere in the northern [Pg 9] mountains, are the voices of the waters and the white, burnished, shining peaks. I met a woman who found her playground one summer by driving up in a tented wagon through the National Forests from Colorado to Montana. Camp stove and truck bed were in the democrat wagon. An outfitter supplied the horses for a rental which I have forgotten. The borders of most of the National Forests may be reached by wagon. The higher and more intimate trails may be essayed only on foot or on horseback.

How much will the trip cost? You must figure that out for yourself. There is, first of all, your railway fare from the point you leave. Then there is the fare out to the Forest—usually not $10. Go straight to the supervisor or forester of the district. He will recommend the best hotel of the little mountain village where the supervisor's office is usually located. At those hotels, you will board as a transient at $10 a week; as a permanent, for less. In many of the mountain hamlets are outfitters who will rent you a team of horses and tented wagon; and you can cater for yourself. In fact, as to clothing, and outfit, you can buy cheaper camp kit at these local stores than in your home town. Many Eastern things are not suitable for Western use. For instance, it is foolish to go into the thick, rough forests of heavy timber with an expensive eastern riding suit for man or woman. Better buy a $4 or $6 or $8 khaki suit that you can throw away when you have torn it to tatters. An Eastern waterproof coat will cost you from $10 to $30. You can get a yellow [Pg 10] cowboy slicker (I have two), which is much more serviceable for $2.50 or $3. As to boots, I prefer to get them East, as I like an elk-skin leather which never shrinks in the wet, with a good deal of cork in the sole to save jars, also a broad sole to save your foot in the stirrup; but avoid a conventional riding boot. Too hot and too stiff! I like an elk-skin that will let the water out fast as it comes in if you ever have to wade, and which will not shrink in the drying. If you forswear hotels and take to a sky tent, or canvas in misty weather, better carry eatables in what the guides call a tin "grub box," in other words a cheap $2 tin trunk. It keeps out ants and things; and you can lock it when you go away on long excursions. As to beds, each to his own taste! Some like the rolled rubber mattress. Too much trouble for me. Besides, I am never comfortable on it. If you camp near the snow peaks, a chill strikes up to the small of your back in the small of the morning. I don't care to feel like using a derrick every time I roll over. The most comfortable bed I know is a piece of twenty-five cent oilcloth laid over the slicker on hemlock boughs, fur rug over that, with suit case for pillow, and a plain gray blanket. The hardened mountaineer will laugh at the next recommendation; but the town man or woman going out for play or health is not hardened, and to attempt sudden hardening entails the endurance of a lot of aches that are apt to spoil the holiday. You may say you like the cold plunge in the icy water coming off a snowy mountain. I confess I don't; and you'll acknowledge, even if you do like it, you are in such a hurry [Pg 11] to come out of it that you don't linger to scrub. I like my hot scrub; and you can have that only by taking along (no, not a rubber bath) a $1.50 camp stove to heat the water in the tent while you are eating your supper out round the camp fire that burns with such a delicious, barky smell. Besides, late in the season, there will be rains and mist. Your camp stove will dry out the tent walls and keep your kit free of rain mold. Do you need a guide? That depends entirely on yourself. If you camp under direction and within range of the district forester, I do not think you do.

Whether you go out as a health seeker, or a pleasure seeker, $8 to $10 will buy you a miner's tent —a miner's, preferable to a tepee because the walls lift the canvas roof high enough not to bump your head; $2 will buy you a tin trunk or grub box; $1.50 will cover the price of oilcloth to spread over the boughs which you lay all over the floor to keep you above the earth damp; $2 will buy you a little tin camp stove to keep the inside of your tent warm and dry for the hot night bath; $10 will cover cost of pail and cooking utensils. That leaves of what would be your monthly expenses at even a moderate hotel, $125 for food—bacon, flour, fresh fruit; and your food should not exceed $10 each a month. If you are a good fisherman, you will add to the larder, by whipping the mountain streams for trout. If you need an attendant, that miner's tent is big enough for two. Or if you will stand $5 or $6 more expense, buy a tepee tent for a bath and toilet [Pg 12] room. There will be windy days in fall and spring when an extra tent with a camp stove in it will prove useful for the nightly hot bath.

What reward do you reap for all the bother? You are away from all dust irritating to weak lungs. You are away from all possibility of re-infecting yourself with your own disease. Except in late autumn and early spring, you are living under almost cloudless skies, in an atmosphere steeped in sunshine, spicy with the healing resin of the pines and hemlocks and spruce, that not only scent the air but literally permeate it with the essences of their own life. You are living far above the vapors of sea level, in a region luminous of light. Instead of the clang of street car bells and the jangle of nerves tangled from too many humans in town, you hear the flow and the sing and the laughter and the trebles of the glacial streams rejoicing in their race to the sea. You climb the rough hills; and your town lungs blow like a whale as you climb; and every beat pumps inertia out and the sun-healing air in. If an invalid, you had better take a doctor's advice as to how high you should camp and climb. In town, amid the draperies and the portières and the steam-heated rooms, an invalid is seeking health amid the habitat of mummies. In the Forests, whether you will or not, you live in sunshine that is the very elixir of life; and though the frost sting at night, it is the sting of pulsing, superabundant life, not the lethargy of a gradual decay. [Pg 13]

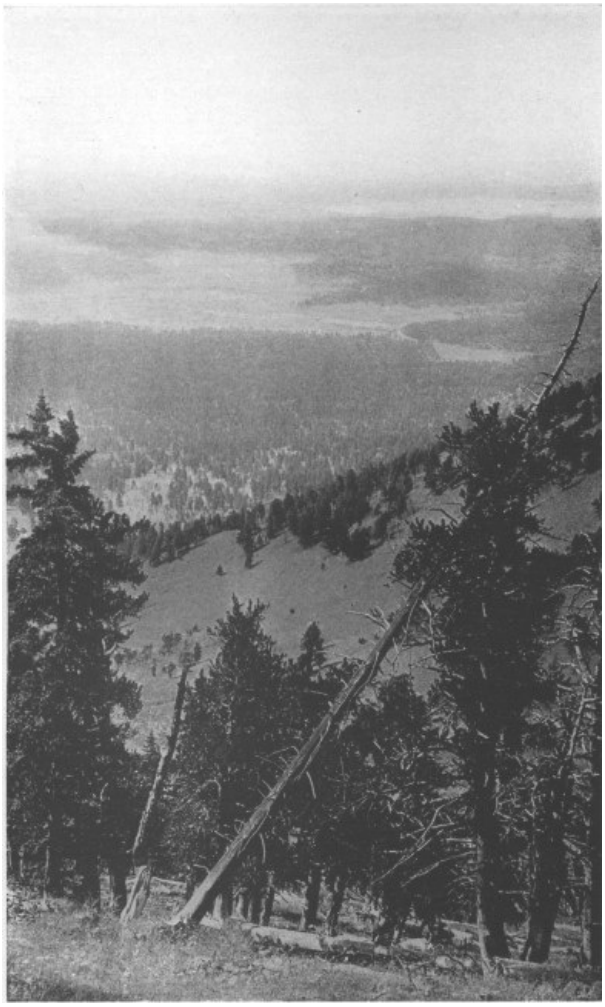
At the southern edge of the National Forests in the Southwest dwell the remnants of a race, can be seen the remnants of cities, stand houses near enough the train to be touched by your hand, that run back in unbroken historic continuity to dynasties preceding the Aztecs of Mexico or the Copts of Egypt. When the pyramids were young, long before the flood gates of the Ural Mountains had broken before the inundating Aryan hordes that overran the forests and mountains of Europe to the edge of the Netherland seas, this race which you can see to-day dwelling in New Mexico and Arizona were spinning their wool, working their silver mines, and on the approach of the enemy, withdrawing to those eagle nests on the mountain tops which you can see, where only a rope ladder led up to the city, or uncertain crumbling steps cut in the face of

the sheer red sandstone.

And besides the prehistoric in the Forests—what will you find? The plains below you like a scroll, the receding cities, a patch of smoke. You had thought that sky above the plains a cloudless one, air that was pure, buoyant champagne without dregs. Now the plains are vanishing in a haze of dust, and you—you are up in that cloudless air, where the light hits the rocks in spangles of pure crystal, and the tang of the clearness of it pricks your sluggish blood to a new, buoyant, pulsing life. You feel as if somehow or other that existence back there in towns and under roofs had been a life with cobwebs on the brain and weights on the wings of the spirit. I wonder if it wasn't? I wonder if the ancients, after all, didn't accord with science in ascribing to the sun, to the god of [Pg 14] Light, the source of all our strength? Things are accomplished not in the thinking, but in the clearness of the thinking; and here is the realm of pure light.

Presently, the train carrying you up to the Forests of the Southwest gives a bump. You are in darkness—diving through some tunnel or other; and when you come out, you could drop a stone sheer down to the plains a couple of miles. That is not so far as up in South Dakota. In Sundance Cañon off the National Forests there, you can drop a pebble down seven miles. That's not as the crow flies. It is as the train climbs. But patience! The road into Sundance Cañon takes you to the top of the world, to be sure; but that is only 7,000 feet up; and this little Moffat Road in Colorado takes you above timber line, above cloud line, pretty nearly above growth line, 12,000 feet above the sea; at 11,600 you can take your lunch inside a snow shed on the Moffat Road.

Long ago, men proved their superiority to other men by butchering each other in hordes and droves and shambles; Alva must have had a good 100,000 corpses to his credit in the Netherlands. To-day, men make good by conquering the elements. For four hours, this little Colorado road has been cork-screwing up the face of a mountain pretty nearly sheer as a wall; and for every twist and turn and tunnel, some engineer fellow on the job has performed mathematical acrobatics; and some capitalist behind the engineer—the man behind the modern gun of conquest—has paid the cost. In this case, it was David Moffat paid for our dance in the clouds—a mining man, who poked his brave little road over the mountains across the desert towards the Pacific.



From a lookout point in the Coconino Forest of Arizona

You come through those upper tunnels still higher. Below, no longer lie the plains, but seas of [Pg 15] clouds; and it is to the everlasting credit of the sense and taste of Denver people, that they have dotted the outer margin of this rock wall with slab and log and shingle cottages, built literally on the very backbone of the continent overlooking such a stretch of cloud and mountain and plain as I do not know of elsewhere in the whole world. In Sundance Cañon, South Dakota, summer people have built in the bottom of the gorge. Here, they are dwellers in the sky. Rugged pines cling to the cliff edge blasted and bare and wind torn; but dauntlessly rooted in the everlasting

rocks. Little mining hamlets composed of matchbox houses cling to the face of the precipice like cardboards stuck on a nail. Then, you have passed through the clouds, and are above timber line; and a lake lies below you like a pool of pure turquoise; and you twist round the flank of the great mountain, and there is a pair of green lakes below you—emerald jewels pendant from the neck of the old mountain god; and with a bump and a rattle of the wheels, clear over the top of the Continental Divide you go—believe me, a greater conquest than any Napoleon's march to Moscow, or Alva's shambles of headless victims in the Netherlands.

You take lunch in a snow shed on the very crest of the Continental Divide. I wish you could taste [Pg 16] the air. It isn't air. It's champagne. It isn't champagne, it's the very elixir of life. There can never be any shadows here; for there is nothing to cast the shadow. Nightfall must wrap the world here in a mantle of rest, in a vespers of worship and quiet, in a crystal of dying chrysoprase above the green enameled lake and the forests below, looking like moss, and the pearl clouds, a sea of fire in the sunset, and the plain—there are no more plains—this is the top of the world!

Yet it is not always a vesper quiet in the high places. When I came back this way a week later, such a blizzard was raging as I have never seen in Manitoba or Alberta. The high spear grass tossed before it like the waves of a sea; and the blasted pines on the cliffs below—you knew why their roots had taken such grip of the rocks like strong natures in disaster. The storm might break them. It could not bend them, nor wrench them from their roots. The telegraph wires, for reasons that need not be told are laid flat on the ground up here.

When you cross the Divide, you enter the National Forests. National Forests above tree line? To be sure! These deep, coarse upper grasses provide ideal pasturage for sheep from June to September; and the National Forests administer the grazing lands for the general use of all the public, instead of permitting them to be monopolized by the big rancher, who promptly drove the weaker man off by cutting the throats of intruding flocks and herds. [Pg 17]

Then, the train is literally racing down hill—with the trucks bumping heels like the wheels of a wagon on a sluggish team; and a new tang comes to the ozone—the tang of resin, of healing balsam, of cinnamon smells, of incense and frankincense and myrrh, of spiced sunbeams and imprisoned fragrance—the fragrance of thousands upon thousands of years of dew and light, of pollen dust and ripe fruit cones; the attar, not of Persian roses, but of the everlasting pines.

The train takes a swift swirl round an escarpment of the mountain; and you are in the Forests proper, serried rank upon rank of the blue spruce and the lodgepole pine. No longer spangles of light hitting back from the rocks in sparks of fire! The light here is sifted pollen dust—pollen dust, the primordial life principle of the tree—with the purple, cinnamon-scented cones hanging from the green arms of the conifers like the chevrons of an enranked army; and the cones tell you somewhat of the service as the chevrons do of the soldier man. Some conifers hold their cones for a year before they send the seed, whirling, swirling, broadside to the wind, aviating pixy parachutes, airy armaments for the conquest of arid hills to new forest growth, though the process may take the trifling æon of a thousand years or so. At one season, when you come to the Forests, the air is full of the yellow pollen of the conifers, gold dust whose alchemy, could we but know it, would unlock the secrets of life. At another season—the season when I happened to be in the Colorado Forests—the very atmosphere is alive with these forest airships, conifer seeds [Pg 18] sailing broadside to the wind. You know why they sail broadside, don't you? If they dropped plumb like a stone, the ground would be seeded below the heavily shaded branches inches deep in self-choking, sunless seeds; but when the broadside of the sail to the pixy's airship tacks to the veering wind, the seed is carried out and away and far beyond the area of the shaded branches; to be caught up by other counter currents of wind and hurled, perhaps, down the mountain side, destined to forest the naked side of a cliff a thousand years hence. It is a fact, too, worth remembering and crediting to the wiles and ways of Dame Nature that destruction by fire tends but to free these conifer seeds from the cones; so that they fall on the bare burn and grow slowly to maturity under the protecting nursery of the tremulous poplars and pulsing cottonwoods.

The train has not gone very far in the National Forests before you see the sleek little Douglas squirrel scurrying from branch to branch. From the tremor of his tiny body and the angry chitter of his parted teeth, you know he is swearing at you to the utmost limit of his squirrel (?) language; but that is not surprising. This little rodent of the evergreens is the connoisseur of all conifers. He, and he alone, knows the best cones for reproductive seed. No wonder he is so full of fire when you consider he diets on the fruit of a thousand years of sunlight and dew; so when the ranger seeks seed to reforest the burned or scant slopes, he rifles the *cache* of this little furred [Pg 19] forester, who suspects your noisy trainload of robbery—robbery—sc—scur—r—there!

Then, the train bumps and jars to a stop with a groaning of brakes on the steep down grade, for a drink at the red water tank; and you drop off the high car steps with a glance forward to see that the baggage man is dropping off your kit. The brakes reverse. With a scrunch, the train is off again, racing down hill, a blur of steamy vapor like a cloud against the lower hills. Before the rear car has disappeared round the curve, you have been accosted by a young man in Norfolk suit of sage green wearing a medal stamped with a pine tree—the ranger, absurdly young when you consider each ranger patrols and polices 100,000 acres compared to the 1,700 which French and German wardens patrol and daily deals with criminal problems ten times more difficult than those confronting the Northwest Mounted Police, without the military authority which backs that

body of men.

You have mounted your pony—men and women alike ride astride in the Western States. It heads of its own accord up the bridle trail to the ranger's house, in this case 9,000 feet above sea level, 1,000 feet above ordinary cloud line. The hammer of a woodpecker, the scur of a rasping blue jay, the twitter of some red bills, the soft *thug* of the unshod broncho over the trail of forest mold, no other sound unless the soul of the sea from the wind harping in the trees. Better than the jangle of city cars in that stuffy hotel room of the germ-infested town, isn't it? [Pg 20]

If there is snow on the peaks above, you feel it in the cool sting of the air. You hear it in the trebling laughter, in the trills and rills of the brook babbling down, sound softened by the moss as all sounds are hushed and low keyed in this woodland world. And all the time, you have the most absurd sense of being set free from something. By-and-by when eye and ear are attuned, you will see the light reflected from the pine needles glistening like metal, and hear the click of the same needles like fairy castanets of joy. Meantime, take a long, deep, full breath of these condensed sunbeams spiced with the incense of the primeval woods; for you are entering a temple, the temple where our forefathers made offerings to the gods of old, the temple which our modern churches imitate in Gothic spire and arch and architrave and nave. Drink deep in open, full lungs; for you are drinking of an elixir of life which no apothecary can mix. Most of us are a bit ill mentally and physically from breathing the dusty street sweepings of filth and germs which permeate the hived towns. They will not stay with you here! Other dust is in this air, the gold dust of sunlight and resin and ozone. They will make you over, will these forest gods, if you will let them, if you will lave in their sunlight, and breathe their healing, and laugh with the chitter and laughter of the squirrels and streams.

And what if your spirit does not go out to meet the spirit of the woods halfway? Then, the woods will close round you with a chill loneliness unutterable. You are an alien and an exile. They will have none of you and will reveal to you none of their joyous, dauntless life secrets. [Pg 21]

CHAPTER II [Pg 22]

AMONG THE NATIONAL FORESTS OF THE SOUTHWEST

You have not ridden far towards the ranger's house in the Forest before you become aware that clothing for town is not clothing for the wilds. No matter how hot it may be at midday, in this high, rare air a chill comes soon as the sun begins to sink. To be comfortable, light flannels must be worn next the skin, with an extra heavy coat available—never farther away from yourself than the pack straps. Night may overtake you on a hard trail. Long as you have an extra heavy coat and a box of matches, night does not matter. You are safer benighted in the wilds than in New York or Chicago. If you have camp fire and blanket, night in the wilds knows nothing of the satyr-faced spirit of evil, sand-bagger and yeggman, that stalks the town.

The forest-ranger in action, fighting a ground fire with his saddle blanket in one of the National Forests of the West

To anyone used to travel in the wilderness, it seems almost like little boys playing Robinson Crusoe to give explicit directions as to dress. Yet only a few years ago, the world was shocked and horrified by the death of a town man exploring the wilds; and that death was directly traceable to a simple matter of boots. His feet played out. He had gone into a country of rocky portages with only one pair of moccasins. I have never gone into the wilds for longer than four months at a time. Yet I have never gone with less than four sets of footgear. Primarily, you need a pair of good outing boots; and outing boots are good only when they combine two qualities—comfort and thick enough soles to protect your feet from sharp rock edges if you climb, broad enough soles, too, to protect the edge of your feet from hard knocks from passing trees and jars [Pg 23]

in the stirrup. For the rest, you need about two extras in case you chip chunks out of these in climbing; and if you camp near glaciers or snow fields, a pair of moccasins for night wear will add to comfort. You may get them if you like to spend the money—$8 leggings and $8 horsehide shoes and cowboy hat and belted corduroy suit and all the other paraphernalia by which the seasoned Westerner recognizes the tenderfoot. You may get them if you want to. It will not hurt you; but a $3 cowboy slicker for rainy days and a pair of boots guaranteed to let the water out as fast as it comes in, these and the ordinary outing garments of any other part of the world are the prime essentials.

This matter of proper preparation recalls a little English woman who determined to train her boys and girls to be resourceful and independent by taking them camping each summer in the forests of the Pacific Coast. They were on a tramp one day twelve miles from camp when a heavy fog blew in, and they lost themselves. That is not surprising when you consider the big tree country. Two notches and one blaze mark the bounds of the National Forests; one notch and one blaze, the trail; but they had gone off the trail trout fishing. "If they had been good path-finders, [Pg 24] they could have found the way out by following the stream down," remarked a critic of this little group to me; and a very apt criticism it was from the safe vantage point of a study chair. How about it, if when you came to follow the stream down, it chanced to cut through a gorge you couldn't follow, with such a sheer fall of rock at the sides and such a crisscross of big trees, house-high, that you were driven back from the stream a mile or two? You would keep your directions by sunlight? Maybe; but that big tree region is almost impervious to sunlight; and when the fog blows in or the clouds blow down thick as wool, you will need a pocket compass to keep the faintest sense of direction. Compass signs of forest-lore fail here. There are few flowers under the dense roofing to give you sense of east or west; and you look in vain for the moss sign on the north bark of the tree. All four sides are heavily mossed; and where the little Englishwoman lost herself, they were in ferns to their necks.

"Weren't the kiddies afraid?" I asked.

"Not a bit! Bob got the trout ready; and Son made a big fire. We curled ourselves up round it for the night; and I wish you could have seen the children's delight when the clouds began to roll up below in the morning. It was like a sea. The youngsters had never seen clouds take fire from the sun coming up below. I want to tell you, too, that we put out every spark of that fire before we left in the morning." [Pg 25]

All of which conveys its own moral for the camper in the National Forests.

It ought not to be necessary to say that you cannot go to the National Forests expecting to billet yourself at the ranger's house. Many of the rangers are married and have a houseful of their own. Those not married, have no facilities whatever for taking care of you. In my visit to the Vasquez Forest, I happened to have a letter of introduction to the ranger and his mother, who took me in with that bountiful hospitality characteristic of the frontier; but directly across the road from the ranger's cabin was a little log slab-sided hotel where any comer could have stayed in perfect comfort for $7 a week; and at the station, where the train stopped, was another very excellent little hotel where you could have stayed and enjoyed meals that for nutritious cooking might put a New York dinner to shame—all to the tune of $10 a week. Also, at this very station, is the Supervisor's office of the Forestry Department. By inquiry here, the newcomer can ascertain all facts as to tenting outfit and camping place. Only one point must be kept in mind—do not go into the National Forests expecting the railroads, or the rangers, or Providence, to look after you. Do not go unless you are prepared to look after yourself.

And now that you are in the National Forests, what are you going to do? You can ride; or you can hunt; or you can fish; or you can bathe in the hot springs that dot so many of these intermountain regions, where God has landscaped the playground for a nation; or you can go in for records [Pg 26] mountain climbing; or you can go sightseeing in the most marvelously beautiful mountain scenery in the whole world; or you can prowl round the prehistoric cave and cliff dwellings of a race who flourished in mighty power, now solitary and silent cities, contemporaneous with that Egyptian desert runner whose skeleton lies in the British Museum marked 20,000 B. C. It isn't every day you can wander through the deserted chambers of a king's palace with 500 rooms. Tourist agencies organize excursion parties for lesser and younger palaces in Europe. I haven't heard of any to visit the silent cities of the cliff and cave dwellers on the Jemez Plateau of New Mexico, or the Gila River, Arizona, or even the easily accessible dead cities of forgotten peoples in the National Forest of Southern Colorado. What race movement in the first place sent these races perching their wonderful tier-on-tier houses literally on the tip-top of the world?

The prehistoric remains of the Southwest are now, of course, under the jurisdiction of the Forestry Department; and you can't go digging and delving and carrying relics from the midden heaps and baked earthen floors without the permission of the Secretary of Agriculture; but if you go in the spirit of an investigator, you will get that permission.

The question isn't *what is there to do*. It is *which of the countless things there are to do* are you going to choose to do? When Mr. Roosevelt goes to the National Forests, he strikes for the Holy [Pg 27] Cross Mountain and bags a grizzly. When ordinary folk hie to this Forest, they take along a bathing suit and indulge in a daily plunge in the hot pools at Glenwood Springs. If the light is good and the season yet early, you can still see the snow in the crevices of the peak, giving the

Forest its name of the Holy Cross. People say there is no historic association to our West. Once a foolish phrase is uttered, it is surprising how sensible people will go on repeating it. Take this matter of the "Holy Cross" name. If you go investigating how these "Holy Cross" peaks got their names from old Spanish *padres* riding their burros into the wilderness, it will take you a hard year's reading just to master the Spanish legends alone. Then, if you dive into the realm of the cliff dwellers, you will be drowned in historic antiquity before you know. In the Glenwood Springs region, you will not find the remnants of prehistoric people; but you'll find the hot springs.

Just two warnings: one as to hunting; the other, as to mountain climbing. There is still big game in Colorado Forests—bear, mountain sheep, elk, deer; and the ranger is supposed to be a game warden; but a man patrolling 100,000 acres can't be all over at one time. As to mountain climbing, you can get your fill of it in Grand Cañon, above Ouray, at Pike's Peak—a dozen places, and only the mountain climber and his troglodyte cliff-climbing prototype know the drunken, frenzied joy of climbing on the roof of the earth and risking life and limb to stand with the [Pg 28] kingdoms of the world at your feet. But unless you are a trained climber, take a guide with you, or the advice of some local man who knows the tricks and the moods and the wiles and the ways of the upper mountain world. Looking from the valley up to the peak, a patch of snow may seem no bigger to you than a good-sized table-cloth. Look out! If it is steep beneath that "table-cloth" and the forest shows a slope clean-swept of trees as by a mighty broom, be careful how you cross and recross following the zigzag trail that corkscrews up below the far patch of white! I was crossing the Continental Divide one summer in the West when a woman on the train pointed to a patch of white about ten miles up the mountain slope and asked if "that" were "rock or snow." I told her it was a very large snow field, indeed; that we saw only the forefoot of it hanging over the edge; that the upper part was supposed to be some twenty miles across. She gave me a look meant for Mrs. Ananias. A month later, when I came back that way, the train suddenly slowed up. The slide had come down and lay in white heaps across the track three or four miles down into the valley and up the other side. The tracks were safe enough; for the snow shed threw the slide over the track on down the slope; but it had caught a cluster of lumbermen's shacks and buried eight people in a sudden and eternal sleep. "We saw it coming," said one of the survivors, "and we thought we had plenty of time. It must have been ten miles away. One of the men went in to get his wife. Before he could come out, it was on us. Man and wife and child were carried down [Pg 29] in the house just as it stood without crushing a timber. It must have been the concussion of the air—they weren't even bruised when we dug them out; but the kid couldn't even have wakened up where it lay in the bed; and the man hadn't reached the inside room; but they were dead, all three."

And near Ouray another summer, a chance acquaintance pointed to a peak. "That one caught my son last June," he said. "He was the company's doctor. He had been born and raised in these mountains; but it caught him. We knew the June heat had loosened those upper fields; and his wife didn't want him to go; but there was a man sick back up the mountain; and he set out. They saw it coming; but it wasn't any use. It came—quick—" with a snap of his fingers—"as that; and he was gone."

It's a saying among all good mountaineers that it's "only the fool who monkeys with a mountain," especially the mountain with a white patch above a clean-swept slope.

And there is another thing for the holiday player in the National Forests to do; and it is the thing that I like best to do. You have been told so often that you have come to believe it—that our mountains in America lack the human interests; lack the picturesque character and race types dotting the Alps, for instance. Don't you believe it! Go West! There isn't a mountain or a forest from New Mexico to Idaho that has not its mountaineering votary, its quaint hermit, or its sky-top guide, its refugee from civilization, or simply its lover of God's Great Outdoors and Peace and Big [Pg 30] Silence, living near to the God of the Great Open as log cabin on a hilltop capped by the stars can bring him. Wild creatures of woodland ways don't come to your beck and call. You have to hunt out their secret haunts. The same with these Western mountaineers. Hunt them out; but do it with reverence! I was driving in the Gunnison country with a local magnate two years ago. We saw against the far sky-line a cleft like the arched entrance to a cave; only this arch led through the rock to the sky beyond.

"I wish," said my guide, "you had time to spend two or three weeks here. We'd take you to the high country above these battlements and palisades. See that hole in the mountain?"

"Rough Upper Alpine meadows?" I asked.

"Oh, dear no! Open park country with lakes and the best of fishing. It used to be an almost impossible trail to get up there; but there has been a hermit fellow there for the last ten years, living in his cabin and hunting; and year after year, never paid by anybody, he has been building that trail up. When men ask him why he does it, he says it's to lead people up; for the glory of God and that sort of thing. Of course, the people in the valley think him crazy."

Of course, they do. What would we, who love the valley and its dust and its maniacal jabber of jealousies and dollars do, building trails to lead people up to see the Glory of God? We call those hill-crest dwellers the troglodytes. Is it not we, who are the earth dwellers, the dust eaters, the insects of the city ant heaps, the true troglodytes and subsoilers of the sordid iniquities? Perhaps, [Pg 31] by this, you think there are some things to do if you go out to the National Forests.

You have been told so often that the National Forests lock up timber from use that it comes as a surprise as you ride up the woodland trail to hear the song of the crosscut saw and the buzzing hum of a mill—perhaps a dozen mills—running full blast here in this National Forest. Heaps of sawdust emit the odors of imprisoned flowers. Piles of logs lie on all sides stamped at the end U. S.—timber sold on the stump to any lumberman and scaled as inspected by the ranger and paid by the buyer. To be sure, the lumberman cannot have the lumber for nothing; and it was for nothing that the Forests were seized and cut under the old régime.

How was the spoliation effected? Two or three ways. The law of the public domain used to permit burn and windfall to be taken out free. Your lumberman, then, homesteaded 160 acres on a slope of forest affording good timber skids and chutes. So far, no wrong! Was not public domain open to homesteading? Good; but your homesteading lumberman now watched his chance for a high wind away from his claim. Then, purely accidentally, you understand, the fire sprang up and swept the entire slope of green forest away from his claim. Your homesteading lumberman then set up a sawmill. A fire fanned up a green slope by a high wind did less harm than fire in a slow wind in dry weather. The slope would be left a sweep of desolate burn and windfall, dead trees [Pg 32] and spars. Your lumberman then went in and took his windfall and his burn free. Thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of acres of the public domain, were rifled free from the public in this way. If challenged, I could give the names of men who became millionaires by lumbering in this manner.

That was the principle of Congress when it withdrew from public domain these vast wooded areas and created the National Forests to include grazing and woodland not properly administered under public domain. The making of windfall to take it free was stopped. The ranger's job is to prevent fires. Also he permits the cutting of only ripe, full-grown trees, or dead tops, or growth stunted by crowding; and all timber sold off the forests must be marked for cutting and stamped by the ranger.

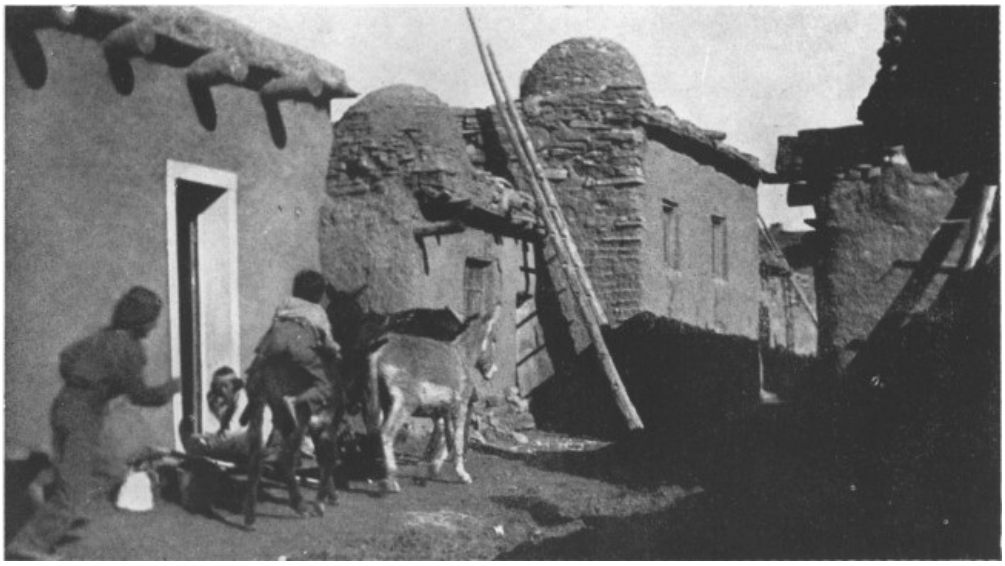
But the old spirit assumes protean forms. The latest way of working the old trick is through the homestead law. You have been told that homesteaders cannot go in on the National Forests. Yet there, as you ride along the trail, is a cleared space of 160 acres where a Swedish woman and her boys are making hay; and inquiry elicits the fact that millions of acres are yearly homesteaded in the National Forests. Just as fast as they can be surveyed, all farming lands in the National Forests are opened to the homesteader. Where, then, is the trick? Your farmer man comes in for a homestead and he picks out 160 acres where the growth of big trees is so dense they will yield from $10,000 to $40,000 in timber per quarter section. Good! Hasn't the homesteader a right to [Pg 33] this profit? He certainly has, if he gets the profit; but supposing he doesn't clear more than a few hundred feet round his cabin, and hasn't a cent of money to pay the heavy expense of clearing the rest, and sells out at the end of his homesteading for a few hundred dollars? Supposing such farmer men are brought in by excursion loads by a certain big lumber company, and all sell out at a few hundred dollars, claims worth millions, to that certain big lumber company—is this true homesteading of free land; or a grabbing of timber for a lumber trust?

The same spirit explains the furious outcry that miners are driven off the National Forest land. Wherever there is genuine metal, prospectors can go in and stake their claims and take lumber for their preliminary operations; but they cannot stake thousands of fictitious claims, then yearly turn over a quarter of a million dollars' worth of timber free to a big smelting trust—a merry game worked in one of the Western States for several years till the rangers put a stop to it.

To build roads through an empire the size of Germany would require larger revenues than the Forests yet afford; so the experiment is being tried of permitting lumbermen to take the timber free from the space occupied by a road for the building of the road. When you consider that you can drive a span of horses through the width of a big conifer, or build a cottage of six rooms from a single tree, the reward for road building is not so paltry as it sounds. [Pg 34]

Presently, your pony turns up a by-path. You are at the ranger's cabin,—picturesque to a degree, built of hewn logs or timbers, with slab sides scraped down to the cinnamon brown, nailed on the hewn wood. Many an Eastern country house built in elaborate and shoddy imitation of town mansion, or prairie home resembling nothing in the world so much as an ugly packing box, might imitate the architecture of the ranger's cabin to the infinite improvement of appearances, not to mention appropriateness.

Appropriateness! That is the word. It is a forest world; and the ranger tunes the style of his house to the trees around him; log walls, log partitions, log veranda, unbarked log fences, rustic seats, fur rugs, natural stone for entrance steps. In several cases, where the cabin had been built of square hewn timber with tar paper lining, slabs scraped of the loose bark had been nailed diagonally on the outside; and a more suitable finish to a wood hermitage could hardly be devised —surely better than the weathered browns and dirty drabs and peeling whites that you see defacing the average frontier home. Naturally enough, city people building cottages as play places have been the first to imitate this woodsy architecture. You see the slab-sided, cinnamon-barked cottages among the city folk who come West to play, and in the lodges of hunting clubs far East as the Great Lakes. Personally I should like to see the contagion spread to the farthest East of city people who are fleeing the cares of town, "back to the land;" but when there are taken to the country all the cares of the city house, a regiment of servants or hostiles, and a mansion of grandeur demanding such care, it seems to me the city man is carrying the woes that he flees "back to the farm."



Pueblo boys at play in the streets of Zuñi, New Mexico. The dome-like tops on the houses are bake ovens

What sort of men are these young fellows living halfway between heaven and earth on the lonely forested ridges whose nearest neighbors are the snow peaks? Each, as stated previously, patrols 100,000 acres. That is, over an area of 100,000 acres he is a road warden, game warden, timber cruiser, sales agent, United States marshal, forester, gardener, naturalist, trail builder, fire fighter, cattle boss, sheep protector, arrester of thugs, thieves and poachers, surveyor, mine inspector, field man on homestead jobs inside the limits, tree doctor, nurseryman. When you consider that each man's patrol stretched out in a straight line would reach from New York past Albany, or from St. Paul to Duluth, without any of the inaccuracy with which a specialist loves to charge the layman, you may say the ranger is a pretty busy man. [Pg 35]

What sort of man is he? Very much the same type as the Canadian Northwest Mounted Policeman, with these differences: He is very much younger. I think there is a regulation somewhere in the Department that a new man older than forty-five will not be taken. This insures enthusiasm, weeding out the misfits, the formation of a body of men trained to the work; but I am not sure that it is not a mistake. There is a saying among the men of the North that "it takes a wise old dog to catch a wary old wolf;" and "there are more things in the woods than ever taught in l'pe'tee cat—ee—cheesm." I am not sure that the weathered old dogs, whose catechism has been the woods and the world, with lots of hard knocks, are not better fitted to cope with some of the difficulties of the ranger's life than a double-barreled post-graduate from Yale or Biltmore. So much depends on fist, and the brain behind the fist. I am quite sure that many of the blackguard tricks assailing the Forest Service would slink back to unlighted lairs if the tricksters had to deal not with the boys of Eastern colleges, gentlemen always, but with some wise and weathered old dog of frontier life who wouldn't consult Departmental regulations before showing his fangs. He would consult them, you know; but it would be afterwards. Just now, while the rangers are consulting the red tape, the trickster gets away with the goods. [Pg 36]

In the next place, your Forest ranger is not clothed with the authority to back up his fight which the N.W.M.P. man possesses. In theory, your ranger is a United States marshal, just as your Mounted Policeman is a constable and justice of the peace; but when it comes to practice, where the N.W.M.P. has a free hand on the instant, on the spot, to arrest, try, convict and imprison, the Forest ranger is ham-strung and hampered by official red tape. For instance, riding out with a ranger one day, we came on an irate mill man who opened out a fusillade in all the profanity his tongue could borrow. The ranger turned toward me aghast.

"Don't mind me! Let him swear himself out! I want to see for myself exactly what you men have to deal with!" [Pg 37]

Now, if that mill man had used such language to a Mounted Policeman, he would have been arrested, sentenced to thirty days and a fine, all inside of twenty-four hours. What was it all about? An attempt to bulldoze a young government man into believing that the taking of logs without payment was permissible.

"What will you do to straighten it all out?" I asked.

"Lay a statement of the facts before the District Supervisor. The Supervisor will forward all to Denver. Denver will communicate with Washington. Then, soon as the thing has been investigated, word will come back from Washington."

Investigated? If you know anything about government investigations, you will not stop the clock, as Joshua played tricks with the sun dial, to prevent speed.

"Then, it's a matter of six weeks before you can put decency and respect for law in that gentleman's heart?" I asked.

"Perhaps longer," said the college man without a suspicion of irony, "and he has given us trouble this way ever since he has come to the Forests."

"And will continue to give you trouble till the law gives you a free hand to put such blackguards to bed till they learn to be good."

"Yes, that's right. This isn't the first time men have tried to get away with logs that didn't belong to them. Once, when I came back to the first Forest where I served, there was a whole pile of logs stamped U. S. that we had never scaled. By the time we could get word back from Washington, the guilty party had left the State and blame had been shunted round on a poor half-witted fellow who didn't know what he was doing; but we forced pay for those logs." [Pg 38]

It is a common saying in the Northwest that it takes eight years to make a good Mounted Policeman—eight years to jounce the duffer out and the man in; but in the Forest Service, men over forty-five are not taken. For men who serve up to forty-five, the inducements of salary beginning at $65 a month and seldom exceeding $200 are not sufficient to retain tested veterans. The big lumber companies will pay a trained forester more for the same work on privately owned timber limits; so the rangers remain for the most part young. Would the same difficulties rise if wise old dogs were on guard? I hardly think so.

What manner of man is the ranger? As we sat round the little parlor of the cabin that night in the Vasquez Forest, an army man turned forester struck up on a piano that had been packed on horseback above cloud-line strains of Wagner and Beethoven. A graduate of Ann Arbor and post-graduate of Yale played with a cigarette as he gazed at his own fancies through the mica glow of the coal stove. A Denver boy, whose mother kept house in the cabin, was chief ranger. In the group was his sister, a teacher in the village school; and I fancy most of the ranger homes present pretty much the same types, though one does not ordinarily expect to hear strains of grand opera above cloud-line. Picture the men dressed in sage-green Norfolk suits; and you have as rare a scene as Scott ever painted of the men in Lincoln green in England's borderland forests. [Pg 39]

Of course, there are traitors and spies and Judas Iscariots in the Service with lip loyalty to public weal and one hand out behind for thirty pieces of silver to betray self-government; but under the present régime, such men are not kept when found out, nor shielded when caught. For twenty years, the world has been ringing with praise of the Northwest Mounted Police; but the red-coat men have served their day; and the extension of Provincial Government will practically disband the force in a few years. Right now, in the American West, is a similar picturesque body of frontier fighters and wardens, doing battle against ten times greater odds, with little or no authority to back them up, and under constant fire of slanderous mendacity set going by the thieves and grafters whose game of spoliation has been stopped. Let spread-eagleism look at the figures and ponder them, and never forget them, especially never forget them, when charges are being hurled against the Forest rangers! *In the single fire of 1909 more rangers lost their lives than Mounted Policemen have died in the Service since 1870, when the force was organized.* [Pg 40]

Was it Nietzsche, or Haeckel, or Maeterlinck, or all of them together, who declared that Nature's constant aim is to perpetuate and surpass herself? The sponge slipping from vegetable to animal kingdom; the animal grading up to man; man stretching his neck to become—what?—is it spirit, the being of a future world? The tadpole striving for legs and wings, till in the course of the centuries it developed both. The flower flaunting its beauty to attract bee and butterfly that it may perfect its union with alien pollen dust and so perpetuate a species that shall surpass itself. The tree trying to encompass and overcome the law of its own being—fixity—by sending its seeds sailing, whirling, aviating the seas of the air, with wind for pilot to far distant clime.

You see it all of a sun-washed morning in a ride or walk through the National Forests. You thought the tree was an inanimate thing, didn't you? Yet you find John Muir and Dante clasping hands across the centuries in agreement that the tree is a living, sensate thing, sensate almost as you are; with its seven ages like the seven ages of man; with the same ceaseless struggle to survive, to be fit to survive, to battle up to light and stand in serried rank proud among its peers, drawing life and strength straight from the sun.

The storm wind ramps through its thrashing branches; and what do you suppose it is doing? Precisely what the storm winds of adversity do to you and me: blowing down the dead leaves, snapping off the dead branches, making us take tighter hold on the verities of the eternal rocks, teaching us to anchor on facts, not fictions, destroying our weakness, strengthening our flabbiness, making us prove our right to be fit to survive. Woe betide the tree with rotten heart wood or mushy anchorage! You see its fate with upturned roots still sticky with the useless muck. Not so different from us humans with mushy creeds that can't stand fast against the shocks of life! [Pg 41]

You say all this is so much symbolism; but when the First Great Cause made the tree as well as the man, is it surprising that the same laws of life should govern both? It is the forester, not the symbolist, who divides the life of the tree into seven ages; just as it is the poet, not the philosopher, who divides the life of man in seven ages; and it needs no Maeterlinck, or Haeckel, to trace the similarity between the seven ages. Seedling, sapling, large sapling, pole, large pole, standard and set—marking the ages of the trees—all have their prototypes in the human. The seedling can grow only under the protecting nursery of earth, air, moisture and in some cases the shade of other trees. The young conifers, for instance, grow best under the protecting nursery of poplars and cottonwoods, as one sees where the fire has run, and the quick growers are already shading the shy evergreens. And there is the same infant mortality among the young trees as in

human life. Too much shade, fire, drought, passing hoof, disease, blight, weeds out the weaklings up to adolescence. Then, the real business of living begins—it is a struggle, a race, a constant contention for the top, for the sunlight and air and peace at the top; and many a grand old tree [Pg 42] reaches the top only when ripe for death. Others live on their three score years and ten, their centuries, and in the case of the sugar pines and sequoias, their decades of centuries. First comes the self-pruning, the branches shaded by their neighbors dying and dropping off. And what a threshing of arms, of strength against strength, there is in the storm wind, every wrench tightening grip, to the rocks, some trees even sending down extra roots like guy ropes for anchorhold. The tree uncrowded by its fellows shoots up straight as a mast pole, whorl on whorl of its branches spelling its years in a century census. It is the crowded trees that show their almost human craft, their instinct of will to live—cork-screwing sidewise for light, forking into two branches where one branch is broken or shaded, twisting and bending, ever seeking the light, and spreading out only when they reach room for shoulder swing at the top, with such a mechanism of pumping machinery to hoist barrels of water up from secret springs in the earth as man has not devised for his own use. And now, when the crown has widened out to sun and air, it stops growing and bears its seeds—seeds shaped like parachutes and canoes and sails and wings, to overcome the law of its own fixity—life striving to surpass itself, as the symbolists and the scientists say, though symbolist and scientist would break each other's heads if you suggested that they both preach the very same thing.

And a lost tree is like a lost life; utter loss, bootless waste. You see it in the bleached skeleton spars of the dead forest where the burn has run. You see it where the wasteful lumberman has [Pg 43] come cutting half-growns and leaving stumps of full-growns three or four feet high with piles of dry slash to carry the first chance spark. The leaf litter here would have enriched the soil and the waste slash would keep the poor of an Eastern city in fuel. Once, at a public meeting, I happened to mention the ranger's rule that stumps must be cut no higher than eighteen inches, and the fact that in the big tree region of the Rocky Mountains many stumps are left three and four feet high. Someone took smiling exception to the height of those stumps. Yet in the redwood and Douglas fir country stumps are cut, not four feet, but nine feet high, leaving waste enough to build a small house. And it will take not a hundred, not two hundred, but a thousand years, to bring up a second growth of such trees.

Sitting down to dinner at a little mountain inn, I noticed only two families besides ourselves; and they were residents of the mountain. I thought of those hotels back in the cities daily turning away health seekers.

"How is it you haven't more people here, when the cities can't take care of all the people who come?" I asked the woman of the house.

"People don't seem to know about the National Forests," she said. "They think the forests are only places for lumber and mills."

CHAPTER III [Pg 44]

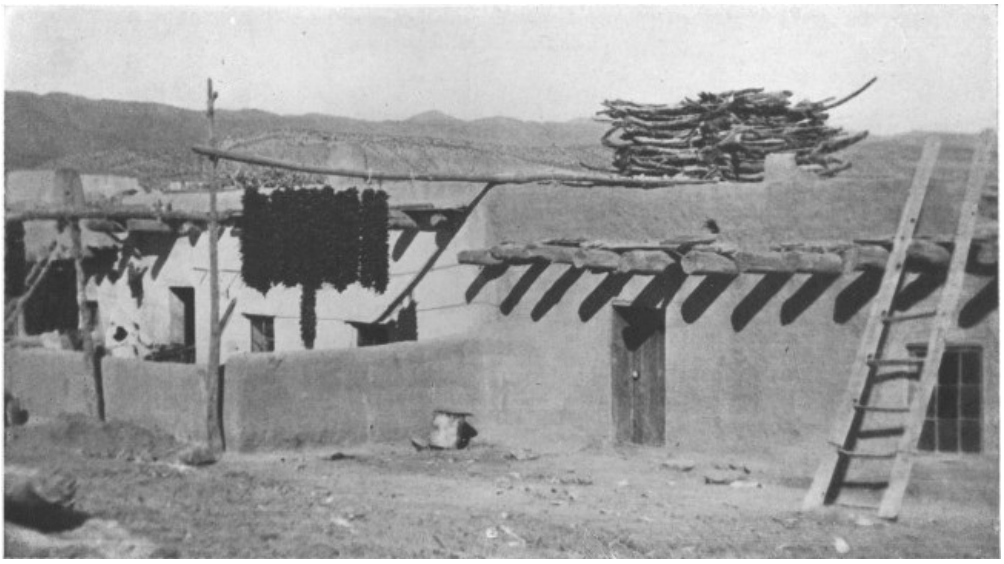
THROUGH THE PECOS NATIONAL FORESTS OF NEW MEXICO

The ordinary Easterner's idea of New Mexico is of a cloudless, sun-scorched land where you can cook an egg by laying it on the sand any day in the year, winter or summer. Yet when I went into the Pecos National Forest, I put on the heaviest flannels I have ever worn in northernmost Canada and found them inadequate. We were blocked by four feet of snow on the trail; and one morning I had to break the ice in my bedroom pitcher to get washing water. To be sure, it is hot enough in New Mexico at all seasons of the year; and you can cook that egg all right if you keep down on the desert sands of the southern lowlands and mesas; but New Mexico isn't all scorched lowlands and burnt-up mesas. You'll find your egg in cold storage if you go into the different National Forests, for most of them lie above an altitude of 8,000 feet; and at the headwaters of the Pecos, you are between 10,000 and 13,000 feet high, according as you camp on Baldy Pecos, or the Truchas, or Grass Mountain, or in Horse-Thief Cañon.

There are several other ways in which the National Forests of New Mexico discount Eastern [Pg 45] expectation.

First of all, they are cheap; and that is not true of the majority of trips through the West. Ordinarily, it costs more to take a trip to the wilds of the West than to go to Europe. What with enormous distances to be traversed and extortionate hotel charges, it is much cheaper to go to Paris than to San Francisco; but this is not true of the Forests of New Mexico. Prices have not yet been jacked up to "all the traffic will stand." The constant half-hour leak of tips at every turn is unknown. If you gave a tip to any of the ranch people who take care of you in the National Forests of Mexico, the chances are they would hand it back, leaving you a good deal smaller than you feel when you run the gauntlet of forty servitors lined up in a Continental hotel for tips. In letters of gold, let it be written across the face of the heavens—*There is still a no-tip land.* As prices rule to-day in New Mexico, you can literally take a holiday cheaper in the National Forests

than you can stay at home. Once you have reached the getting off place from the transcontinental railroad, it will cost you to go into the Forests $4 an hour by motor, and the roads are good enough to make a long trip fast. In fact, you can set down the cost of going in and out at not less than $2, nor more than $4. If you hire a team to go in, it will not cost you more than $4 a day, including driver, driver's meals and horse feed. Or you may still buy a pony in New Mexico at from $35 to $60, and so have your own horse for a six weeks' holiday. To rent a horse by the [Pg 46] month would probably not cost $20. Set your going in charges down at $2—where will you go? All through the National Forests of New Mexico are ranch houses, usually old Mexican establishments taken over and modernized, where you can board at from $8 to $10 a week. Don't picture to yourself an adobe dwelling with a wash basin at the back door and a roller towel that has been too popular; that day has been long passed in the ranches of New Mexico. The chances are the adobe has been whitewashed, and your room will look out either on the little courtyard in the center, or from the piazza outside down the valleys; and somewhere along the courtyard or piazza facing the valley will be a modern bathroom with hot and cold water. The dining-room and living-room will be after the style of the old Franciscan Mission architecture that dominates all the architecture of the Southwest—conical arches opening from one room into another, shut off, perhaps, by a wicket gate. Many of the ranch houses are flanked by dozens of little portable, one-roomed bungalows, tar-paper roof, shingle wainscot, and either white tenting or mosquito wire halfway up; and this is by all odds the best type of room for the health seeker who goes to New Mexico. He endangers neither himself nor others by housing close to neighbors. In fact, the number of health seekers living in such little portable boxes has become so great in New Mexico that they are locally known as "tent-dwellers." It need scarcely be said that there are dozens and dozens of ranch houses that will not take tuberculous patients; so there is no danger to ordinary comers seeking a holiday in the National Forests. On the other hand, there is no hardship worked on the invalid. For a sum varying from $50 to $100, he can buy his own ready-made, portable house; and arrangements can easily be made for sending in meals.



Chili peppers drying outside pueblo dwelling. The structure of sticks on the roof is a cage where an eagle is kept for its feathers, which are used in religious rites

The next surprise about the National Forests of New Mexico is the excellence of roads and trails. [Pg 47] You can go into the very heart of *most* of the Forests by motor, of *all* of the Forests by team (be sure to hire a strong wagon); and you can ride almost to the last lap of the highest peaks along bridle trails that are easy to the veriest beginner. In the Pecos Forest are five or six hundred miles of such trails cut by the rangers as their patrol route; and New Mexico has for some seasons been cutting a graded wagon road clear across the ridges of two mountain ranges, a great scenic highway from Santa Fe to Las Vegas, from eight to ten thousand feet above sea level. One of the most marvelous roads in the world it will be when it is finished, skirting inaccessible cañons, shy Alpine lakes and the eternal snows all through such a forest of huge mast pole yellow pine as might be the park domain of some old baronial lord on the Rhine. This road is now built halfway from each end. It is not clear of snow at the highest points till well on to the end of May; but you can enter the Pecos at any season at right angles to this road, going up the cañon from south to north.

The great surprise in the National Forests of New Mexico is the great plenitude of game; and I [Pg 48] suppose the Pecos of New Mexico and the White Mountains of Arizona are the only sections of America of which this can still be said. In two hours, you can pull out of the Pecos more trout than your entire camp can eat in two days. Wild turkey and quail still abound. Mountain lion and wildcat are still so frequent that they constitute a peril to the deer, and the Forest Service actually needs hunters to clear them out for preservation of the turkey and deer. As for bear, as many as eight have been trapped in three weeks on the Sangre de Christo Range. In one of the cañons forking off the Pecos at right angles, twenty-six were trapped and shot in three months.

Lastly, the mountain cañons of New Mexico are second in grandeur to none in the world. People here have not caught the climbing mania yet; that will come. But there are snow peaks of 13,500 feet yet awaiting the conqueror, and the scenery of the Upper Pecos might be a section of the

Alps or Canadian Rockies set bodily down in New Mexico. And please to remember—with all these advantages, cheapness, good accommodation, excellent trails and abundance of game—these National Forests of New Mexico are only one day from Kansas City, only two days from Chicago, only sixty hours from New York or Washington, which seems to prove that the National Forests are as much a possession to the East as to the West.

You can strike into the Pecos in one of three ways: by Santa Fe, by Las Vegas, or by Glorieta, all on the main line of the railroad. I entered by way of Glorieta because snow still packed the upper [Pg 49] portions of the scenic highway from Santa Fe and Las Vegas. As the train pants up over the arid hills, 6,000, 7,000, 7,500 feet, you would never guess that just behind these knolls of scrub pine and juniper, the foothills rolling back to the mountains, whose snow peaks you can see on the blue horizon, present a heavy growth of park-like yellow pine forests—trees eighty to 150 feet high, straight as a mast, clear of under-branching and underbrush, interspersed with cedar and juniper and Engelmann spruce. Ten years ago, before the Pecos was taken in the National Forests, goats and sheep ate these young pine seedlings down to the ground; but of late, herds have been permitted only where the seedlings have made headway enough to resist trampling, and thousands of acres are growing up to seedling yellow pines as regular and thrifty as if set out by nurserymen. In all, the Pecos Forest includes some 750,000 acres; and in addition to natural seeding, the Forest men are yearly harrowing in five or six hundred acres of yellow pine; so that in twenty-five years this Forest is likely to be more densely wooded than in its primeval state.

The train dumps you off at Glorieta, a little adobe Mexican town hedged in by the arid foothills, with ten-acre farm patches along the valley stream, of wonderfully rich soil, every acre under the ditch, a homemade system of irrigation which dates back to Indian days when the Spanish first came in the fifteen hundreds and found the same little checkerboard farm patches under the [Pg 50] same primitive ditch system. A glance tells you that nearly all these peon farms are goat ranches. The goats scrabble up over the hills; and on the valley fields the farmer raises corn and oats enough to support his family and his stock. We, in the East, who pay from $175 to $250 for a horse, and twenty to thirty cents a pound for our meat, open our eyes wide with wonder when we learn that horses can still be bought here for from $35 to $60 and meat at $2 a sheep. To be sure, this means that the peon Mexican farmer does not wax opulent, but he does not want to wax opulent; $40 or $100 a year keeps him better than $400 or $1,000 would keep you; and a happier looking lot of people you never saw than these swarthy descendants of old Spain still plowing with single horse wooden plows, with nothing better for a barn than a few sticks stuck up with a wattle roof.

Then suddenly, it dawns on you—this is not America at all. It is a bit of old Spain picked up three centuries ago and set down here in the wilderness of New Mexico, with a sprinkling of outsiders seeking health, and a sprinkling of nondescripts seeking doors in and out of mischief. The children in bright red and blue prints playing out squat in the fresh-plowed furrows, the women with red shawls over heads, brighter skirts tucked up, sprawling round the adobe house doorways, the goats bleating on the red sand hills—all complete the illusion that you have waked up in some picturesque nook of old Spain. What Quebec is to Canada, New Mexico is to the United States—a mosaic in color; a bit of the Old World set down in the New; a relic of the [Pg 51] historic and the picturesque not yet sandpapered into the commonplace by the friction of progress and democracy. I confess I am glad of it. I am glad there are still two nooks in America where simple folk are happy just to be alive, undisturbed by the "over-weaning ambition that over-vaulteth itself" and falls back in social envy and class hate. "Our people, no, they are not ambish!" said an old Mexican to me. "Dey do not wish wealfth—no—we have dis," pointing to all his own earthly belongings in the little whitewashed adobe room, "and now I will read you a little poem I make on de snow mountains. Hah! Iss not dis good?"

"Mighty good," though I was not thinking of the poem. I was thinking of the spirit that is contented enough to *see* poetry in the great white mountains through the door of a little whitewashed adobe room; and in this case, it was a sick room. Presently, he got up out of his bed, and donned an old military cape, and came out in the sunlight to have me photograph him, so that his friends would have it *after*.

Having reached Glorieta, you have decided which of the many ranch houses in the Pecos Forest you will stay at; or if you have not decided, a few words of inquiry with the station agent or a Forest Service man will put you wise; and you telephone in for rig or motor to come out for you. Any normal traveler does not need to be told that these ranch houses are not regular boarding [Pg 52] houses as you understand that term; but as a great many travelers are not normal, perhaps I should explain. The custom of taking strangers has arisen from those old days when there were no inns and all passers-by were given beds and meals as a matter of course. Those days are past, but luckily for outsiders, the custom survives; only remember while you pay, you go as a *guest*, and must not expect a valet to clean your boots and to quake at any discord of nerves untuned by the jar of town.

In half an hour after leaving the transcontinental train, we were spinning out by motor to the well-known Harrison Ranch, the rolling, earth-baked hills gradually rising, the forest growth thickening, the little checkerboard farms taking on more and more the appearance of settlement than on the desert which the railroads traverse. Presently, at an elevation of 8,000 feet; we pulled up in Pecos Town before the long, low, whitewashed ranch house, the two ends coming

back in an L round the court, the main entrance on the other side of it. You expected to find wilderness. Well, there is an upright piano, and there is a gramophone with latest musical records, and close by the davenport where hangs a grizzly bear pelt, stands a banjo. You have scarcely got travel togs off before dinner is sounded by the big copper ranch bell hung on the piazza after the fashion of the Missions.

After dinner, you go over to the Supervisor's office for advice on going up the cañon. Technically, this is not necessary; but it is wise for a great many reasons. He will tell you where to get, and [Pg 53] what to pay for, your camp outfit; where to go and how to go. He will show you a map with the leading trails and advise you as to the next stopping place. To hunt predatory animals—bear and wolf and cat and mountain lion—you need no permit; but if you are an outsider, you need one to get trout and turkey and deer. Another point: are you aware that you are going into a country as large as two or three of the Eastern States put together; and that the forests in the upper cañons are very dense; and that you might get lost; and that it is a good thing to leave somebody on the outside edge who knows where you have gone?

On my way back from the Supervisor's office, the sick man called me in and told me his life story and showed me his poem. As he is a Mexican, has been a delegate to the Constitutional Convention and is somewhat of a politician, it may be worth while setting down his views.

"What is going to happen in Old Mexico?"

"Ah, only one t'ing possible—los Americanos must go in."

"Why?"

"Well," with a shrug, "Diaz cannot—cannot control. Madero, he cannot control better dan Diaz. Los Americanos must go in."

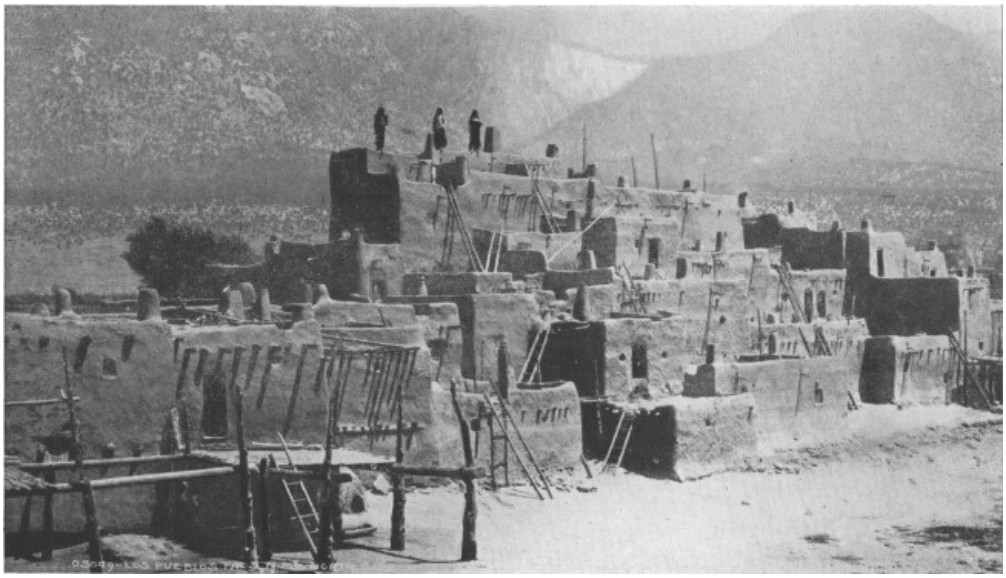
It is a bit of a surprise to find in this little Pecos Town of adobe huts set down higgledy-piggledy a tiny stone church with stained glass windows, a little gem in a wilderness. I slipped through the doors and sat watching the sunset through the colored windows and dreaming of the devotees [Pg 54] whose ideals had been built into the stones of these quiet walls.

Three miles lower down the valley is a still older church built in—well, they tell you all the way from 1548 and 1600 to 1700. I dare say the middle date is the nearest right. At all events, the bronze bell of this old ruin dated before 1700; and when preparations were under way for the Chicago World's Fair, these old Mission bells were so much in demand that the prices went up to $500; and the Mexicans of Pecos were so fearful of the desecrating thief that they carried this ancient bell away and buried it in the mountains—where, no man knows: it has never since been found. You have been told so often that the mountains of America lack human and historic interest that you have almost come to believe it. Does all this sound like lack of human interest? Yet it is most of it 8,000 feet above sea level, and much of it on the top of the snow peaks between ten and thirteen thousand feet up.

At eight o'clock Tuesday, April 18, I set out up the cañon with a span of stout, heavy horses, an exceptionally strong democrat wagon, and a very careful Mexican driver. To those who know mountain travel, I do not need to describe the trails up Pecos Cañon. I consider it a safer road than Broadway, New York, or Piccadilly, London; but people from Broadway or Piccadilly might not consider it so. It isn't a trail for a motor car, though the scenic highway cutting this at right [Pg 55] angles will be when it is finished; and it isn't a trail for a fool. The pedestrian who jumps forward and then back in dodging motors on Broadway, might turn several somersaults down this trail if trying experiments in the way of jumping. The trail is just the width of the wagon, and it clings to the mountain side above the brawling waters in Pecos Cañon, now down on a level with the torrent, now high up edging round ramparts of rock sheer as a wall. You load your wagon the heavier on the inner side both going and coming; and you sit with your weight on the inner side; and the driver keeps the brakes pretty well jammed down on sharp in-curves and the horses headed close in to the wall. With care, there is no danger whatever. Lumber teams traverse the road every day. With carelessness—well, last summer a rig and span and four occupants went over the edge head first: nobody hurt, as the steep slope is heavily wooded and you can't slide far.

Ranch after ranch you pass with the little portable houses for "the tent dwellers;" and let it be emphasized that well folk must be careful how they go into quarters which tuberculous patients have had. Carry your own collapsible drinking cup. Cabins and camps of city people from Texas, from the Pacific Coast, from Europe, dot the level knolls where the big pines stand like sentinels, and the rocks shade from wind and heat, and the eddying brook encircles natural lawn in trout pools and miniature waterfalls. Wherever the cañon widens to little fields, the Mexican farmer's [Pg 56] adobe hut stands by the roadside with an intake ditch to irrigate the farm. The road corkscrews up and up, in and out, round rock flank and rampart and battlement, where the cañon forks to right and left up other forested cañons, many of which, save for the hunter, have never known human tread. Straight ahead north there, as you dodge round the rocky abutments crisscrossing the stream at a dozen fords, loom walls and domes of snow, Baldy Pecos, a great ridge of white, the two Truchas Peaks going up in sharp summits. The road is called twenty miles as the crow flies; but this is not a trail as the crow flies. You are zigzagging back on your own track a dozen

places; and there is no lie as big as the length of a mile in the mountains, especially when the wheels go over stones half their own size. Where the snow peaks rear their summits is the head of Pecos Cañon—a sort of snow top to the sides of a triangle, the Santa Fe Range shutting off the left on the west, the Las Vegas or Sangre de Christo Mountains walling in the right on the east. I know of nothing like it for grandeur in America except the Rockies round Laggan in Canada.



The Pueblo of Taos, where the houses are practically communal dwellings five stories in height

I had put on heaviest flannels in the morning; and now donned in addition a cowboy slicker and was cold—this in a land where the Easterner thinks you can sizzle eggs by laying them on the sand. An old Mexican jumps into the front seat with the driver near a deserted mining camp, and the two sing snatches of Spanish songs as we ascend the cañon. Promptly at twelve, Tomaso turns back and asks me the time. When I say it is dinner, he digs out of his box a paper of soda biscuits and asks me to "have a crack." To reciprocate that kindness, I loan him my collapsible drinking cup to go down to the cañon for some water. Tomaso's courtesy is not to be outdone. After using, he dries that cup off with an ancient bandana, which I am quite sure has been used for ten years; but fortunately he does not offer me a drink. [Pg 57]

Winsor's Ranch marks the end of the wagon road up the cañon. From this point, travel must be on foot or horseback; and though the snow peaks seem to wall in the north, they are really fifteen miles away with a dozen cañons heavily forested like fields of wheat between you and them. In fact, if you followed up any of these side cañons, you would find them, too, dotted with ranch houses; but beyond them, upper reaches yet untrod.

Up to the right, above a grove of white aspens straight and slender as a bamboo forest, is a rounded, almost bare lookout peak 10,000 feet high known as Grass Mountain. We zigzag up the lazy switchback trail, past the ranger's log cabin, past a hunting lodge of some Texas club, through the fenced ranch fields of some New York health seekers come to this 10,000 feet altitude horse ranching; and that brings up another important feature of the "tent dwellers" in New Mexico. There is nothing worse for the consumptive than idle time to brood over his own depression. If he can combine outdoor sleeping and outdoor living and twelve hours of sunshine in a climate of pure ozone with an easy occupation, conditions are almost ideal for recovery; and [Pg 58] that is what thousands are doing—combining light farming, ranching, or fruit growing with the search for health. We passed the invalid's camp chair on this ranch where "broncho breaking" had been in progress.

Grass Mountain is used as a lookout station for fires on the Upper Pecos. The world literally lies at your feet. You have all the exaltation of the mountain climber without the travail and labor; for the rangers have cut an easy trail up the ridge; and you stand with the snow wall of the peaks on your north, the crumpled, purpling masses of the Santa Fe Range across the Pecos Cañon, and the whole Pecos Valley below you. Not a fire can start up for a hundred miles but the mushroom cone of smoke is visible from Grass Mountain and the rangers spur to the work of putting the fire out. Though thousands of outsiders camp and hunt in Pecos Cañon every year, not $50 loss has occurred through fire; and the fire patrol costs less than $47 a year. The "why" of this compared to the fire-swept regions of Idaho is simply a matter of trails. The rangers have cut five or six hundred miles of trails all through the Pecos, along which they can spur at breakneck speed to put out fires. In Idaho and Washington, thanks to the petty spites of local congressmen and senators, the Service has been so crippled by lack of funds that fewer trails have been cut through that heavy Northwest timber; and men cannot get out on the ground soon enough to stop the fire while it is small. So harshly has the small-minded policy of penuriousness reacted on the [Pg 59] Service in the Northwest that last year the rangers had to take up a subscription among themselves to bury the men who perished fighting fire. Pecos Service, too, had its struggle against spite and incendiarism in the old days; but that is a story long past; and to-day, Pecos stands as an example of what good trail making will do to prevent fires.

We walked across the almost flat table of Grass Mountain and looked down the east side into the

Las Vegas Cañon. Four feet of snow still clung to the east side of Grass Mountain, almost a straight precipice; and across the forested valley lay another ten or twelve feet of snow on the upper peaks of the Sangre de Christo Range. A pretty legend clings to that Sangre de Christo Range; and because people repeat the foolish statement that America's mountains lack legend and lore, I shall repeat it, though it is so very old. The holy *padre* was jogging along on his mule one night leading his little pack burro behind, but so deeply lost in his vesper thoughts that he forgot time and place. Suddenly, the mule stopped midway in the trail. The holy father looked up suddenly from his book of devotions. The rose-tinted afterglow of an Alpine sunset lay on the glistening snows of the great silent range. He muttered an *Ave Maria*; "Praise be God," he said; "for the Blood of Christ;" and as Sangre de Christo the great white ridge has been known ever since.

CHAPTER IV

[Pg 60]

THE CITY OF THE DEAD IN FRIJOLES CAÑON

I am sitting in one of the caves of the Stone Age. This is not fiction but fact. I am not speculating as to *how* those folk of neolithic times lived. I am writing in one of the cliff houses *where* they lived, sitting on the floor with my feet resting on the steps of an entrance stone stairway worn hip-deep through the volcanic rock by the moccasined tread of æons of ages. Through the cave door, looking for all the world from the outside like a pigeon box, I can see on the floor of the valley a community house of hundreds of rooms, and a sacred *kiva* or ceremonial chamber where gods of fire and water were invoked, and a circular stone floor where men and women danced the May-pole before Julius Cæsar was born, before—if Egyptian archæologists be correct—the dynasties of the Nile erected Pyramid and Sphinx to commemorate their own oblivion. To my right and left for miles—for twelve miles, to be correct—are thousands of such cave houses against the face of the cliff, as the one in which I now write. Boxed up by the snow-covered Jemez (Hamez) Mountains at one end, with a black basalt gash in the rock at the other end through which roars a mountain torrent and waterfalls too narrow for two men to walk abreast, with [Pg 61] vertical walls of yellow pumice straight up and down as if leveled by a giant trowel, in this valley of the Frijoles waters once dwelt a nation, dead and gone before the Spaniards came to America, vanished leaving not the shadow of a record behind long before William the Conqueror crossed to England, contemporaneous, perhaps—for all science knows to the contrary—with that 20,000 B.C. Egyptian desert runner lying in the British Museum.

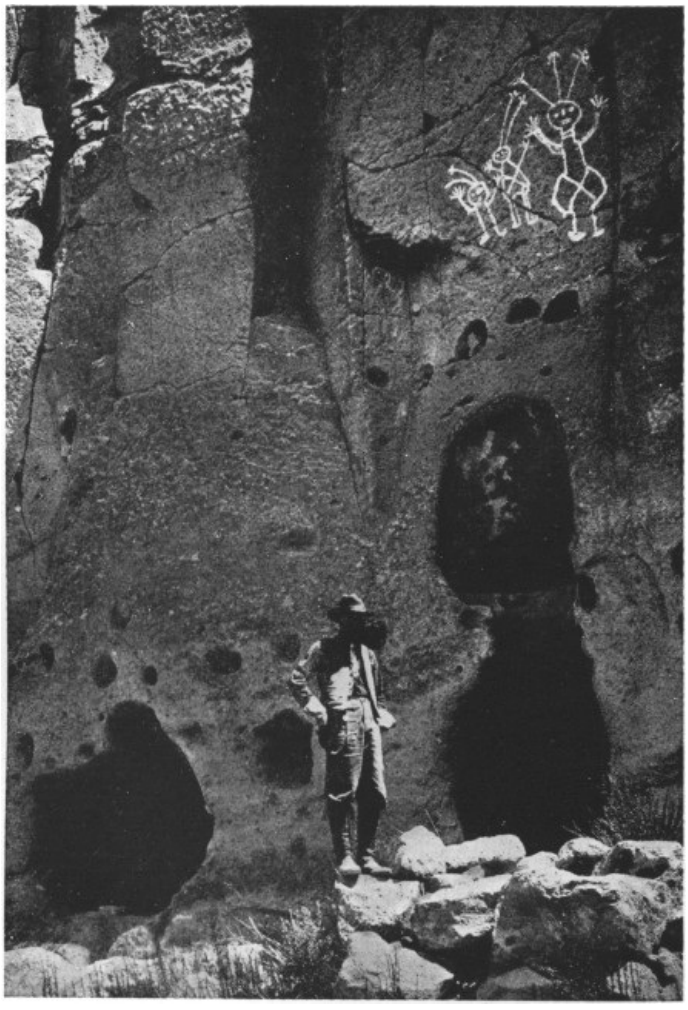
Lying in my tent camp last night listening to coyote and fox barking and to owls hooting from the dead silent city of the yellow cliff wall, I fell to wondering on this puzzle of archæologist and historian—what desolated these bygone nations? The theory of desiccation, or drought, so plausible elsewhere, doesn't hold for one minute when you are here on the spot; for there is the mountain brook brawling through the Valley not five minutes' scramble from any one of these caves; and there on the far western sky-line are the snows of the Jemez Mountains, which must have fed this brook since this part of the earth began. Was it war, or pestilence, or captivity, that made of the populous city a den of wolves, a resort for hoot owl and bittern and fox? If pestilence, then why are the skeletons not found in the great ossuaries and masses that mark the pestilential destruction of other Indian races? There remain only the alternatives of war, or captivity; and of either, not the vestige of a shadow of a tradition remains. One man's guess is as good as another's; and the scientist's guesses vary all the way from 8,000 B. C. to 400 A. D. So there you [Pg 62] are! You have as good a right to a guess as the highest scientist of them all; and while I refrain from speculation, I want to put on record the definite, provable fact that these people of the Stone Age were not the gibbering, monkey-tailed maniacs of claw finger nails and simian jaw which the half-baked pseudo-evolutionist loves to picture of Stone Age denizens. As Jack Donovan, a character working at Judge Abbott's in the Valley said—"Sure, monkey men wud a' had a haard time scratchin' thro' thim cliffs and makin' thim holes in the rocks." Remnants of shard and pottery, structure of houses, decorations and woven cloths and skins found wrapped as cerements round the dead all prove that these men were a sedentary and for that age civilized people. When our Celt and Saxon ancestors were still chasing wild boars through the forests, these people were cultivating corn on the Upper and Lower Mesas. When Imperial Rome's common populace boasted few garments but the ones in which they had been born, these people were wearing a cloth woven of fiber and rushes. When European courts trod the stately over floors of filthy rushes, these cliff dwellers had flooring of plaster and cement, and rugs of beaver and wolf and bear. All this you can see with your own eyes by examining the caves and skeletons of the Jemez Forests; and the fine glaze of the beautiful pottery work is as lost an art as the pigments of old Italy.

As you go into the Pecos Forests to play, so you go into the Jemez to dream. You go to Pecos to hunt and fish. So you do to the Jemez; but it is historic fact you are hunting and a reconstruction [Pg 63] of the record of man you are fishing for. As the Pecos Forests appeal to the strenuous holiday hunter—the man who considers he has not had his fun till he has broken a leg killing a bear, or stood mid-waist in snow-water stringing fish on a line like beads on a string—so the Jemez

appeals to the dreamer, the scholar, the scientist, the artist; and I can imagine no more ideal (nor cheaper) holiday than to join the American School of Archæology, about which I have already spoken, that comes in here with scientists from every quarter of the world every midsummer to camp, and dig, and delve, and revel in the past of moonlight nights round campfires before retiring to sleeping quarters in the caves along the face of the cliff. The School has been a going concern for only a few years. Yet last year over 150 scientists came in from every quarter of the globe.

Spite of warnings to the contrary given to me both East and West, the trip to the Jemez is one of the easiest and cheapest you can make in America. You strike in from Santa Fe; and right here, let me set down as emphatically as possible, two or three things pleasant and unpleasant about Santa Fe.

First, it is the most picturesque and antique spot in America, not excepting Quebec. Color, age, leisure; a medley of races; sand-hills engirt by snow sky-line for eighty miles; the honking of a motor blending with the braying of a Mexican burro trotting to market loaded out of sight under a wood pile; Old Spain and New America; streets with less system and order about them than an [Pg 64] ant hill, with a modern Woman's Board of Trade that will make you mind your P's and Q's and toe the sanitary scratch if you are apt to be slack; the chimes, and chimes and chimes yet again of old Catholic churches right across from a Wild West Show where a throaty band is screeching Yankee-Doodle; little adobe houses where I never quite know whether I am entering by the front door or the back; the Palace where Lew Wallace wrote Ben Hur, and eighty governors of three different nationalities preceded him, and where the Archæological Society has its rooms with Lotave's beautiful mural paintings of the Cliff Dwellers, and where the Historical Society has neither room nor money enough to do what it ought in a region that is such a mine of history. Such is Santa Fe; the only bit of Europe set down in America; I venture to say the only picturesque spot in America, yet undiscovered by the jaded globe-trotter.



Above this entrance to a cliff dwelling in the Jemez Forest are drawings by the prehistoric inhabitants

Second, I want to put on record that Santa Fe should be black ashamed of itself for hiding its [Pg 65] light under a bushel. Ask a Santa Fe man why in the world, with all its attraction of the picturesque, the antique, the snowy mountains, and the weak-lunged one's ideal climate, it has so few tourists; and he answers you with a depreciatory shrug that "it's off the main line." "Off the main line?" So is Quebec off the main line; yet 200,000 Americans a year see it. So is Yosemite off the main line; and 10,000 people go out to it every year. I have never heard that the Nile and the Pyramids and the Sphinx were on the main line; yet foreigners yearly reap a fortune catering to visiting Americans. Personally, it is a delight to me to visit a place untrodden by the jaded globe-trotter, for I am one myself; but whether it is laziness that prevents Santa Fe blowing its own

horn, or the old exclusive air bequeathed to it by the grand dons of Spain that is averse to sounding the brass band, I love the appealing, picturesque, inert laziness of it all; but I love better to ask: "Why go to Egypt, when you have the wonders of an Egypt unexplored in your own land? Why scour the crowded Alps when the snowy domes of the Santa Fe and Jemez and Sangre de Christo lie unexplored only an easy motor ride from your hotel?" If Santa Fe, as it is, were known to the big general public, 200,000 tourists a year would find delight within its purlieus; and while I like the places untrodden by travelers, still—being an outsider, myself,—I should like the outsiders to know the same delight Santa Fe has given me.

To finish with the things of the mundane, you strike in to Santa Fe from a desolate little junction called Lamy, where the railroad has built a picturesque little doll's house of a hotel after the fashion of an old Spanish mansion. To reach the Jemez Forests where the ruins of the Cave Dwellers exist, you can drive or motor (to certain sections only) or ride. As the distance is forty miles plus, you will find it safer and more comfortable to drive. If you take a driver and a team, and keep both over two days, it will cost you from $10 to $14 for the round trip. If you go in on a burro, you can buy the burro outright for $5 or $10. (Don't mind if your feet do drag on the [Pg 66] ground. It will save being pitched.) If you go out with the American School of Archæology (Address Santa Fe for particulars) your transportation will cost you still less, perhaps not $2. Once out, in the cañons of the Cave Dwellers, you can either camp out with your own tenting and food; or put up at Judge Abbott's hospitable ranch house; or quarter yourself free of charge in one of the thousands of cliff caves and cook your own food; or sleep in the caves and pay for your meals at the ranch. At most, your living expenses will not exceed $2 a day. If you do your own cooking, they need not be $1 a day.

One of the stock excuses for Americans not seeing their own country is that the cost is so extortionate. Does this sound extortionate?

I drove out by livery because I was not sure how else to find the way. We left Santa Fe at six A. M., the clouds still tingeing the sand-hills. I have heard Eastern art critics say that artists of the Southwest laid on their colors too strongly contrasted, too glaring, too much brick red and yellow ocher and purple. I wish such critics had driven out with me that morning from Santa Fe. Gregoire Pedilla, the Mexican driver, grew quite concerned at my silence and ran off a string of good-natured nonsense to entertain me; and all the while, I wanted nothing but quiet to revel in the intoxication of shifting color. Twenty miles more or less, we rattled over the sand-hills before we began to climb in earnest; and in that time we had crossed the muddy, swirling Rio Grande [Pg 67] and left the railroad behind and passed a deserted lumber camp and met only two Mexican teams on the way.

From below, the trail up looks appalling. It seems to be an ash shelf in pumice-stone doubling back and back on itself, up and up, till it drops over the top of the sky-line; but the seeming riskiness is entirely deceptive. Travel wears the soft volcanic *tufa* hub deep in ash dust, so that the wheels could not slide off if they tried; and once you are really on the climb, the ascent is much more gradual than it looks. In fact, our horses took it at a trot without urging. A certain Scriptural dame came to permanent grief from a habit of looking back; but you will miss half the joy of going up to the Pajarito Plateau if you do not look back towards Santa Fe. The town is hidden in the sand-hills. The wreaths have gone off the mountain, and the great white domes stand out from the sky for a distance of eighty miles plain as if at your feet, with the gashes of purple and lilac where the passes cut into the range. Then your horses take their last turn and you are on top of a foothill mesa and see quite plainly why you have to drive 40 miles in order to go 20. Here, White Rock Cañon lines both sides of the Rio Grande—precipices steep and sheer as walls, cut sharp off at the top as a huge square block; and coming into this cañon at right angles are the cañons where lived the ancient Cliff Dwellers—some of them hundreds of feet above the Rio Grande, with opening barely wide enough to let the mountain streams fall through. To reach [Pg 68] these inaccessible cañons, you must drive up over the mesa, though the driver takes you from eight to ten thousand feet up and down again over cliffs like a stair.

We lunched in a little water cañon, which gashed the mesa side where a mountain stream came down. Such a camping place in a dry land is not to be passed within two hours of lunching time, for in some parts of the Southwest many of the streams are alkali; and a stream from the snows is better than wine. Beyond our lunching place came the real reason for this particular cañon being inaccessible to motors—a climb steep as a stair over a road of rough bowlders with sharp climbing turns, which only a Western horse can take. Then, we emerged on the high upper mesa —acres and acres of it, thousands of acres of it, open like a park but shaded by the stately yellow pine, and all of it above ordinary cloud-line, still girt by that snowy range of opal peaks beyond. We followed the trail at a rattling pace—the Archæological School had placed signs on the trees to Frijoles Cañon—and presently, by great mounds of building stone covered feet deep by the dust and débris of ages, became aware that we were on historic ground. Nor can the theory of drought explain the abandonment of this mesa. While it rains heavily only two months in the year —July and August—the mesa is so high that it is subject to sprinkling rains all months of the year; to be sure not enough for springs, but ample to provide forage and grow corn; and for water, these sky-top dwellers had access to the water cañons both before and behind. What hunting [Pg 69] ground it must have been in those old days! Even yet you are likely to meet a flock of wild turkey face to face; or see a mountain lion slink away, or hear the bark of coyote and fox.

"Is this it, Gregoire?" I asked. The mound seemed irregularly to cover several acres—pretty extensive remains, I thought.

"Ah, no—no Señorita—wait," warned Gregoire expectantly.

I had not to wait long. The wagon road suddenly broke off short and plumb as if you tossed a biscuit over the edge of the Flatiron roof. I got out and looked down and then—went dumb! Afterwards, Mrs. Judge Abbott told me they thought I was afraid to come down. It wasn't that! The thing so far surpassed anything I had ever dreamed or seen; and the color—well—those artists accused of over-coloration could not have over-colored if they had tried. Pigments have not been invented that could do it!

Picture to yourself two precipices three times the height of Niagara, three times the height of the Metropolitan Tower, sheer as a wall of blocked yellow and red masonry, no wider apart than you can shout across, ending in the snows of the Jemez to the right, shut in black basalt walls to the left, forested with the heavy pines to the very edge and down the blocky tiers of rocks and escarpments running into blind angles where rain and sun have dyed the terra cotta pumice blood-red. And picture the face of the cliff under your feet, the sides of the massive rocks eroded [Pg 70] to the shapes of tents and tepees and beehives, pigeon-holed by literally thousands of windows and doors and arched caves and winding recess and portholes—a city of the dead, silent as the dead, old almost as time!

The wind came soughing up the cañon with the sound of the sea. The note of a lonely song sparrow broke the silence in a stab. Somewhere, down among the tender green, lining the cañon stream, a mourning dove uttered her sad threnody—then, silence and the soughing wind; then, more silence; then, if I had done what I wanted to, I would have sat down on the edge of the cañon wall and let the palpable past come touching me out of the silence.

A community house of some hundreds of rooms lay directly under me in the floor of the valley. This was once a populous city twelve miles long, a city of one long street, with the houses tier on tier above each other, reached by ladders, and steps worn hip-deep in the stone. Where had the people gone; and why? What swept their civilization away? When did the age-old silence fall? Seven thousand people do not leave the city of their building and choice, of their loves and their hates, and their wooing and their weddings, of their birth and their deaths—do not leave without good reason. What was the reason? What gave this place of beauty and security and thrift over to the habitation of bat and wolf? Why did the dead race go? Did they flee panic-stricken, pursued like deer by the Apache and the Ute and the Navajo? Or were they marched out captives, [Pg 71] weeping? Or did they fall by the pestilence? Answer who can! Your guess is as good as mine! But there is the sacred ceremonial underground chamber where they worshiped the sacred fire and the plumed serpent, guardian of the springs; where the young boys were taken at time of manhood and instructed in virtue and courage and endurance and cleanliness and reticence. "If thou art stricken, die like the deer with a silent throat," says the adage of the modern Pueblo Indian. "When the foolish speak, keep thou silent." "When thou goest on the trail, carry only a light blanket." Good talk, all of it, for young boys coming to realize themselves and life! And there farther down the valley is the stone circle or dancing floor where the people came down from their cliff to make merry and express in rhythm the emotions which other nations express in poetry and music. The whole city must have been the grandstand when the dancing took place down there.

It was Gregoire who called me to myself.

"We cannot take the wagon down there," he said. "No wagon has ever gone down here. You walk down slow and I come with the horses, one by one."

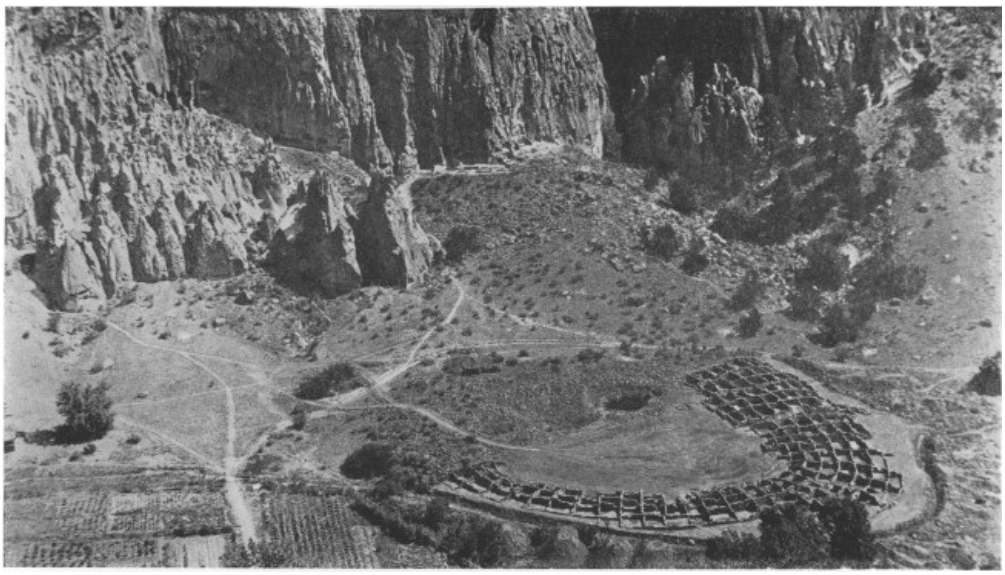
It sounded a good deal easier than it looked. I haven't seen a steeper stair; and if you imagine five ladders trucked up zigzag against the Flatiron Building and the Flatiron Building three times higher than it is, you'll have an idea of the appearance of the situation; but it looked a great deal harder than it really was, and the trail has since been improved. The little steps cut in the [Pg 72] volcanic *tufa* or white pumice are soft and offer a grip to foothold. They grit to your footstep and do not slide like granite and basalt, though if New Mexico wants to make this wonderful Frijoles Cañon accessible to the public, or if the Archæological School can raise the means and coöperate with the Forestry Service trail makers, a broad graded wagon road should be cut down the face of this cañon, graded gradually enough for a motor. The day that is done, visitors will number not 150 a year but 150,000; for nothing more exquisitely beautiful and wonderful exists in America.

It seems almost incredible that Judge and Mrs. Abbott have brought down this narrow, steep tier of 600 steps all the building material, all the furniture, and all the farm implements for their charming ranch place; but there the materials are and there is no other trail in but one still less accessible.

That afternoon, Mrs. Abbott and I wandered up the valley two or three miles and visited the high arched ceremonial cave hundreds of feet up the face of the precipice. The cave was first discovered by Judge and Mrs. Abbott on one of their Sunday afternoon walks. The Archæological School under Dr. Hewitt cleared out the débris and accumulated erosion of centuries and put the ceremonial chamber in its original condition. "Restoring the ruins" does not mean "manufacturing ruins." It means digging out the erosion that has washed and washed for thousands of years down the hillsides during the annual rains. All the caves have been originally plastered in a sort of terra cotta or ocher stucco. When that is reached and the charred wooden [Pg 73]

beams of the smoked, arched ceilings, restoration stops. The aim is to put the caves as they were when the people abandoned them. On the floors is a sort of rock bottom of plaster or rude cement. When this is reached, digging stops. It is in the process of digging down to these floors that the beautiful specimens of prehistoric pottery have been rescued. Some of these specimens may be seen in Harvard and Yale and the Smithsonian and the Natural History Museum in New York, and in the Santa Fe Palace, and the Field Museum of Chicago. Sometimes as many as four feet of erosion have overlaid the original flooring. When digging down to the flooring of the ceremonial cave, an *estufa* or sacred secret underground council chamber was found; and this, too, was restored. The pueblo of roofless chambers seen from the hilltop on the floor of the valley was dug from a mound of débris. In fact, too great praise cannot be given Dr. Hewitt and his co-workers for their labors of restoration; and the fact that Dr. Hewitt was a local man has added to the effectiveness of the work, for he has been in a position to learn from New Mexican Indians of any discoveries and rumors of discoveries in any of the numerous caves up the Rio Grande. For instance, when about halfway down the trail that first day, at the Frijoles Cañon or Rito de los Frijoles, as it is called, I met on an abrupt bend in the trail a Pueblo Indian from Santa Clara—blue jean suit, red handkerchief around neck, felt hat, huge silver earrings and teeth white as [Pg 74] pearls—Juan Gonzales, one of the workers in the cañon, who knows every foot of the Rio Grande. Standing against the white pumice background, it was for an instant as if one of the cave people had stepped from the past. Well, it was Wan, as we outsiders call him, who one day brought word to the Archæological workers that he had found in the pumice dust in one of the caves the body of a woman. The cave was cleaned out or restored, and proved to be a back apartment or burial chamber behind other chambers, which had been worn away by the centuries' wash. The cerements of the body proved to be a woven cloth like burlap, and beaver skin. There you may see the body lying to-day, proving that these people understood the art of weaving long before the Flemings had learned the craft from Oriental trade.

You could stay in the Rito Cañon for a year and find a cave of fresh interest each day. For instance, there is the one where the form of a huge plumed serpent has been etched like a molding round under the arched roof. The serpent, it was, that guarded the pools and the springs; and when one considers where snakes are oftenest found, it is not surprising that the serpent should have been taken as a totem emblem. Many of the chambers show six or seven holes in the floor—places to connect with the Great Earth Magician below. Little alcoves were carved in the arched walls for the urns of meal and water; and a sacred fireplace was regarded with somewhat the same veneration as ancient Orientals preserved their altar fires. In one cave, some old Spanish *padre* has come and carved a huge cross, in rebuke to pagan symbols. Other large arched caves have housed the wandering flocks of goats and sheep in the days of the Spanish régime; and there are other caves where horse thieves and outlaws, who infested the West after the Civil War, hid secure from detection. In fact, if these caves could speak they "would a tale unfold."



Looking down on the ruins of a prehistoric dwelling from one of the upper caves in the Rito de las Frijoles, New Mexico

The aim of the Archæological Society is year by year to restore portions till the whole Rito is [Pg 75] restored; but at the present rate of financial aid, complete restoration can hardly take place inside a century. When you consider that the Rito is only one of many prehistoric areas of New Mexico, of Utah, of Colorado, awaiting restoration, you are constrained to wish that some philanthropist would place a million or two at the disposal of the Archæological Society. If this were done, no place on earth could rival the Rito; for the funds would make possible not only the restoration of the thousands of mounds buried under tons of débris, but it would make the Cañon accessible to the general public by easier, nearer roads. The inaccessibility of the Rito may be in harmony with its ancient character; but that same inaccessibility drives thousands of tourists to Egypt instead of the Jemez Forests.

There are other things to do in the Cañon besides explore the City of the Dead. Wander down the bed of the stream. You are passing through parks of stately yellow pine, and flowers which no

botanist has yet classified. There is the globe cactus high up on the black basalt rocks, blood-red and fiery as if dyed in the very essence of the sun. There is the mountain pink, compared to which our garden and greenhouse beauties are pale as white woman compared to a Hopi. There is the short-stemmed English field daisy, white above, rosy red below, of which Tennyson sings in "Maud." Presently, you notice the stream banks crushing together, the waters tumbling, the pumice changing to granite and basalt; and you are looking over a fall sheer as a plummet, fine as mist. [Pg 76]

Follow farther down! The cañon is no longer a valley. It is a corridor between rocks so close they show only a slit of sky overhead; and to follow the stream bed, you must wade. Beware how you do that on a warm day when a thaw of snow on the peaks might cause a sudden freshet; for if the waters rose here, there would be no escape! The day we went down a thaw was not the danger. It was cold; the clouds were looming rain, and there was a high wind. We crept along the rock wall. Narrower and darker grew the passageway. The wind came funneling up with a mist of spray from below; and the mossed rocks on which we waded were slippery as only wet moss can be. We looked over! Down—down—down—tumbled the waters of the Rito, to one black basin in a waterfall, then over a ledge to another in spray, then down—down—down to the Rio Grande, many feet below. You come back from the brink with a little shiver, but it was a shiver of sheer delight. No wonder dear old Bandelier, the first of the great archæologists to study this region, opens his quaint myth with the simple words—"The Rito is a beautiful place." [Pg 77]

CHAPTER V [Pg 78]

THE ENCHANTED MESA OF ACOMA

They call it "the Enchanted Mesa," this island of ocher rock set in a sea of light, higher than Niagara, beveled and faced straight up and down as if smoothed by some giant trowel. One great explorer has said that its flat top is covered by ruins; and another great scientist has said that it isn't. Why quarrel whether or not this is the Enchanted Mesa? The whole region is an Enchanted Mesa, a Painted Desert, a Dream Land where mingle past and present, romance and fact, chivalry and deviltry, the stately grandeur of the old Spanish don and the smart business tricks of modern Yankeedom.

Shut your mind to the childish quarrel whether there is a heap of old pottery shards on top of that mesa, or whether the man who said there was carried it up with him; whether the Hopi hurled the Spaniards off that particular cliff, or off another! Shut your mind to the childish, present-day bickering, and the past comes trooping before you in painted pageantry more gorgeous and stirring than fiction can create. First march the enranked old Spanish dons encased in armor-plate from visor to leg greaves, in this hot land where the very touch of metal is a burn. Back at Santa Fe, in Governor Prince's fine collection, you can see one of the old breastplates dug up from these Hopi mesas with the bullet hole square above the heart. Of course, your old Spanish dons are followed by cavalry on the finest of mounts, and near the leader rides the priest. Sword and cross rode grandly in together; and up to 1700, sword and cross went down ignominiously before the fierce onslaught of the enraged Hopi. I confess it does not make much difference to me whether the Spaniards were hurled to death from this mesa—called Enchanted—or that other ahead there, with the village on the tip-top of the cliff like an old castle, or eagle's nest. The point is—pagan hurled Christian down; and for two centuries the cross went down with the sword before savage onslaught. Martyr as well as soldier blood dyed these ocher-walled cliffs deeper red than their crimson sands. [Pg 79]

Then out of the romantic past comes another era. The Navajo warriors have obtained horses from the Spaniards; and henceforth, the Navajo is a winged foe to the Hopi people across Arizona and New Mexico. You can imagine him with his silver trappings and harnessings and belts and necklaces and turquoise-set buttons down trouser leg, scouring below these mesas to raid the flocks and steal the wives of the Hopi; and the Hopi wives take revenge by conquering their conqueror, bringing the arts and crafts of the Hopi people—silver work, weaving, basketry—into the Navajo tribe. I confess it does not make much difference to me whether the raid took place a minute before midday, or a second after nightfall. I can't see the point to this breaking of historical heads over trifles. The point is that after the incoming of Spanish horses and Spanish firearms, the Navajos became a terror to the Hopi, who took refuge on the uppermost tip-top of the highest mesas they could find. There you can see their cities and towns to this day. [Pg 80]

And if you let your mind slip back to still remoter eras, you are lost in a maze of antiquities older than the traditions of Egypt. Draw a line from the Manzano Forests east of Albuquerque west through Isleta and Laguna and Acoma and Zuñi and the three mesas of Arizona to Oraibi and Hotoville for 400 miles to the far west, and along that line you will find ruins of churches, temples, council halls, call them what you will, which antedate the coming of the Spaniards by so many centuries that not even a tradition of their object remained when the conquerors came. Some of these ruins—in the Manzanos and in western Arizona—would house a modern cathedral and seat an audience of ten thousand. What were they: council halls, temples, what? And what reduced the nation that once peopled them to a remnant of nine or ten thousand Hopi all told? Do you not see how the past of this whole Enchanted Mesa, this Painted Desert, this Dream Land, is more romantic than fiction could create, or than picayune historic disputes as to dates and

broken crockery?

A Hopi wooing, which has an added interest in that among the Hopi Indians, women are the rulers of the household

There are prehistoric cliff dwellings in this region of as great marvel as up north of Santa Fe; [Pg 81] north of Ganado at Chin Lee, for instance. But if you wish to see the modern descendants of these prehistoric Cliff Dwellers, you can see them along the line of the National Forests from the Manzanos east of Albuquerque to the Coconino and Kaibab at Grand Cañon in Arizona. Let me explain here also that the Hopi are variously known as Moki, Zuñi, Pueblos; but that Hopi, meaning peaceful and life-giving, is their generic name; and as such, I shall refer to them, though the western part of their reserve is known as Moki Land. You can visit a pueblo at Isleta, a short run by railroad from Albuquerque; but Isleta has been so frequently "toured" by sightseers, I preferred to go to the less frequented pueblos at Laguna and Acoma, just south of the western Manzano National Forests, and on up to the three mesas of the Moki Reserve in Arizona. Also, when you drive across Moki Land, you can cross the Navajo Reserve, and so kill two birds with one stone.

Up to the present, the inconvenience of reaching Acoma will effectually prevent it ever being "toured." When you have to take a local train that lands you in an Indian town where there is no hotel at two o'clock in the morning, or else take a freight, which you reach by driving a mile out of town, fording an irrigation ditch and crawling under a barb wire fence—there is no immediate danger of the objective point being rushed by tourist traffic. This is a mistake both for the tourist and for the traffic. If anything as unique and wonderful as Acoma existed in Egypt or Japan, it would be featured and visited by thousands of Americans yearly. As it is, I venture to say, not a [Pg 82] hundred travelers see Acoma's Enchanted Mesa in a year, and half the number going out fail to see it properly owing to inexperience in Western ways of meeting and managing Indians. For instance, the day before I went out, a traveler all the way from Germany had dropped off the transcontinental and taken a local freight for the Hopi towns. When a tourist wants to see things in Germany, he finds a hundred willing palms out to collect and point the way; but when a tourist leaves the beaten trail in America, if he asks too many questions, he is promptly told to "go to—" I'll not say where. That German wasn't in a good mood when he dropped off the freight train at Laguna. Good rooms you can always get at the Marmons, but there is no regular meal place except the section house. If you are a good Westerner, you will carry your own luncheon, or take cheerful pot luck as it comes; but the German wasn't a good Westerner; and it didn't improve his temper to have butter served up mixed with flies to the tune of the landlady's complaint that "it didn't pay nohow to take tourists" and she "didn't see what she did it for anyway."

They tell you outside that it is a hard drive, all the way from twenty-five to thirty miles to Acoma. Don't you believe it! For once, Western miles are too short. The drive is barely eighteen miles and

as easy as on a paved city street; but the German had left most of his temper at Laguna. When he reached the foot of the steep acclivity leading up to the town of Acoma on the very cloud-crest of a rampart rock and found no guide, he started up without one and, of course, missed the way. [Pg 83] How he ever reached the top without breaking his neck is a wonder. The Indians showed me the way he had come and said they could not have done it themselves. Anyway, what temper he had not left at Laguna he scattered sulphurously on the rocks before he reached the crest of Acoma; and when he had climbed the perilous way, he was too fatigued to go on through the town. The whole episode is typically characteristic of our stupid short-sightedness as a continent to our own advantage. A $20 miner's tent at Laguna for meals, another at Acoma, a good woman in charge at the Laguna end to put up the lunches, a $10 a month Indian boy to show tourists the way up the cliff—and thousands of travelers would go in and come out with satisfaction. Yet here is Acoma, literally the Enchanted, unlike anything else in the whole wide world; and it is shut off from the sightseer because enterprise is lacking to put in $100 worth of equipment and set the thing going. Is it any wonder people say that Europeans live on the opportunities Americans throw away? If Acoma were in Germany, they would be diverting the Rhine round that way so you could see it by moonlight.

Being a Westerner, it didn't inconvenience me *very* seriously to rise at four, and take a cab at five, and drive out from Albuquerque a mile to the freight yards, where it was necessary to wet one's feet in an *acequia* ditch and crawl under a barb wire fence to reach the caboose. The desert sunrise atoned for all—air pure wine, the red-winged blackbirds, thousands of them, whistling [Pg 84] sheer joy of life along the overflow swamps of the irrigation canals. The train passes close enough to the pueblo of Isleta for you to toss a stone into the back yards of the little adobe dwellings; but Isleta at best is now a white-man edition of Hopi type. Few of the houses run up tier on tier as in the true pueblo; and the gorgeous skirts and shirts seen on the figures moving round the doors are nothing more nor less than store calico in diamond dyes. In the true Hopi pueblo, these garments would be sun-dyed brown skin on the younger children, and home-woven, vegetable-dyed fabric on the grown-ups. The true Hopi skirt is nothing more nor less than an oblong of home-woven cloth, preferably white, or vegetable blue, brought round to overlap in front under a belt, with, perhaps, shoulder straps like a man's braces. A shawl over nature's undergarments completes the native costume; and the little monkey-shaped bare feet cramped from long scrambling over the rocks get better grip on steep stone stairs than civilized boots, though many of the pueblo women are now affecting the latter.

The freight train climbs and climbs into the gypsum country of terrible drought, where nothing grows except under the ditch, and the cattle lie dead of thirst, and the wind blows a hurricane of dust that almost knocks you off your feet.

The railroad passes almost through the lower streets of Laguna; so that when you look up, you see tier upon tier of streets and three-story houses up and up to the Spanish Church that crowns [Pg 85] the hill. You get off at Laguna, but do not waste much time there; for the glories of Laguna are past. Long ago—in the fifties or thereabouts—the dam to the lagoon which gives the community its name broke, letting go a waste of flood waters; and since that time, the men of Laguna have had to go away for work, the women only remaining constantly at the village engaged herding their flocks and making pottery. Perhaps it should be stated here in utter contradiction to the Herbert Spencer school of sociology that among the Hopi the women not only rule but own the house and all that therein is. The man may claim the corn patch outside the town limits, where you see rags stuck on sticks marking each owner's bounds; or if he attends the flocks he may own them; but the woman is as supreme a ruler in the house as in the Navajo tribe, where the supreme deity is female. If the man loses affection for his spouse, he may gather up his saddle and bridle, and leave.

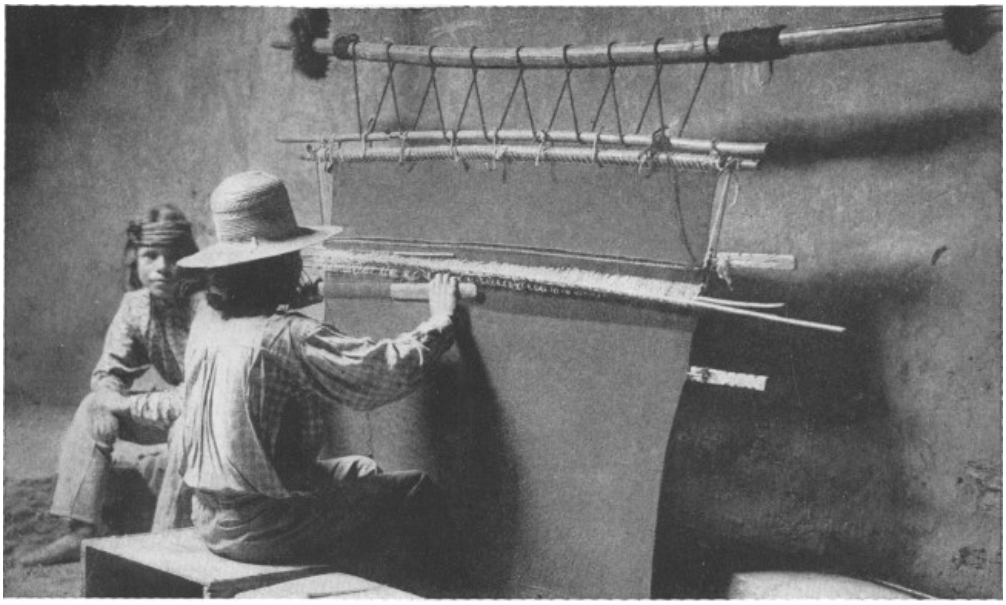
"I marry, yes," said Marie Iteye, my Acoma guide, to me, "and I have one girl—her," pointing to a pretty child, "but my man, I guess he—a bad boy—he leave me."

If the wife tires of her lord, all she has to do is hang the saddle and bridle outside. My gentleman takes the hint and must be off.

I set this fact down because a whole school of modern sex sociologists, taking their cue from Herbert Spencer, who never in his life knew an Indian first hand, write nonsensical deductions about the evolution of woman from slave status. Her position has been one of absolute equality [Pg 86] among the Hopi from the earliest traditions of the race.

At Laguna, you can obtain rooms with Mr. Marmon, or Mr. Pratt; but you must bring your luncheon with you; or, as I said before, take chance luck outside at the section house. A word as to Mr. Marmon and Mr. Pratt, two of the best known white men in the Indian communities of the Southwest. Where white men have foregathered with Indians, it has usually been for the higher race to come down to the level of the lower people. Not so with Marmon and Pratt! If you ask how it is that the pueblos of Laguna and Acoma are so superior to all other Hopi communities of the Southwest, the answer invariably is "the influence of the two Marmons and Pratt." Coming West as surveyors in the early seventies the two Marmons and Pratt opened a trading store, married Indian women and set themselves to civilize the whole pueblo. After almost four years' pow-wow and argument and coaxing, they in 1879 succeeded in getting three children, two boys and a girl, to go to school in the East at Carlisle. To-day, those three children are leading citizens

of the Southwest. Later on, the trouble was not to induce children to go, but to handle the hundreds eager to be sent. To-day, there is a government school here, and the two pueblos of Laguna and Acoma are among the cleanest and most advanced of the Southwest. Fifteen hundred souls there are, living in the hillside tiered-town, where you may see the transition from Indian to white in the substitution of downstairs doors for the ladders that formerly led to entrance through the roof.



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A Hopi Indian weaving a rug on a hand loom in a deserted cave

Out at Acoma, with its 700 sky dwellers perched sheer hundreds of feet straight as arrow-flight above the plain, you can count the number of doors on one hand. Acoma is still pure Hopi. Only one inhabitant—Marie Iteye—speaks a word of English; but it is Hopi under the far-reaching and civilizing influence of "Marmon and Pratt." The streets—1st, 2nd and 3rd, they call them—of the cloud-cliff town are swept clean as a white housewife's floor. Inside, the three story houses are all whitewashed. To be sure, a hen and her flock occupy the roof of the first story. Perhaps a burro may stand sleepily on the next roof; but then, the living quarters are in the third story, with a window like the porthole of a ship looking out over the precipice across the rolling, purpling, shimmering mesas for hundreds and hundreds of miles, till the sky-line loses itself in heat haze and snow peaks. The inside of these third story rooms is spotlessly clean, big ewers of washing water on the floor, fireplaces in the corners with sticks burning upright, doorways opening to upper sleeping rooms and meal bins and corn caves. Fancy being spotlessly clean where water must be carried on the women's heads and backs any distance up from 500 to 1,500 feet. Yet I found some of the missionaries and government teachers and nuns among the Indians curiously discouraged about results. [Pg 87]

"It takes almost three generations to have any permanent results," one teacher bewailed. "We doubt if it ever does much good." [Pg 88]

"Doubt if it ever does much good?" I should like to take that teacher and every other discouraged worker among the Indians first to Acoma and then, say, to the Second Mesa of the Moki Reserve. In Acoma, I would not be afraid to rent a third story room and spread my blanket, and camp and sleep and eat for a week. At the Second Mesa, where mission work has barely begun—well, though the crest of the peak is swept by the four winds of heaven and disinfected by a blazing, cloudless sun, I could barely stay out two hours; and the next time I go, I'll take a large pocket handkerchief heavily charged with a deodorizer. At Acoma, you feel you are among human beings like yourself; of different lineage and traditions and belief, but human. At the Second Mesa, you fall to raking your memory of Whitechapel and the Bowery for types as sodden and putrid and degenerate.

Mr. Marmon furnishes team and Indian driver to take you out to Acoma; and please remember, the distance is not twenty-five or fifty miles as you have been told, but an easy eighteen with a good enough road for a motor if you have one.

Set out early in the day, and you escape the heat. Sun up; the yellow-throated meadowlarks lilting and tossing their liquid gold notes straight to heaven; the desert flowers such a mass of gorgeous, voluptuous bloom as dazzle the eye—cactus, blood-red and gold and carmine, wild pink, scarlet poppy, desert geranium, little shy, dwarf, miniature English daisies over which Tennyson's "Maud" trod—gorgeous desert flowers voluptuous as oriental women—who said our Southwest was an arid waste? It is our Sahara, our Morocco, our Algeria; and we have not yet had sense enough to discover it in its beauty. [Pg 89]

Red-shawled women pattered down the trail from the hillside pueblo of Laguna, or marched back up from the yellow pools of the San José River, jars of water on their heads; figures in bronze,

they might have been, or women of the Ganges. Then, the morning light strikes the steeples of the twin-towered Spanish mission on the crest of the hill; and the dull steeples of the adobe church glow pure mercury. And the light broods over the stagnant pools of the yellow San Jose; and the turgid, muddy river flows pure gold. And the light bathes the sandy, parched mesas and the purple mountains girding the plains around in yellow walls flat topped as if leveled by a trowel, with here and there in the distant sky-line the opal gleam as of a snow peak immeasurably far away. It dawns on you suddenly—this is a realm of pure light. How J. W. M. Turner would have gone wild with joy over it—light, pure light, split by the shimmering prism of the dusty air into rainbow colors, transforming the sand-charged atmosphere into an unearthly morning gleam shot with gold dust. You know now that the big globe cactus shines with the glow of a Burma ruby here when it is dull in the Eastern conservatory, because here is of the very essence of the sun. The wild poppies shine on the desert sands like stars because, like the stars, they draw their [Pg 90] life from the sun. And the blue forget-me-nots are like bits of heaven, because their faces shine with the light of an unclouded sky from dawn to dark.

You see the countless herds of sheep and goats and cattle and horses belonging to the Indian pueblos, herded, perhaps, by a little girl on horseback, or a couple of boys lying among the sage brush; but the figures come to your eye unreal and out of all perspective, the horses and cattle, exaggerated by heat mirage, long and leggy like camels in Egypt, the boys and girls lifted by the refraction of light clear off earth altogether, unreal ghost figures, the bleating lambs and kids enveloped in a purple, hazy heat veil—an unreal Dream World, an Enchanted Mesa all of it, a Painted Desert made of lavender mist and lilac light and heat haze shimmering and unreal as a poet's vision.

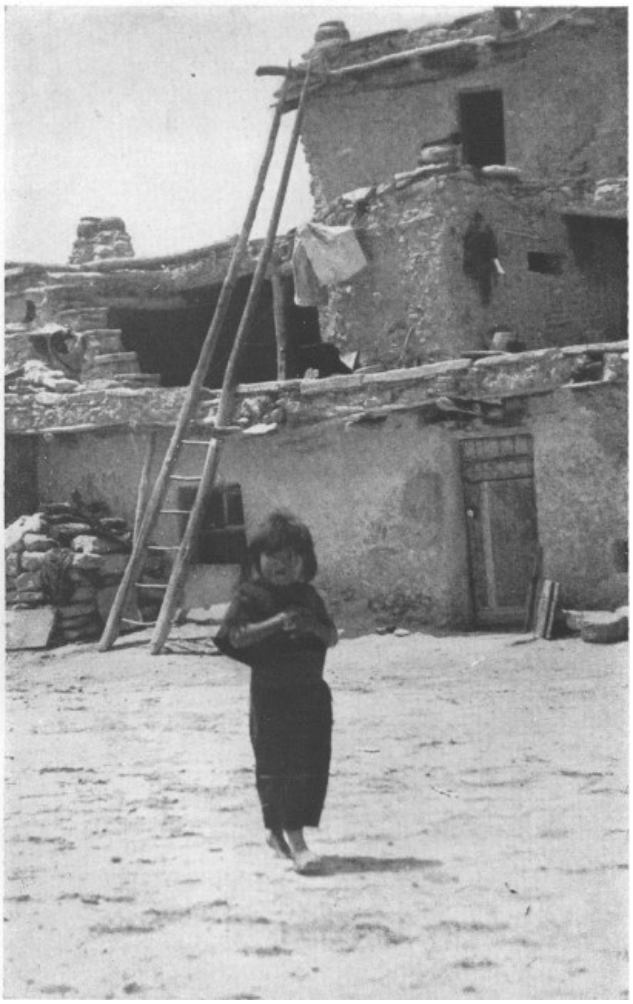
It adds to the glamour of the unreal as the sun mounts higher, and the planed rampart mountain walls encircling the mesa begin to shimmer and shift and lift from earth in mirage altogether.

You hear the bleat-bleat of the lambs, and come full in the midst of herds of thousands going down to a water pool. These Indians are not poor; not poor by any means. Their pottery and baskets bring them ready money. Their sheep give them meat and wool; and the little corn patches suffice for meal.

Then the blank wall of the purple mountains opens; and you pass into a large saucer-shaped valley engirt as before by the troweled yellow *tufa* walls; a lake of light, where the flocks lift in mirage, lanky and unreal. Almost the spell and lure of a Sahara are upon you, when you lift your [Pg 91] eyes, and there—straight ahead—lies an enchanted island in this lake of light, shimmering and lifting in mirage; sides vertical yellow walls without so much as a handhold visible. High as three Niagaras, twice as high it might be, you so completely lose sense of perspective; with top flat as a billiard table, detached from rock or sand or foothill, isolated as a slab of towering granite in a purple sea. It is the Enchanted Mesa.

Hill Ki, my Indian driver, grunts and points at it with his whip. "The Enchanted Mesa," he says.

I stop to photograph it; but who can photograph pure light? Only one man has ever existed who could paint pure light; and Turner is dead. Did a race once live on this high, flat, isolated, inaccessible slab of huge rock? Lummis says "yes;" Hodge says "no." Are there pottery remnants of a dead city? Lummis says "yes;" Hodge says "no." Both men climbed the rock, though Hill Ki tells me confidentially they "were very scare," when it came to throwing a rope up over the end of the rock, to pull the climber up as if by pulley. Marmon and Pratt have both been up; and Hill Ki tells me so have two venturesome white women climbers, whose names he does not know, but "they weren't scare." As we pass from the end to the side of the Enchanted Mesa, it is seen to be an oblong slab utterly cut off from all contact but so indented halfway up at one end as to be ascended by a good climber to within distance of throwing a rope over the top. The quarrel between Lummis and Hodge has waxed hotter and hotter as to the Enchanted Mesa without any [Pg 92] finale to the dispute; and far be it from an outsider like myself to umpire warfare amid the gods of the antiquarian; but isn't it possible that a custom among the Acoma Indians may explain the whole matter; and that both men may be partly right? Miss McLain, who was in the Indian Service at Laguna, reports that once an Indian family told her of this Acoma ceremony. Before a youth reaches manhood, while he is still being instructed in the mysteries of Hopi faith in the underground council room or *kiva*, it is customary for the Acomas to blindfold him and send him to the top of the Enchanted Mesa for a night's lonely vigil with a jar of water as oblation to the spirits. These jars explain the presence of pottery, which Lummis describes. They would also give credence to at least periodic inhabiting of the Mesa. The absence of house ruins, on the other hand, would explain why Hodge scouted Lummis' theory. The Indians explained to Miss McLain that a boy could climb blindfolded where he could not go open-eyed, a fact that all mountain engineers will substantiate.



A shy little Indian maid in a Hopi village of Arizona

But what matters the quarrel? Is not the whole region an Enchanted Mesa, one of the weirdest bits of the New World? You have barely rounded the Enchanted Mesa, when another oblong colossus looms to the fore, sheer precipice, but accessible by tiers of sand and stone at the far end; that is, accessible by handhold and foothold. Look again! Along the top of the walled precipice, a crest to the towering slab, is a human wall, the walls of an adobe streetful of houses, little windows looking out flush with the precipice line like the portholes of a ship. Then you see something red flutter and move at the very edge of the rock top—Hopi urchins, who have spied us like young eagles in their eyrie, and shout and wave down at us, though we can barely hear their voices. It looks for all the world like the top story of a castle above a moat. [Pg 93]

At the foot of the sand-hill, I ask Hill Ki, why, now that there is no danger from Spaniard and Navajo, the Hopi continue to live so high up where they must carry all their supplies sheer, vertical hundreds of feet, at least 1,500 if you count all the wiggling in and out and around the stone steps and stone ladders, and niched handholds. Hill Ki grins as he unhitches his horses, and answers: "You understan' when you go up an' see!" But he does not offer to escort me up.

As I am looking round for the beginning of a visible trail up, a little Hopi girl comes out from the sheep kraal at the foot of the Acoma Mesa. Though she cannot speak one word of English and I cannot speak one word of Hopi we keep up a most voluble conversation by gesture. Don't ask how we did it! It is wonderful what you can do when you have to. She is dressed in white, home-woven skirt with a white rag for a head shawl—badge of the good girl; and her stockings come only to the ankles, leaving the feet bare. The feet of all the Hopi are abnormally small, almost monkey-shaped; and when you think of it, it is purely cause and effect. The foot is not flat and [Pg 94] broad, because it is constantly clutching foothold up and down these rocks. I saw all the Hopi women look at my broad-soled, box-toed outing boots in amazement. At hard spots in the climb, they would turn and point to my boots and offer me help till I showed them that the sole, though thick, was pliable as a moccasin.

The little girl signaled; did I want to go up?

I nodded.

She signaled; would I go up the hard, steep, quick way; or the long, easy path by the sand? As the stone steps seemed to give handhold well as foothold, and the sand promised to roll you back fast as you climbed up, I signaled the hard way; and off we set. I asked her how old she was; and she seemed puzzled how to answer by signs till she thought of her fingers—then up went eight with a tap to her chest signifying self. I asked her what had caused such sore inflammation in her eyes. She thought a minute; then pointed to the sand, and winnowed one hand as of wind—the sand storm; and so we kept an active conversation up for three hours without a word being spoken;

but by this, a little hand sought mine in various affectionate squeezes, and a pair of very sore eyes looked up with confidence, and what was lacking in words, she made up in shy smiles. Poor little Hopi kiddie! Will your man "be bad boy," too, by and by? Will you acquire the best, or the worst, of the white civilization that is encroaching on your tenacious, conservative race? After all, you are better off, little kiddie, a thousand fold, than if you were a street gamin in the vicious gutters of New York. [Pg 95]

By this, what with wind, and sand, and the weight of a kodak and a purse, and the hard ascent, one of the two climbers has to pause for breath; and what do you think that eight-year-old bit of small humanity does? Turns to give me a helping hand. That is too much for gravity. I laugh and she laughs and after that, I think she would have given me both hands and both feet and her soul to boot. She offers to carry my kodak and films and purse; and for three hours, I let her. Can you imagine yourself letting a New York, or Paris, or London street gamin carry your purse for three hours? Yet the Laguna people had told me to look out for myself. I'd find the Acomas uncommonly sharp.

That climb is as easy to the Acomas as your home stairs to you; but it's a good deal more arduous to the outsider than a climb up the whole length of the Washington Monument, or up the Metropolitan Tower in New York; but it is all easily possible. Where the sand merges to stone, are handhold niches as well as stone steps; and where the rock steps are too steep, are wooden ladders. At last, we swing under a great overhanging stone—splendid weapon if the Navajos had come this way in old days, and splendid place for slaughter of the Spanish soldiers, who scaled Acoma two centuries ago—up a tier of stone steps, and we are on top of the white limestone Mesa, in the town of Acoma, with its 1st, 2nd, and 3rd streets, and its 1st, 2nd, and 3rd story houses, the first roof reached by a movable ladder, the next two roofs by stone steps. [Pg 96]

I shall not attempt to describe the view from above. Take Washington's Shaft; multiply by two, set it down in Sahara Desert, climb to the top and look abroad! That is the view from Acoma. Is the trip worth while? Is mountain climbing worth while? Do you suppose half a hundred people would yearly break their necks in Switzerland if climbing were not worth while? As Hill Ki said when I asked him why they did not move their city down now that all danger of raid had passed, "You go up an' see!" Now I understood. The water pools were but glints of silver on the yellow sands. The flocks of sheep and goats looked like ants. The rampart rocks that engirt the valley were yellow rims below; and across the tops of the far mesas could be seen scrub forests and snowy peaks. Have generations—generations on generations—of life amid such color had anything to do with the handicrafts of these people—pottery, basketry, weaving, becoming almost an art? Certainly, their work is the most artistic handicraft done by Indians in America to-day.

Boys and girls, babies and dogs, rush to salute us as we come up; but my little guide only takes tighter hold of my hand and "shoos" them off. We pass a deep pool of waste water from the houses, lying in the rocks, and on across the square to the twin-towered church in front of which is a rudely fenced graveyard. The whole mesa is solid, hard rock; and to make this graveyard for their people, the women have carried up on their backs sand and soil enough to fill in a depression for a burying place. The bones lie thick on the surface soil. The graveyard is now literally a bank of human limestone.

At the water hole on the outskirts of Laguna, one of the pueblos in New Mexico

I have asked my little guide to take me to Marie Iteye, the only Acoma who speaks English; and I meet her now stepping smartly across the square, feet encased in boots at least four sizes smaller than mine, red skirt to knee, fine stockings, red shawl and a profusion of turquoise ornaments. We shake hands, and when I ask her where she learned to speak such good English, she tells me of her seven years' life at Carlisle. It is the one wish of her heart that she may some day go back: another shattered delusion that Indians hate white schools. [Pg 97]

She takes me across to the far edge of the Mesa, where her sisters, the finest pottery makers of Acoma, are burning their fine gray jars above sheep manure. For fifty cents I can buy here a huge

fern jar with finest gray-black decorations, which would cost me $5 to $10 down at the railroad or $15 in the East; but there is the question of taking it out in my camp kit; and I content myself with a little black-brown basin at the same price, which Marie has used in her own house as meal jar for ten years. As a memento to me, she writes her name in the bottom.

Her house we ascended by ladder to a first roof, where clucked a hen and chickens, and lay a litter of new puppies. From this roof goes up a tier of stone steps to a second roof. Off this roof is the door to a third story room; and a cleaner room I have never seen in a white woman's house. [Pg 98] The fireplace is in one corner, the broom in the other, a window between looking out of the precipice wall over such a view as an eagle might scan. Baskets with corn and bowls of food and jars of drinking water stand in niches in the wall. The adobe floor is hard as cement, and clean. All walls and the ceiling are whitewashed. The place is spotless.

"Where do you sleep, Marie?" I ask.

"Downstairs! You come out and stay a week with me, mebbee, sometime."

And as she speaks, come up the stone stairs from the room below, her father and brother, amazed to know why a woman should be traveling alone through Hopi and Moki and Navajo Land.

And all the other houses visited are clean as Marie's. Is the fact testimony to Carlisle, or the twin-towered church over there, or Marmon and Pratt? I cannot answer; but this I do know, that Acoma is as different from the other Hopi or Moki mesas as Fifth Avenue is from the Bowery.

All the time I was in the houses, my little guide had been waiting wistfully at the bottom of the ladder; and the children uttered shouts of glee to see me come down the ladder face out instead of backwards as the Acomas descend.

We descended from the Mesa by the sand-hills instead of the rock steps, preceded by an escort of romping children; but not a discourteous act took place during all my visit. Could I say the same of a three hours' visit amid the gamins of New York, or London? At the foot of the cliff, we shook [Pg 99] hands all round and said good-by; and when I looked back up the valley, the children were still waving and waving. If this be humble Indian life in its Simon pure state, with all freedom from our rules of conduct, all I have to say is it is infinitely superior to the hoodlum life of our cities and towns.

One point more: I asked Marie as I had asked Mr. Marmon, "Do you think your people are Indians, or Aztecs?" and the answer came without a moment's hesitation—"Aztecs; we are not Indian like Navajo and Apaches."

Opposite the Enchanted Mesa, I looked back. My little guide was still gazing wistfully after us, waving her shawl and holding tight to a coin which I trust no old grimalkin pried out of her hand.

CHAPTER VI [Pg 100]

ACROSS THE PAINTED DESERT THROUGH NAVAJO LAND

When you leave the Enchanted Mesa at Acoma, to follow the unbeaten trail on through the National Forests, you may take one of three courses; or all three courses if you have time.

You may strike up into Zuñi Land from Gallup. Or you may go down in the White Mountains of Arizona from Holbrook; and here it should be stated that the White Mountains are one of the great un-hunted game resorts of the Southwest. Some of the best trout brooks of the West are to be found under the snows of the Continental Divide. Deer and bear and mountain cat are as plentiful as before the coming of the white man—and likely to remain so many a day, for the region is one of the most rugged and forbidding in the Western States. Add to the danger of sheer rock declivity, an almost desert-forest growth—dwarf juniper and cedar and giant cactus interwoven in a snarl, armed with spikes to keep off intruders—and you can understand why some of the most magnificent specimens of black-tail in the world roam the peaks and mesas here undisturbed by the hunter. Also, on your way into the White Mountains, you may visit almost [Pg 101] as wonderful prehistoric dwellings as in the Frijoles of New Mexico, or the Mesa Verde of Colorado. It is here you find Montezuma's Castle and Montezuma's Well, the former, a colossal community house built on a precipice-face and reached only by ladders; the latter, a huge prehistoric reservoir of unknown soundings; both in almost as perfect repair as if abandoned yesterday, though both antedate all records and traditions so completely that even when white men came in 1540 the Spaniards had no remotest gleaning of their prehistoric occupants. Also on your way into the White Mountains, you may visit the second largest natural bridge in the world, a bridge so huge that quarter-section farms can be cultivated above the central span.

Or you may skip the short trip out to Zuñi off the main traveled highway, and the long trip south through the White Mountains—two weeks at the very shortest, and you should make it six—and leave Gallup, just at the State line of Arizona, drive north-west across the Navajo Reserve and Moki Land to the Coconino Forests and the Tusayan and the Kaibab, round the Grand Cañon up towards the State lines of California and Utah. If you can afford time only for one of these three

trips, take the last one; for it leads you across the Painted Desert with all its wonder and mystery and lure of color and light and remoteness, with the tang of high, cool, lavender blooming mesas set like islands of rock in shifting seas of gaudy-colored sand, with the romance and the [Pg 102] adventure and the movement of the most picturesque horsemen and herdsmen in America. It isn't America at all! You know that as soon as you go up over the first high mesa from the beaten highway and drop down over into another world, a world of shifting, shimmering distances and ocher-walled rampart rocks and sand ridges as red as any setting sun you ever saw. It isn't America at all! It's Arabia; and the Bedouins of our Painted Desert are these Navajo boys—a red scarf binding back the hair, the hair in a hard-knotted coil (not a braid), a red plush, or brilliant scarlet, or bright green shirt, with silver work belt, and khaki trousers or white cotton pantaloons slit to the knee, and moccasins, with more silver-work, and such silver bridles and harnessings as would put an Arab's Damascus tinsel to the blush. Go up to the top of one of the red sand knobs—you see these Navajo riders everywhere, coming out of their *hogan* houses among the juniper groves, crossing the yellow plain, scouring down the dry arroyo beds, infinitesimal specks of color moving at swift pace across these seas of sand. Or else you see where at night and morning the water comes up through the arroyo bed in pools of silver, receding only during the heat of the day; and moving through the juniper groves, out from the ocher rocks that screen the desert like the wings of a theater, down the panting sand bed of the dead river, trot vast herds of sheep and goats, the young bleat—bleating till the air quivers—driven by little Navajo girls on horseback, [Pg 103] born to the saddle, as the Canadian Cree is born to the canoe.

If you can't go to Zuñi Land and the White Mountain Forest and the Painted Desert, then choose the Painted Desert. It will give you all the sensations of a trip to the Orient without the expense or discomfort. Besides, you will learn that America has her own Egypt and her own Arabia and her own Persia in racial type and in handicraft and in antiquity; and that fact is worth taking home with you. Also, the end of the trip will drop you near your next jumping-off place—in the Coconino and Tusayan Forests of the Grand Cañon. And if the lure of the antique still draws you, if you are still haunted by that blatant and impudent lie (ignorance, like the big drum, always speaks loudest when it is emptiest), "that America lacks the picturesque and historic," believe me there are antiquities in the Painted Desert of Arizona that antedate the antiquities of Egypt by 8,000 years. "The more we study the prehistoric ruins of America," declared one of the leading ethnological scholars of the world in the School of Archæology at Rome, "the more undecided we become whether the civilization of the Orient preceded that of America, or that of America preceded the Orient."

For instance, on your way across the Painted Desert, you can strike into Cañon de Shay (spelled Chelly), and in one of the rock walls high above the stream you will find a White House carved in high arches and groined chambers from the solid stone, a prehistoric dwelling where you could hide and lose a dozen of our national White House. Who built the aerial, hidden and secluded [Pg 104] palace? What royal barbaric race dwelt in it? What drove them out? Neither history nor geology have scintilla of answer to those questions. Your guess is as good as the next; and you haven't to go all the way to Persia, or the Red Sea, or Tibet, to do your guessing, but only a day's drive from a continental route—cost for team and driver $14. In fact, you can go into the Painted Desert with a well-planned trip of six months; and at the end of your trip you will know, as you could not at the beginning, that you have barely entered the margin of the wonders in this Navajo Land.

To strike into the Painted Desert, you can leave the beaten highway at Gallup, or Holbrook, or Flagstaff, or the Grand Cañon; but to cross it, you should enter at the extreme east and drive west, or enter west and drive east. Local liverymen have drivers who know the way from point to point; and the charge, including driver, horses and hay, is from $6 to $7 a day. Better still, if you are used to horseback, go in with pack animals, which can be bought outright at a very nominal price—$25 to $40 for ponies, $10 to $20 for burros; but in any case, take along a white, or Indian, who knows the trails of the vast Reserve, for water is as rare as radium and only a local man knows the location of those pools where you will be spending your nooning and camp for the night. Camp in the Southwest at any other season than the two rainy months—July and August—does not necessitate a tent. You can spread your blankets and night will stretch a sky as soft as [Pg 105] the velvet blue of a pansy for roof, and the stars will swing down so close in the rare, clear Desert air that you will think you can reach up a hand and pluck the lights like jack-o'-lanterns. Because you are in the Desert, don't delude yourself into thinking you'll not need warm night covering. It may be as hot at midday as a blast out of a furnace, though the heat is never stifling; but the altitude of the various mesas you will cross varies from 6,000 to 9,000 feet, and the night will be as chilly as if you were camped in the Canadian Northwest.

Up to the present, the Mission of St. Michael's, Day's Ranch, and Mr. Hubbell's almost regal hospitality, have been open to all comers crossing the Desert—open without cost or price. In fact, if you offered money for the kindness you receive, it would be regarded as an insult. It is a type of the old-time baronial Spanish hospitality, when no door was locked and every comer was welcomed to the festive board, and if you expressed admiration for jewel, or silver-work, or old mantilla, it was presented to you by the lord of the manor with the simple and absolutely sincere words, "It is yours," which scrubs and bubs and dubs and scum and cockney were apt to take greedily and literally, with no sense of the *noblesse oblige* which binds recipient as it binds donor to a code of honor not put in words. It is a type of hospitality that has all but vanished from this sordid earth; and it is a type, I am sorry to write, ill-suited to an age when the Quantity travel [Pg 106] quite as much as the Quality. For instance, everyone who has crossed the Painted Desert knows that Lorenzo Hubbell, who is commonly called the King of Northern Arizona, has yearly spent thousands, tens of thousands, entertaining passing strangers, whom he has never seen before

and will never see again, who come unannounced and stay unurged and depart reluctantly. In the old days, when your Spanish grandee entertained only his peers, this was well; but to-day—well, it may work out in Goldsmith's comedy, where the two travelers mistake a mansion for an inn. But where the arrivals come in relays of from one to a dozen a month, and issue orders as to hot water and breakfast and dinner and supper and depart tardily as a dead-beat from a city lodging house and break out in complaints and sometimes afterwards break out in patronizing print, it is time for the Mission and Day's Ranch and Mr. Hubbell's trading posts to have kitchen quarters for such as they. In the old days, Quality sat above the salt; Quantity sat below it and slept in rushes spread on the floor. I would respectfully offer a suggestion as to salting down much of the freshness that weekly pesters the fine old baronial hospitality of the Painted Desert. For instance, there was the Berlin professor, who arrived unwanted and unannounced after midnight, and quietly informed his host that he didn't care to rise for the family breakfast but would take his at such an hour. There was the drummer who ordered the daughter of the house "to hustle the fodder." There was the lady who stayed unasked for three weeks, then departed to write ridiculous caricatures of the very roof that had sheltered her. There was the Government man who calmly ordered his host to have breakfast ready at three in the morning. His host would not ask his colored help to rise at such an hour and with his own hands prepared the breakfast, when the guest looked lazily through the window and seeing a storm brewing "thought he'd not mind going after all."

A Navajo boy who is exceptionally handsome and picturesque

"What?" demanded his entertainer. "You will not go after you have roused me at three? You will go; and you will go quick; and you will go this instant." [Pg 107]

The Painted Desert is bound to become as well known to American travelers as Algiers and the northern rim of the Sahara to the thousands of European tourists, who yearly flock south of the Mediterranean. When that time comes, a different system must prevail, so I would advise all visitors going into the Navajo country to take their own food and camp kit and horses, either rented from an outfitter at the starting point, or bought outright. At St. Michael's Mission, and Ganado, and the Three Mesas, and Oraibi, you can pick up the necessary local guide.

We entered the Painted Desert by way of Gallup, hiring driver and team locally. Motors are available for the first thirty miles of the trip, though out of the question for the main 150 miles, owing to the heavy sand, fine as flour; but they happened to be out of commission the day we wanted them. [Pg 108]

The trail rises and rises from the sandy levels of the railroad town till you are presently on the high northern mesa among scrub juniper and cedar, in a cool-scented, ozone atmosphere, as life-giving as any frost air of the North. The yellow ocher rocks close on each side in walled ramparts, and nestling in an angle of rock you see a little fenced ranch house, where they charge ten cents

a glass for the privilege of their spring. There is the same profusion of gorgeous desert flowers, dyed in the very essence of the sun, as you saw round the Enchanted Mesa—globe cactus and yellow poppies and wild geraniums and little blue forget-me-nots and a rattlesnake flower with a bloated bladder seed pod mottled as its prototype's skin. And the trail still climbs till you drop sheer over the edge of the sky-line and see a new world swimming below you in lakes of lilac light and blue shadows—blue shadows, sure sign of desert land as Northern lights are of hyperborean realm. It is the Painted Desert; and it isn't a flat sand plain as you expected, but a world of rolling green and purple and red hills receding from you in the waves of a sea to the belted, misty mountains rising up sheer in a sky wall. And it isn't a desolate, uninhabited waste, as you expected. You round a ridge of yellow rock, and three Zuñi boys are loping along the trail in front of you—red headband, hair in a braid, red sash, velvet trousers—the most famous runners of all Indian tribes in spite of their short, squat stature. The Navajo trusts to his pony, and so is a slack runner. Also, he is not so well nourished as the Zuñi or Hopi, and so has not as firm muscles and [Pg 109] strong lungs. These Zuñi lads will set out from Oraibi at daybreak, and run down to Holbrook, eighty miles in a day. Or you hear the tinkle of a bell, and see some little Navajo girl on horseback driving her herd of sheep down to a drinking pool. It all has a curiously Egyptian or Oriental effect. So Rachel was watering her flocks when the Midianitish herders drove her from the spring; and you see the same rivalry for possession of the waterhole in our own desert country as ancient record tells of that other storied land.

The hay stacks, huge, tent-shaped *tufa* rocks to the right of the road, mark the approach to St. Michael's Mission. Where one great rock has splintered from the main wall is a curious phenomenon noted by all travelers—a cow, head and horns, etched in perfect outline against the face of the rock. The driver tells you it is a trick of rain and stain, but a knowledge of the tricks of lightning stamping pictures on objects struck in an atmosphere heavily charged with electricity suggests another explanation.

Then you have crossed the bridge and the red-tiled roofs of St. Michael's loom above the hill, and you drive up to an oblong, white, green-shuttered building as silent as the grave—St. Michael's Mission, where the Franciscans for seventeen years have been holding the gateway to the Navajo Reserve. Below the hill is a little square log shack, the mission printing press. Behind, another shack, the post-office; and off beyond the hill, the ranch house of Mr. and Mrs. Day, two of the [Pg 110] best known characters on the Arizona frontier. A mile down the arroyo is the convent school, Miss Drexel's Mission for the Indians; a fine, massive structure of brick and stone, equal to any of the famous Jesuit and Ursuline schools so famous in the history of Quebec.

And at this little mission, with its half-dozen buildings, is being lived over again the same heroic drama that Father Vimont and Mother Mary of the Incarnation opened in New France three centuries ago; only we are a little too close to this modern drama to realize its fine quality of joyous self-abnegation and practical religion. Also, the work of Miss Drexel's missionaries promises to be more permanent than that to the Hurons and Algonquins of Quebec. They are not trying to turn Indians into white men and women at this mission. They are leaving them Indians with the leaven of a new grace working in their hearts. The Navajos are to-day 22,000 strong, and on the increase. The Hurons and Algonquins alive to-day, you can almost count on your hands. Driven from pillar to post, they were destroyed by the civilization they had embraced; but the Navajos have a realm perfectly adapted to sustain their herds and broad enough for them to expand—14,000,000 acres, including Moki Land—and against any white man's greedy encroachment on that Reserve, Father Webber, of the Franciscans, has set his face like adamant. In two or three generations, we shall be putting up monuments to these workers among the Navajos. Meanwhile, we neither know nor care what they are doing. [Pg 111]

You enter the silent hallway and ring a gong. A Navajo interpreter appears and tells you Father Webber has gone to Rome, but Father Berrard will be down; and when you meet the cowled Franciscan in his rough, brown cassock, with sandal shoes, you might shut your eyes and imagine yourself back in the Quebec consistories of three centuries ago. There is the same poverty, the same quiet devotion, the same consecrated scholarship, the same study of race and legend, as made the Jesuit missions famous all through Europe of the Seventeenth Century. Why, do you know, this Franciscan mission, with its three priests and two lay helpers, is sustained on the small sum of $1,000 a year; and out of his share of that, Father Berrard has managed to buy a printing press and issue a scholarly work on the Navajos, costing him $1,500!

Next morning, when Mother Josephine, of Miss Drexel's Mission School, drove us back to the Franciscan's house, we saw proofs of a second volume on the Navajos, which Father Berrard is issuing; a combined glossary and dictionary of information on tribal customs and arts and crafts and legends and religion; a work of which a French academician would be more than proud. Then he shows us what will easily prove the masterpiece of his life—hundreds of drawings, which, for the last ten years, he has been having the medicine men of the Navajos make for their legends, of [Pg 112] all the authentic, known patterns of their blankets and the meanings, of their baskets and what they mean, and of the heavenly constellations, which are much the same as ours except that the names are those of the coyote and eagle and other desert creatures instead of the Latin appellations. Lungren and Burbank and Curtis and other artists, who have passed this way, suggested the idea. Someone sent Father Berrard folios of blank drawing boards. Sepia made of coal dust and white chalk made of gypsum suffice for pigments. With these he has had the Indian medicine men make a series of drawings that excels anything in the Smithsonian Institute of Washington or the Field Museum of Chicago. For instance, there is the map of the sky and of the milky way with the four cardinal points marked in the Navajo colors, white, blue, black and

yellow, with the legend drawn of the "great medicine man" putting the stars in their places in the sky, when along comes Coyote, steals the mystery bag of stars—and puff, with one breath he has mischievously sent the divine sparks scattering helter-skelter all over the face of heaven. There is the legend of "the spider maid" teaching the Navajos to weave their wonderful blankets, though the Hopi deny this and assert that their women captured in war were the ones who taught the Navajos the art of weaving. There is the picture of the Navajo transmigration of souls up the twelve degrees of a huge corn stalk, for all the world like the Hindoo legend of a soul's travail up to life. You must not forget how similar many of the Indian drawings are to Oriental work. Then, [Pg 113] there is the picture of the supreme woman deity of the Navajos. Does that recall any Mother of Life in Hindoo lore? If all ethnologists and archæologists had founded their studies on the Indian's own account of himself, rather than their own scrappy version of what the Indian told them, we should have got somewhere in our knowledge of the relationships of the human race.

Father Berrard's drawings in color of all known patterns of Navajo blankets are a gold mine in themselves, and would save the squandering by Eastern buyers of thousands a year in faked Navajo blankets. Wherever Father Berrard hears of a new blanket pattern, thither he hies to get a drawing of it; and on many a fool's errand his quest has taken him. For instance, he once heard of a wonderful blanket being displayed by a Flagstaff dealer, with vegetable dyes of "green" in it. Dressing in disguise, with overcoat collar turned up, the priest went to examine the alleged wonder. It was a palpable cheat manufactured in the East for the benefit of gullible tourists.

"Where did your Indians get that vegetable green?" Father Berrard asked the unsuspecting dealer.

"From frog ponds," answered the store man of a region where water is scarce as hens' teeth.

Father Berrard has not yet finished his collection of drawings, for the medicine men will reveal certain secrets only when the moon and stars are in a certain position; but he vows that when the book is finished and when he has saved money enough to issue it, his *nom de plume* shall be [Pg 114] "Frog Pond Green."

If we had been a party of men, we should probably have been put up at either the Franciscan Mission, or Day's Ranch; but being women we were conducted a mile farther down the arroyo to Miss Drexel's Mission School for Indian boys and girls. Here 150 little Navajos come every year, not to be transformed into white boys and girls, but to be trained inside and out in cleanliness and uprightness and grace. There are in all fourteen members of the sisterhood here, much the same type of women in birth and station and training as the polished nobility that founded the first religious institutions of New France. Perhaps, because the Jesuit relations record such a terrible tale of martyrdom, one somehow or other associates those early Indian missions with religions of a dolorous cast. Not so here! A happier-faced lot of women and children you never saw than these delicately nurtured sisters and their swarthy-faced, black-eyed little wards. These sisters evidently believe that goodness should be a thing more beautiful, more joyous, more robust than evil; that the temptation to be good should be greater than the compulsion to be evil. Sisters are playing tag with the little Indian girls in one yard; laymen helpers teaching Navajo boys baseball on the open common; and from one of the upper halls comes the sound of a brass band tuning up for future festivities.

We were presently ensconced in the quarters set aside for guests; room, parlor and refectory, where two gentle-faced sisters placed all sorts of temptations on our plates and gathered news of [Pg 115] the big, outside world. Then Mother Josephine came in, a Southern face with youth in every feature and youth in her heart, and merry, twinkling, tender, understanding eyes.

Presently, you hear a bugle-call signal the boys from play; and the bell sounds to prayers; and a great stillness falls; and you would not know this was Navajo Land at all but for the bright blanketed folk camped on the hill to the right—eerie figures seen against the pink glow of the fading light.

Next morning we attended mass in the little chapel upstairs. Priest in vestment, altar aglow with lights and flowers, little black-eyed faces bending over their prayers, the chanting of gently nurtured voices from the stalls—is it the Desert we are in, or an oasis watered by that age-old, never-failing spring of Service?

CHAPTER VII [Pg 116]

ACROSS THE PAINTED DESERT THROUGH NAVAJO LAND (*continued*)

There are two ways to travel even off the beaten trail. One is to take a map, stake out pins on the points you are going to visit, then pace up to them lightning-flier fashion. If you want to, and are prepared to kill your horses, you can cross Navajo Land in from three to four days. Even going at that pace, you can get a sense of the wonderful coloring of the Painted Desert, of the light lying in shimmering heat layers split by the refraction of the dusty air in prismatic hues, of an atmosphere with the tang of northern ozone and the resinous scent of incense and frankincense and myrrh. You can see the Desert flowers that vie with the sun in brilliant coloring; and feel the Desert night sky come down so close to you that you want to reach up a hand and pluck the jack-

o'-lantern stars swinging so low through the pansy-velvet mist. You can even catch a flying glimpse of the most picturesque Indian race in America, the Navajos. Their *hogans* or circular, mud-wattled houses, are always somewhere near the watering pools and rock springs; and just when you think you are most alone, driving through the sagebrush and dwarf juniper, the bleat of [Pg 117] a lamb is apt to call your attention to a flock of sheep and goats scattered almost invisibly up a blue-green hillside. Blue-green, did you say? Yes: that's another thing you can unlearn on a flying trip—the geography definition of a Desert is about as wrong as a definition could be made. A Desert isn't necessarily a vast sandy plain, stretching out in flat and arid waste. It's as variegated in its growth and landscape as your New England or Old England hills and vales, only your Eastern rivers flow all the time, and your Desert rivers are apt to disappear through evaporation and sink below the surface during the heat of the day, coming up again in floods during the rainy months, and in pools during the cool of morning and evening.

But on a flying trip, you can't learn the secret moods of the Painted Desert. You can't draw so much of its atmosphere into your soul that you can never think of it again without such dream-visions floating you away in its blue-gray-lilac mists as wrapped the seers of old in clairvoyant prophetic ecstasy. On a flying trip, you can learn little or nothing of the Arab life of our own Desert nomads. You have to depend on Blue Book reports of "the Navajos being a dangerous, warlike race" blasted into submission by the effulgent glory of this, that, and the other military martinet writing himself down a hero. Whereas, if you go out leisurely among the traders and missionaries and Indians themselves, who—more's the pity—have no hand in preparing official reports, you will learn another story of a quiet, pastoral race who have for three hundred years [Pg 118] been the victims of white man greed and white man lust, of blundering incompetency and hysterical cowardice.

These are strong words. Let me give some instances. We were having luncheon in the priests' refectory of the Franciscan Mission; and for the benefit of those who imagine that missionaries to the Indians are fat and bloated on three hundred a year, I should like to set down the fact that the refectory was in a sort of back kitchen, that we ate off a red table-cloth with soup served in a basin and bath towels extemporized into serviettes. I had asked about a Navajo, who not long ago went locoed right in Cincinnati station and began stabbing murderously right and left.

"In the first place," answered the Franciscan, "that Indian ought not to have been in Cincinnati at all. In the second place, he ought not to have been there alone. In the third place, he had great provocation."

Here is the story, as I gathered it from traders and missionaries and Indians. The Navajo was having trouble over title to his land. That was wrong the first on the part of the white man. It was necessary for him to go to Washington to lay his grievance before the Government. Now for an Indian to go to Washington is as great an undertaking as it was for Stanley to go to Darkest Africa. The trip ought not to have been necessary if our Indian Office had more integrity and less red-tape; but the local agency provided him with an interpreter. The next great worry to the [Pg 119] Navajo was that he could not get access to "The Great White Father." There were interminable red-tape and delay. Finally, when he got access to the Indian Office, he could get no definite, prompt settlement. With this accumulation of small worries, insignificant enough to a well-to-do white man but mighty harassing to a poor Indian, he set out for home; and at the station in Washington, the interpreter left him. The Navajo could not speak one word of English. Changing cars in Cincinnati, hustled and jostled by the crowds, he suddenly felt for his purse—he had been robbed. Now, the Navajo code is if another tribe injures his tribe, it is his duty to go forth instantly and strike that offender. Our own Saxon and Highland Scotch ancestors once had a code very similar. The Indian at once went locoed—lost his head, and began stabbing right and left. The white man newspaper told the story of the murderous assault in flare head lines; but it didn't tell the story of wrongs and procrastination. The Indian Office righted the land matter; but that didn't undo the damage. Through the efforts of the missionaries and the traders, the Indian was permitted to plead insanity. He was sent to an asylum, where he must have had some queer thoughts of white man justice. Just recently, he has been released under bonds.

The most notorious case of wrong and outrage and cowardice and murder known in Navajo Land [Pg 120] was that of a few years ago, when the Indian agent peremptorily ordered a Navajo to bring his child in to the Agency School. Not so did Marmon and Pratt sway the Indians at Laguna, when the Pueblos there were persuaded to send their children to Carlisle; and Miss Drexel's Mission has never yet issued peremptory orders for children to come to school; but the martinet mandate went forth. Now, the Indian treaty, that provides the child shall be sent to school, also stipulates that the school shall be placed within reach of the child; and the Navajo knew that he was within his right in refusing to let the child leave home when the Government had failed to place the school within such distance of his *hogan*. He was then warned by the agent that unless the child were sent within a certain time, troops would be summoned from Ft. Wingate and Ft. Defiance. The Indians met, pow-wowed with one another, and decided they were still within their right in refusing. There can be no doubt but that if Captain Willard, himself, had been in direct command of the detachment, the cowardly murder would not have occurred; but the Navajos were only Indians; and the troops arrived on the scene in charge of a hopelessly incompetent subordinate, who proved himself not only a bully but a most arrant coward. According to the traders and the missionaries and the Indians themselves, the Navajos were not even armed. Fourteen of them were in one of the mud *hogans*. They offered no resistance. They say they were not even summoned to surrender. Traders, who have talked with the Navajos present, say the troopers [Pg 121] surrounded the *hogan* in the dark, a soldier's gun went off by mistake and the command was

given in hysterical fright to "fire." The Indians were so terrified that they dashed out to hide in the sagebrush. "Bravery! Indian bravery—pah," one officer of the detachment was afterwards heard to exclaim. Two Navajos were killed, one wounded, eleven captured in as cold-blooded a murder as was ever perpetrated by thugs in a city street. Without lawyers, without any defense whatsoever, without the hearing of witnesses, without any fair trial whatsoever, the captives were sentenced to the penitentiary. It needed only a finishing touch to make this piece of Dreyfusism complete; and that came when a little missionary voiced the general sense of outrage by writing a letter to a Denver paper. President Roosevelt at once dispatched someone from Washington to investigate; and it was an easy matter to scare the wits out of the little preacher and declare the investigation closed. In fact, it was one of the things that would not bear investigation; but the evidence still exists in Navajo Land, with more, which space forbids here but which comes under the sixty-fifth Article of War. The officer guilty of this outrage has since been examined as to his sanity and brought himself under possibilities of a penitentiary term on another count. He is still at middle age a subordinate officer.

These are other secrets of the Painted Desert you will daily con if you go leisurely across the great lone Reserve and do not take with you the lightning-express habits of urban life. [Pg 122]

For instance, in the account of the Cave Dwellers of the Frijoles reference was made to the Indian legend of "the heavens raining fire" (volcanic action) and driving the prehistoric Pueblo peoples from their ancient dwelling. Mrs. Day of St. Michael's, who has forgotten more lore than the scientists will ever pick up, told me of a great chunk of lava found by Mr. Day in which were embedded some perfect specimens of corn—which seems to sustain the Indian legend of volcanic outburst having destroyed the ancient nations here. The slab was sent East to a museum in Brooklyn. Some scientists explain these black slabs as a fusion of adobe.

As we had not yet learned how to do the Painted Desert, we went forward by the mail wagon from St. Michael's to Mr. Hubbell's famous trading post at Ganado. Mail bags were stacked up behind us, and a one-eyed Navajo driver sat in front. We were in the Desert, but our way led through the park-like vistas of the mast-high yellow pine, a region of such high, rare, dry air that not a blade of grass grows below the conifers. The soil is as dry as dust and fine as flour; and there is an all-pervasive odor, not of burning, but of steaming resin, or pine sap heated to evaporation; but it is not hot. The mesa runs up to an altitude of almost 9,000 feet, with air so light that you feel a buoyant lift to your heart-beats and a clearing of the cobwebs from your brain. You can lose lots of sleep here and not feel it. All heaviness has gone out of body and soul. In fact, when you come back to lower levels, the air feels thick and hard to breathe. And you can go hard here and not tire, and stand on the crest of mesas that anywhere else would be considered mountains, and wave your arms above the top of the world. So high you are—you did not realize it—that the rim of encircling mountains is only a tiny wave of purplish green sky-line like the edge of an inverted blue bowl.

The Moki Indian pueblo of Walpi, in northeastern Arizona, stands on a mesa high above the plain

The mesas rise and rise, and presently you are out and above forest line altogether among the sagebrush shimmering in pure light; and you become aware of a great quiet, a great silence, such as you feel on mountain peaks; and you suddenly realize how rare and scarce life is—life of bird or beast—at these high levels. The reason is, of course, the scarcity of water, though on our way out just below this mesa at the side of a dry arroyo we found one of the wayside springs that make life of any kind possible in the Desert. [Pg 123]

Then the trail began dropping down, down in loops and twists; and just at sunset we turned up a dry arroyo bed to a cluster of adobe ranch houses and store and mission. Thousands of plaintively bleating goats and sheep seemed to be coming out of the juniper hills to the watering pool, herded as usual by little girls; for the custom is to dower each child at birth with sheep or ponies,

the increase of which becomes that child's wealth for life. Navajo men rode up and down the [Pg 124]
arroyo bed as graceful and gayly caparisoned as Arabs, or lounged around the store building smoking. Huge wool wagons loaded three layers deep with the season's fleece stood in front of the rancho. Women with children squatted on the ground, but the thing that struck you first as always in the Painted Desert was color: color in the bright headbands; color in the close-fitting plush shirts; color in the Germantown blankets—for the Navajo blanket is too heavy for Desert use; color in the lemon and lilac belts across the sunset sky; color, more color, in the blood-red sand hills and bright ochre rocks and whirling orange dust clouds where riders or herds of sheep were scouring up the sandy arroyo. No wonder Burbank and Lungren and Curtis go mad over the color of this subtle land of mystery and half-tones and shadows and suggestions. If you haven't seen Curtis' figures and Burbank's heads and Lungren's marvelously beautiful Desert scenes of this land, you have missed some of the best work being done in the art world to-day. If this work were done in Europe it would command its tens of thousands, where with us it commands only its hundreds. Nothing that the Pre-Raphaelites ever did in the Holy Lands equals in expressiveness and power Lungren's studies of the Desert; though the Pre-Raphaelites commanded prices of $10,000 and $25,000, where we as a nation grumble about paying our artists one thousand and two thousand.

The Navajo driver nodded back to us that this was Ganado; and in a few moments Mr. Hubbell [Pg 125]
had come from the trading post to welcome us under a roof that in thirty years has never permitted a stranger to pass its doors unwelcomed. As Mr. Lorenzo Hubbell has already entered history in the makings of Arizona and as he shuns the limelight quite as "mollycoddles" (his favorite term) seek the spotlights, a slight account of him may not be out of place. First, as to his house: from the outside you see the typical squat adobe oblong so suited to a climate where hot winds are the enemies to comfort. You notice as you enter the front door that the walls are two feet or more thick. Then you take a breath. You had expected a bare ranch interior with benches and stiff chairs backed up against the wall. Instead, you see a huge living-room forty or fifty feet long, every square foot of the walls covered by paintings and drawings of Western life. Every artist of note (with the exception of one) who has done a picture on the Southwest in the last thirty years is represented by a canvas here. You could spend a good week studying the paintings of the Hubbell Ranch. Including sepias, oils and watercolors, there must be almost 300 pictures. By chance, you look up to the raftered ceiling; a specimen of every kind of rare basketry made by the Indians hangs from the beams. On the floor lie Navajo rugs of priceless value and rarest weave. When you go over to Mr. Hubbell's office, you find that he, like Father Berrard, has colored drawings of every type of Moki and Navajo blankets. On the walls of the office are more [Pg 126]
pictures; on the floors, more rugs; in the safes and cases, specimens of rare silver-work that somehow again remind you of the affinity between Hindoo and Navajo. Mr. Hubbell yearly does a quarter-of-a-million-dollar business in wool, and yearly extends to the Navajos credit for amounts running from twenty-five dollars to fifty thousand dollars—a trust which they have never yet betrayed.

Along the walls of the living-room are doors opening to the sleeping apartments; and in each of the many guest rooms are more pictures, more rugs. Behind the living-room is a *placito* flanked by the kitchen and cook's quarters.

Now what manner of man is this so-called "King of Northern Arizona"? A lover of art and a patron of it; also the shrewdest politician and trader that ever dwelt in Navajo Land; a man with friends, who would like the privilege of dying for him; also with enemies who would keenly like the privilege of helping him to die. What the chief factors of the Hudson's Bay Company used to be to the Indians of the North, Lorenzo Hubbell has been to the Indians of the Desert—friend, guard, counselor, with a strong hand to punish when they required it, but a stronger hand to befriend when help was needed; always and to the hilt an enemy to the cheap-jack politician who came to exploit the Indian, though he might have to beat the rascal at his own game of putting up a bigger bluff. In appearance, a fine type of the courtly Spanish-American gentleman with Castilian [Pg 127]
blue eyes and black, beetling brows and gray hair; with a courtliness that keeps you guessing as to how much more gracious the next courtesy can be than the last, and a funny anecdote to cap every climax. You would not think to look at Mr. Hubbell that time was when he as nonchalantly cut the cards for $30,000 and as gracefully lost it all, as other men match dimes for cigars. And you can't make him talk about himself. It is from others you must learn that in the great cattle and sheep war, in which 150 men lost their lives, it was he who led the native Mexican sheep owners against the aggressive cattle crowd. They are all friends now, the old-time enemies, and have buried their feud; and dynamite will not force Mr. Hubbell to open his mouth on the subject. In fact, it was a pair of the "rustlers" themselves who told me of the time that the cowboys took a swoop into the Navajo Reserve and stampeded off 300 of the Indians' best horses; but they had reckoned without Lorenzo Hubbell. In twenty-four hours he had got together the swiftest riders of the Navajos; and in another twenty-four hours, he had pursued the thieves 125 miles into the wildest cañons of Arizona and had rescued every horse. One of the men, whom he had pursued, wiped the sweat from his brow in memory of it. He is more than a type of the Spanish-American gentleman. He is a type of the man that the Desert produces: quiet, soft spoken—powerfully soft spoken—alert, keen, relentless and versatile; but also a dreamer of dreams, a seer of visions, a [Pg 128]
passionate patriot, and a lover of art who proves his love by buying.

The Navajos are to-day by long odds the most prosperous Indians in America. Their vast Reserve offers ample pasturage for their sheep and ponies; and though their flocks are a scrub lot, yielding little more than fifty to seventy cents a head in wool on the average, still it costs nothing to keep sheep and goats. Both furnish a supply of meat. The hides fetch ready money. So does the

wool, so do the blankets; and the Navajos are the finest silversmiths in America. Formerly, they obtained their supply of raw silver bullion from the Spaniards; but to-day, they melt and hammer down United States currency into butterfly brooches and snake bracelets and leather belts with the fifty-cent coins changed into flower blossoms with a turquoise center. Ten-cent pieces and quarters are transformed into necklaces of silver beads, or buttons for shirt and moccasins. If you buy these things in the big Western cities, they are costly as Chinese or Hindoo silver; but on the Reserve, there is a very simple way of computing the value. First, take the value of the coin from which the silver ornament is made. Add a dollar for the silversmith's labor; and also add whatever value the turquoise happens to be; and you have the price for which true Navajo silver-work can be bought out on the Reserve.

Among the Navajos, the women weave the blankets and baskets; among the Moki, the men, while the women are the great pottery makers. The value of these out on the Reserve is exactly in [Pg 129] proportion to the intricacy of the work, the plain native wool colors—black, gray, white and brown—varying in price from seventy cents to $1.25 a pound; the fine bayetta or red weave, which is finer than any machine can produce and everlasting in its durability, fetching pretty nearly any price the owner asks. Other colors than the bayetta red and native wool shades, I need scarcely say here, are in bought mineral dyes. True bayettas, which are almost a lost art, bring as high as $1,500 each from a connoisseur. Other native wools vary in price according to size and color from $15 to $150. Off the Reserve, these prices are simply doubled. From all of which, it should be evident that no thrifty Navajo need be poor. His house costs nothing. It is made of cedar shakes stuck up in the ground crutchwise and wattled with mud. Strangely enough, the Navajo no longer uses his own blankets. They are too valuable; also, too heavy for the climate. He uses the cheap and gaudy Germantown patterns.

At seven one morning in May, equipped with one of Mr. Hubbell's fastest teams and a good Mexican driver who knew the trail, we set out from Ganado for Keam's Cañon. It need scarcely be stated here that in Desert travel you must carry your water keg, "grub" box and horse feed with you. All these, up to the present, Mr. Hubbell has freely supplied passers-by; but as travel increases through the Painted Desert, it is a system that must surely be changed, not because the [Pg 130] public love Mr. Hubbell "less, but more."

The morning air was pure wine. The hills were veiled in a lilac light—tones, half-tones, shades and subtle suggestions of subdued glory—with an almost Alpine glow where the red sunrise came through notches of the painted peaks. *Hogan* after *hogan*, with sheep corrals in cedar shakes, we passed, where little boys and girls were driving the sheep and goats up and down from the watering places. Presently, as you drive northwestward, there swim through the opaline haze peculiar to the Desert, purplish-green forested peaks splashed with snow on the summit—the Francisco Mountains of Flagstaff far to the South; and you are on a high sagebrush mesa, like a gray sea, with miles, miles upon miles (for three hours you drive through it) of delicate, lilac-scented bloom, the sagebrush in blossom. I can liken it to nothing but the appearance of the sea at sunrise or sunset when a sort of misty lavender light follows the red glow. This mesa leads you into the cedar woods, an incense-scented forest far as you can see for hours and hours. You begin to understand how a desert has not only mountains and hills but forests. In fact, the northern belt of the Painted Desert comprises the Kaibab Forest, and the southern belt the Tusayan and Coconino Forests, the Mesas of the Moki and Navajo Land lying like a wedge between these two belts.

Then, towards midday, your trail has been dropping so gradually that you hardly realize it till you [Pg 131] slither down a sand bank and find yourself between the yellow pumice walls of a blind *cul-de-sac* in the rock—nooning place—where a tiny trickle of pure spring water pours out of the upper angle of rock, forming a pool in a natural basin of stone. Here cowboys of the long-ago days, when this was a no-man's-land, have fenced the waters in from pollution and painted hands of blood on the walls of the cave roof above the spring. Wherever you find pools in the Desert, there the Desert silence is broken by life; unbroken range ponies trotting back and forward for a drink, blue jays and bluebirds flashing phantoms in the sunlight, the wild doves fluttering in flocks and sounding their mournful "hoo-hoo-hoo."

This spring is about half of the fifty-five miles between Ganado and Keam's Cañon; and the last half of the trail is but a continuance of the first: more lilac-colored mesas high above the top of the world, with the encircling peaks like the edge of an inverted bowl, a sky above blue as the bluest turquoise; then the cedared lower hills redolent of evergreens; a drop amid the pumice rocks of the lower world, and you are in Keam's Cañon, driving along the bank of an arroyo trenched by floods, steep as a carved wall. You pass the ruins of the old government school, where the floods drove the scholars out, and see the big rock commemorating Kit Carson's famous fight long ago, and come on the new Indian schools where 150 little Navajos and Mokis are being taught by Federal appointees—schools as fine in every respect as the best educational [Pg 132] institutions of the East. At the Agency Office here you must obtain a permit to go on into Moki Land; for the Three Mesas and Oraibi and Hotoville are the *Ultima Thule* of the trail across the Painted Desert. Here you find tribes completely untouched by civilization and as hostile to it (as the name Hotoville signifies) as when the Spaniard first came among them. In fact, the only remnants of Spanish influence left at some of these mesas are the dwarfed peach orchards growing in the arid sands. These were planted centuries ago by the Spanish *padres*.

The trading post managed by Mr. Lorenzo Hubbell, Jr., at Keam's Cañon is but a replica of his father's establishment at Ganado. Here is the same fine old Spanish hospitality. Here, too, is a rare though smaller collection of Western paintings. There are rugs from every part of the Navajo Land, and specimens of pottery from the Three Mesas—especially from Nampaii, the wonderful woman pottery maker of the First Mesa—and fine silver-work gathered from the Navajo silversmiths. And with it all is the gracious perfection of the art that conceals art, the air that you are conferring a favor on the host to accept rest in a little rose-covered bower of two rooms and a parlor placed at the command of guests.

The last lap of the drive across the Painted Desert is by all odds the hardest stretch of the road, as well as the most interesting. It is here the Mokis, or Hopi, have their reservation in the very heart of Navajo Land; and there will be no quarrel over possession of this land. It lies a sea of [Pg 133] yellow sand with high rampant islands—600, 1,000, 1,500 feet above the plains—of yellow *tufa* and white gypsum rock, sides as sheer as a wall, the top a flat plateau but for the crest where perch the Moki villages. Up the narrow acclivities leading to these mesa crests the Mokis must bring all provisions, all water, their ponies and donkeys. If they could live on atmosphere, on views of a painted world at their feet receding to the very drop over the sky-line, with tones and half-tones and subtle suggestions of opaline snow peaks swimming in the lilac haze hundreds of miles away, you would not wonder at their choosing these eerie eagle nests for their cities; for the coloring below is as gorgeous and brilliant as in the Grand Cañon. But you see their little farm patches among the sand billows below, the peach trees almost uprooted by the violence of the wind, literally and truly, a stone placed where the corn has been planted to prevent seed and plantlet from being blown away. Or if the Navajo still raided the Moki, you could understand them toiling like beasts of burden carrying water up to these hilltops; but the day of raid and foray is forever past.

It was on our way back over this trail that we learned one good reason why the dwellers of this land must keep to the high rock crests. Crossing the high mesa, we had felt the wind begin to blow, when like Drummond's Habitant Skipper, "it blew and then it blew some more." By the time we reached the sandy plain below, such a hurricane had broken as I have seen only once before, [Pg 134] and that was off the coast of Labrador, when for six hours we could not see the sea for the foam. The billows of sand literally lifted. You could not see the sandy plain for a dust fine as flour that wiped out every landmark three feet ahead of your horses' noses. The wheels sank hub deep in sand. Of trail, not a sign was left; and you heard the same angry roar as in a hurricane at sea. But like the eternal rocks, dim and serene and high above the turmoil, stood the First Mesa village of Moki Land. Perhaps after all, these little squat Pueblo Indians knew what they were doing when they built so high above the dust storms. Twice the rear wheels lifted for a glorious upset; but we veered and tacked and whipped the fagged horses on. For three hours the hurricane lasted, and when finally it sank with an angry growl and we came out of the fifteen miles of sand into sagebrush and looked back, the rosy tinge of an afterglow lay on the gray pile of stone where the Moki town crests the top of the lofty mesa.

In justice to travelers and Desert dwellers, two or three facts should be added. Such dust storms occur only in certain spring months. So much in fairness to the Painted Desert. Next, I have cursorily given slight details of the Desert storm, because I don't want any pleasure seekers to think the Painted Desert can be crossed with the comfort of a Pullman car. You have to pay for your fun. We paid in that blinding, stinging, smothering blast as from a furnace, from three to [Pg 135] half past five. Women are supposed to be irrepressible talkers. Well—we came to the point where not a soul in the carriage could utter a word for the dust. Lastly, when we saw that the storm was to be such a genuine old-timer, we ought to have tied wet handkerchiefs across our mouths. Glasses we had to keep the dust out of our eyes; but that dust is alkali, and it took a good two weeks' sneezing and a very sore throat to get rid of it.

Of the Three Mesas and Oraibi and Hotoville, space forbids details except that they are higher than the village at Acoma. Overlooking the Painted Desert in every direction, they command a view that beggars all description and almost staggers thought. You seem to be overlooking Almighty God's own amphitheater of dazzlingly-colored infinity; and naturally you go dumb with joy of the beauty of it and lose your own personality and perspective utterly. We lunched on the brink of a white precipice 1,500 feet above anywhere, and saw Moki women toiling up that declivity with urns of water on their heads, and photographed naked urchins sunning themselves on the baking bare rock, and stood above *estufas*, or sacred underground council chambers, where the Pueblos held their religious rites before the coming of the Spaniards.

Of the Moki towns, Oraibi is, perhaps, cleaner and better than the Three Mesas. The mesas are indescribably, unspeakably filthy. At Oraibi, you can wander through adobe houses clean as your own home quarters, the adobe hard as cement, the rooms divided into sleeping apartments, [Pg 136] cooking room, meal bin, etc. Also, being nearer the formation of the Grand Cañon, the coloring surrounding the Mesa is almost as gorgeous as the Cañon.

If it had not been that the season was verging on the summer rains, which flood the Little Colorado, we should have gone on from Oraibi to the Grand Cañon. But the Little Colorado is full of quicksands, dangerous to a span of a generous host's horses; so we came back the way we had entered. As we drove down the winding trail that corkscrews from Oraibi to the sand plain, a group of Moki women came running down the footpath and met us just as we were turning our backs on the Mesa.

"We love you," exclaimed an old woman extending her hand (the Government doctor interpreted

for us), "we love you with all our hearts and have come down to wish you a good-by."

CHAPTER VIII

[Pg 137]

THE GRAND CAÑON AND PETRIFIED FORESTS

The belt of National Forests west of the Painted Desert and Navajo Land comprises that strange area of onyx and agate known as the Petrified Forests, the upland pine parks of the Francisco Mountains round Flagstaff, the vast territory of the Grand Cañon, and the western slope between the Continental Divide and the Pacific.

Needless to say, it takes a great deal longer to see these forests than to write about them. You could spend a good two weeks in each area, and then come away conscious that you had seen only the beginnings of the wonders in each. For instance, the Petrified Forests cover an area of 2,000 acres that could keep you busy for a week. Then, when you think you have seen everything, you learn of some hieroglyphic inscriptions on a nearby rock, with lettering which no scientist has yet deciphered, but with pictographs resembling the ancient Phœnician signs from which our own alphabet is supposed to be derived. Also, after you have viewed the cañons and upland pine parks and snowy peaks and cliff dwellings round Flagstaff and have recovered from the surprise of learning there are upland pine parks and snowy peaks twelve to fourteen thousand feet high in [Pg 138] the Desert, you may strike south and see the Aztec ruins of Montezuma's Castle and Montezuma's Well, or go yet farther afield to the Great Natural Bridge of Southern Arizona, or explore near Winslow a great crater-like cavity supposed to mark the sinking of some huge meteorite.

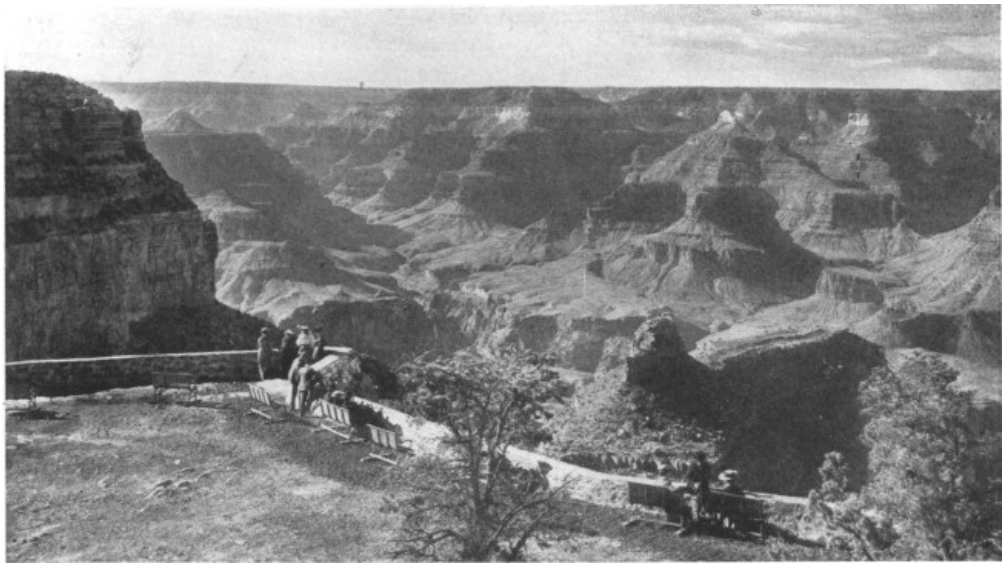
Of the Grand Cañon little need be said here; not because there is nothing to say, but because all the superlatives you can pile on, all the scientific explanations you can give, are so utterly inadequate. You can count on one hand the number of men who have explored the whole length of the Grand Cañon—200 miles—and hundreds of the lesser cañons that strike off sidewise from Grand Cañon are still unexplored and unexploited. Then, when you cross the Continental Divide and come on down to the Angeles Forests in from Los Angeles, and the Cleveland in from San Diego, you are in a poor-man's paradise so far as a camp holiday is concerned. For $3 a week you are supplied with tent, camp kit and all. If there are two of you, $6 a week will cover your holiday; and forty cents by electric car takes you out to your stamping ground. An average of 200 people a month go out to one or other of the Petrified Forests. From Flagstaff, 100 people a month go in to see the cliff dwellings. Not less than 30,000 people a year visit the Grand Cañon and 100,000 people yearly camp and holiday in the Angeles and Cleveland Forests. And we are but at the beginning of the discovery of our own Western Wonderland. Who shall say that the National Forests are not the People's Playground of *all* America; that they do not belong to the [Pg 139] East as much as to the West; that East and West are not alike concerned in maintaining and protecting them?

You strike into the Petrified Forests from Adamana or Holbrook. Adamana admits you to one section of the petrified area, Holbrook to another—both equally marvelous and easily accessible. If you go out in a big tally-ho with several others in the rig, the charge will be from $1.50 to $2.50. If you hire a driver and fast team for yourself, the charge will be from $4 to $6. Both places have hotels, their charges varying from $1 and $1.50 in Holbrook, to $2 and $2.50 at Adamana. The hotel puts up your luncheon and water keg, and the trips can be made, with the greatest ease in a day.

Don't go to the Petrified Forests expecting thrills of the big knock-you-down variety! To go from the spacious glories of the boundless Painted Desert to the little 2,000-acre area of the Petrified Forests is like passing from a big Turner or Watts canvas in the Tate Gallery, London, to a tiny study in blue mist and stars by Whistler. If you go looking for "big" things you'll come away disappointed; but if like Tennyson and Bobby Burns and Wordsworth, "the flower in the crannied wall" has as much beauty for you as the ocean or a mountain, you'll come away touched with the mystery of that Southwestern Wonderland quite as much as if you had come out of all the riotous intoxication of color in the Painted Desert. [Pg 140]

In fact, you drive across the southern rim of the Painted Desert to reach the Petrified Forests. You are crossing the aromatic, sagey-smelling dry plain pink with a sort of morning primrose light, when you come abruptly into broken country. A sandy arroyo trenches and cuts the plain here. A gravelly hillock hunches up there; and just when you are having an eye to the rear wheel brake, or glancing back to see whether the fat man is on the up or down side, your eye is caught by spangles of rainbow light on the ground, by huge blood-colored rocks the shape of a fallen tree with encrusted stone bark on the outside and wedges and slabs and pillars of pure onyx and agate in the middle. Somehow you think of that Navajo legend of the coyote spilling the stars on the face of the sky, and you wonder what marvel-maker among the gods of medicine-men spilled his huge bag of precious stone all over the gravel in this fashion. Then someone cries out, "Why, look, that's a tree!" and the tally-ho spills its occupants out helter-skelter; and someone steps off a long blood-red, bark-incrusted column hidden at both ends in the sand, and shouts out that the visible part of the recumbent trunk is 130 feet long. There was a scientist along with us the day we went out, a man from Belgium in charge of the rare forests of Java; and he declared without

hesitation that many of these prone, pillared giants must be sequoias of the same ancient family as California's groves of big trees. Think what that means! These petrified trees lie so deeply buried in the sand that only treetops and sections of the trunks and broken bits of small upper branches are visible. Practically no excavation has taken place beneath these hillocks of gravel and sand. The depth and extent of the forest below this ancient ocean bed are unknown. Only water—oceans and æons of water—could have rolled and swept and piled up these sand hills. Before the Desert was an ancient sea; and before the sea was an ancient sequoia forest; and it takes a sequoia from six to ten thousand years to come to its full growth; and that about gets you back to the Ancient of Days busy in his Workshop making Man out of mud, and Earth out of Chaos.



There is nothing else remotely resembling the Grand Cañon in the known world, and no one has yet been heard of who has seen it and been disappointed

But there is another side to the Petrified Forests besides a prehistoric, geologic one. Split one of [Pg 141]
the big or little pieces of petrified wood open, and you find pure onyx, pure agate, the colors of the rainbow, which every youngster has tried to catch in its hands, caught by a Master Hand and transfixed forever in the eternal rocks. Crosswise, the split shows the concentric circles of the wood grain in blues and purples and reds and carmines and golds and lilacs and primrose pinks. Split the stone longitudinally and you have the same colors in water-waves brilliant as a diamond, hard as a diamond, so hard you can only break it along the grain of the ancient wood, so hard, fortunately, that it almost defies man-machinery for a polish. This hardness has been a blessing in disguise; for before the Petrified Forests were made by Act of Congress a National Park, or
Monument, the petrified wood was exploited commercially and shipped away in carloads to be [Pg 142]
polished. You can see some shafts of the polished specimens in any of the big Eastern museums; but it was found that the petrified wood required machinery as expensive and fine as for diamonds to effect a hard polish, and the thing was not commercially possible; so the Petrified Forests will never be vandalized.

You lunch under a natural bridge formed by the huge shaft of a prone giant, and step off more fallen pillars to find lengths greater than 130 feet, and seat yourself on stump ends of a rare enough beauty for an emperor's throne; but always you come back to the first pleasures of a child —picking up the smaller pebbles, each pebble as if there had been a sun shower of rainbow drops and each drop had crystallized into colored diamonds.

I said don't go to the Petrified Forests expecting a big thrill. Yet if you have eyes that really see, and go there after a rain when every single bit of rock is ashine with the colors of broken rainbows; or go there at high noon, when every color strikes back in spangles of light—there is something the matter with you if you don't have a big thrill with a capital "B."

There is another pleasure on your trip to the Petrified Forests, which you will get if you know how, but completely miss if you don't. All these drivers to the Forests are old-timers of the days when Arizona was a No-Man's-Land. For instance, Al Stevenson, the custodian at Adamana, was
one of the men along with Commodore Owen of San Diego and Bert Potter of the Forestry [Pg 143]
Department, Washington, who rescued Sheriff Woods of Holbrook from a lynching party in the old sheep and cattle war days. Stevenson can tell that story as few men know it; and dozens of others he can tell of the old, wild, pioneer days when a man had to be all man and fearless to his trigger tips, or cash in, and cash in quick. At Holbrook you can get the story of the Show-Low Ranch and all the $50,000 worth of stock won in a cut of cards; or of how they hanged Stott and Scott and Wilson—mere boys, two of them in Tonto Basin, for horses which they didn't steal. All through this Painted Desert you are just on the other side of a veil from the Land of True Romance; but you'll not lift that veil, believe me, with a patronizing Eastern question. You'll find your way in, if you know how; and if you don't know how, no man can teach you. And at Adamana, don't forget to see the pictograph rocks. Then you'll appreciate why the scientists wonder whether the antiquity of the Orient is old as the antiquity of our own America.

Flagstaff, frankly, does not live up to its own opportunities. It is the gateway to many Aztec ruins—much more easily accessible to the public than the Frijoles cave dwellings of New Mexico. Only nine miles out by easy trail are cliff dwellings in Walnut Cañon. These differ from the Frijoles in not being caves. The ancient people have simply taken advantage of natural arches high in the face of unscalable precipices and have bricked up the faces of these with adobe. As far as I know, [Pg 144] not so much as the turn of a spade has ever been attempted in excavation. The débris of centuries lies on the floors of the houses; and the adobe brick in front is gradually crumbling and rolling down the precipice into Walnut Cañon. Nor is there any doubt but that slight excavation would yield discoveries. You find bits of pottery and shard in the débris piles; and the day we went out, five minutes' scratching over of one cliff floor unearthed bits of wampum shell that from the perforations had evidently been used as a necklace. The Forestry Service has a man stationed here to guard the old ruins; but the Government might easily go a step further and give him authority to attempt some slight restoration. You drive across a cinder plain from Flagstaff and suddenly drop down to a footpath that takes you to the brink of circling gray stone cañons many hundreds of feet deep. Along the top ledges of these amid such rocks as mountain sheep might frequent are the cliff houses—hundreds and hundreds of them, which no one has yet explored. At the bottom of the lonely, silent, dark cañon was evidently once a stream; but no stream has flowed here in the memory of the white race; and the cliff houses give evidence of even greater age than the caves.

Only forty-seven miles south of Flagstaff are Montezuma's Castle and Well. Drivers can be hired in Flagstaff to take you out at from $4 to $6 a day; and there are ranch houses near the Castle [Pg 145] and the Well, where you can stay at very trifling cost, indeed.

It comes as a surprise to see here at Flagstaff, wedged between the Painted Desert and the arid plains of the South, the snow-capped peaks of the Francisco Mountains ranging from 12,000 to 13,000 feet high, an easy climb to the novice. Only twenty miles out at Oak Creek is one of the best trout brooks of the Southwest; and twenty-five miles out is a ranch house in a cool cañon where health and holiday seekers can stay all the year in the Verde Valley. It is from East Verde that you go to the Natural Bridge. The central span of this bridge is 100 feet from the creek bottom, and the creek itself deposits lime so rapidly that if you drop a stone or a hat down, it at once encrusts and petrifies. Also at Flagstaff is the famous Lowell Observatory. In fact, if Flagstaff lived up to its opportunities, if there were guides, cheap tally-hos and camp outfitters on the spot, it could as easily have 10,000 tourists a month as it now has between 100 and 200.

When you reach the Grand Cañon, you have come to the uttermost wonder of the Southwestern Wonder World. There is nothing else like it in America. There is nothing else remotely resembling it in the known world; and no one has yet been heard of who has come to the Grand Cañon and gone away disappointed. If the Grand Cañon were in Egypt or the Alps, it is safe to wager it would be visited by every one of the 300,000 Americans who yearly throng Continental resorts. [Pg 146] As it is, only 30,000 people a year visit it; and a large proportion of them are foreigners.

You can do the Cañon cheaply, or you can do it extravagantly. You can go to it by driving across the Painted Desert, 200 miles; or motoring in from Flagstaff—a half-day trip; or by train from Williams, return ticket something more than $5. Or you can take your own pack horses, and ride in yourself; or you can employ one of the well known local trail makers and guides, like John Bass, and go off up the Cañon on a camping trip of weeks or months.

Once you reach the rim of the Cañon, you can camp under your own tent roof and cater your own meals. Or you may go to the big hotel and pay $4 to $15 a day. Or you may get tent quarters at the Bright Angel Camp—$1 a day, and whatever you pay for your meals. Or you may join one of John Bass' Camps which will cost from $4 up, according to the number of horses and the size of your party.

First of all, understand what the Grand Cañon is, and what it isn't. We ordinarily think of a cañon as a narrow cleft or trench in the rocks, seldom more than a few hundred feet deep and wide, and very seldom more than a few miles long. The Grand Cañon is nearly as long as from New York to Canada, as wide as the city of New York is long, and as deep straight as a plummet as the Canadian Rockies or lesser Alps are high. In other words, it is 217 miles long, from thirteen to twenty wide, and has a straight drop a mile deep, or seven miles as the trail zigzags down. You [Pg 147] think of a cañon as a great trench between mountains. This one is a colossal trench with side cañons going off laterally its full length, dozens of them to each mile, like ribs along a backbone. Ordinarily, to climb a 7,000 foot mountain, you have to go up. At the Grand Cañon, you come to the brink of the sagebrush plain and jump off—to climb these peaks. Peak after peak, you lose count of them in the mist of primrose fire and lilac light and purpling shadows. To climb these peaks, you go down, down 7,000 feet a good deal steeper than the ordinary stair and in places quite as steep as the Metropolitan Tower elevator. In fact, if the Metropolitan Tower and the Singer Building and the Flatiron and Washington's Shaft in the Capital City were piled one on top of another in a pinnacled pyramid, they would barely reach up one-seventh of the height of these massive peaks swimming in countless numbers in the color of the Cañon.

So much for dimensions! Now as to time. If you have only one day, you can dive in by train in the morning and out by night, and between times go to Sunrise Point or—if you are a robust walker—down Bright Angel Trail to the bank of the Colorado River, seven miles. If you have two days at

your disposal, you can drive out to Grand View—fourteen miles—and overlook the panorama of the Cañon twenty miles in all directions. If you have more days yet at your disposal, there are good trips on wild trails to Dripping Springs and to Gertrude Point and to Cataract Cañon and by [Pg 148] aerial tram across the Colorado River to the Kaibab Plateau on the other side. In fact, if you stayed at the Grand Cañon a year and were not afraid of trailless trips, you could find a new view, a new wonder place, new stamping grounds each day. Remember that the Cañon itself is 217 miles long; and it has lateral cañons uncounted.

When you reach El Tovar you are told two of the first things to do are take the drives—three miles each way—to Sunrise and to Sunset Points. Don't! Save your dollars, and walk them both. By carriage, the way leads through the pine woods back from the rim for three miles to each point. By walking, you can keep on an excellent trail close to the rim and do each in twenty minutes; for the foot trails are barely a mile long. Also by walking, you can escape the loud-mouthed, bull-voiced tourist who bawls out his own shallow knowledge of erosion to the whole carriageful just at the moment you want to float away in fancy amid opal lights and upper heights where the Olympic and Hindoo and Norse gods took refuge when unbelief drove them from their old resorts. In fact, if you keep looking long enough through that lilac fire above seas of primrose mists, you can almost fancy those hoary old gods of Beauty and Power floating round angles of the massive lower mountains, shifting the scenes and beckoning one another from the wings of this huge amphitheater. The space-filling talker is still bawling out about "the mighty powers of [Pg 149] erosion"; and a thin-faced curate is putting away a figure of speech about "Almighty Power" for his next sermon. Personally, I prefer the old pagan way of expressing these things in the short cut of a personifying god who did a smashing big business with the hammer of Thor, or the sea horses of Neptune or the forked lightnings of old loud-thundering Jove.

You can walk down Bright Angel Trail to the river at the bottom of the Cañon; but unless your legs have a pair of very good benders under the knees, you'll not be able to walk up that trail the same day, for the way down is steep as a stair and the distance is seven miles. In that case, better spend the night at the camp known as the Indian Gardens halfway down in a beautifully watered dell; or else have the regular daily party bring down the mules for you to the river. Or you can join the regular tourist party both going down and coming up. Mainly because we wanted to see the sunrise, but also because a big party on a narrow trail is always unsafe and a gabbling crowd on a beautiful trail is always agony, two of us rose at four A. M. and walked down the trail during sunrise, leaving orders for a special guide to fetch mules down for us to the river. Space forbids details of the tramp, except to say it was worth the effort, twice over worth the effort in spite of knees that sent up pangs and protests for a week.

It had rained heavily all night and the path was very slippery; but if rain brings out the colors of [Pg 150] the Petrified Forests, you can imagine what it does to sunrise in a sea of blood-red mountain peaks. Much of the trail is at an angle of forty-five degrees; but it is wide and well shored up at the outer edge. The foliage lining the trail was dripping wet; and the sunlight struck back from each leaf in spangles of gold. An incense as of morning worship filled the air with the odor of cedars and cloves and wild nutmeg pinks and yucca bloom. There are many more birds below the Cañon rim than above it; and the dawn was filled with snatches of song from bluebirds and yellow finches and water ousels, whose notes were like the tinkle of pure water. What looked like a tiny red hillock from the rim above is now seen to be a mighty mountain, four, five, seven thousand feet from river to peak, with walls smooth as if planed by the Artificer of all Eternity. In any other place, the gorges between these peaks would be dignified by the names of cañons. Here, they are mere wings to the main stage setting of the Grand Cañon. We reached the Indian Garden's Camp in time for breakfast and rested an hour before going on down to the river. The trail followed a gentle descent over sand-hills and rocky plateaus at first, then suddenly it began to drop sheer in the section known as the Devil's Corkscrew. The heat became sizzling as you descended; but the grandeur grew more imposing from the stupendous height and sheer sides of the brilliantly colored gorges and masses of shadows above. Then the Devil's Corkscrew fell into a sandy dell where a tiny waterfall trickled with the sound of the voice of many waters in the [Pg 151] great silence. A cloudburst would fill this gorge in about a jiffy; but a cloudburst is the last thing on earth you need expect in this land of scant showers and no water. Suddenly, you turn a rock angle, and the yellow, muddy, turbulent flood of the Colorado swirls past you, tempestuous, noisy, sullen and dark, filling the narrow cañon with the war of rock against water. What seemed to be mere foothills far above, now appear colossal peaks sheer up and down, penning the angry river between black walls. It was no longer hot. We could hear a thunder shower reverberating back in some of the valleys of the Cañon; and the rain falling between us and the red rocks was as a curtain to the scene shifting of those old earth and mountain and water gods hiding in the wings of the vast amphitheater.

And if you want a wilder, more eery trail than down Bright Angel, go from Dripping Springs out to Gertrude Point. I know a great many wild mountain trails in the Rockies, North and South; but I have never known one that will give more thrills from its sheer beauty and sheer daring. You go out round the ledges of precipice after precipice, where nothing holds you back from a fall 7,000 feet straight as a stone could drop, nothing but the sure-footedness of your horse; out and out, round and round peak after peak, till you are on the tip top and outer edge of one of the highest mountains in the Cañon. This is the trail of old Louis Boucher, one of the beauty-loving souls who [Pg 152] first found his way into the center of the Cañon and built his own trail to one of its grandest haunts. Louis used to live under the arch formed by the Dripping Springs; but Louis has long since left, and the trail is falling away and is now one for a horse that can walk on air and a head that doesn't feel the sensations of champagne when looking down a straight 7,000 feet into

darkness. If you like that kind of a trail, take the trip; for it is the best and wildest view of the Cañon; but take two days to it, and sleep at Louis' deserted camp under the Dripping Springs. Yet if you don't like a trail where you wonder if you remembered to make your will and what would happen if the gravel slipped from your horse's feet one of these places where the next turn seems to jump off into atmosphere, then wait; for the day must surely come when all of the Grand Cañon's 217 miles will be made as easily and safely accessible to the American public as Egypt.

CHAPTER IX

[Pg 153]

THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE OF SANTA FE

It lies to the left of the city Plaza—a long, low, one-story building flanking the whole length of one side of the Plaza, with big yellow pine pillars supporting the arcade above the public walk, each pillar surmounted by the fluted architrave peculiar to Spanish-Moorish architecture. It is yellow adobe in the sunlight—very old, very sleepy, very remote from latter-day life, the most un-American thing in all America, the only governor's palace from Athabasca to the Gulf of Mexico, from Sitka to St. Lawrence, that exists to-day precisely as it existed one hundred years ago, two hundred years ago, three hundred years ago, four hundred years ago—back, back beyond that to the days when there were no white men in America. Uncover the outer plaster in the six-foot thickness of the walls in the Governor's Palace of Santa Fe, and what do you find? Solid adobe and brick? Not much! The walled-up, conical fireplaces and meal bins and corn caves of a pueblo people who lived on the site of modern Santa Fe hundreds of years before the Spanish founded this capital here in 1605. For years it has been a dispute among historians—Bandelier, Hodge, Twitchell, Governor Prince, Mr. Reed—whether any prehistoric race dwelt where Santa Fe now [Pg 154] stands. Only in the summer of 1912, when it was necessary to replace some old beams and cut some arches through the six-foot walls was it discovered that the huge partitions covered in their centers walls antedating the coming of the Spaniards—walls with the little conical fireplaces of Indian pueblos, with such meal bins and corn shelves as you find in the prehistoric cave dwellings.

We have such a passion for destroying the old and replacing it with the new in America that you can scarcely place your hand on a structure in the New World that stands intact as it was before the Revolution. We somehow or other take it for granted that these mute witnesses of ancient heroism have nothing to teach us with their mossed walls and low-beamed ceilings and dumb, majestic dignity.

The Governor's Palace at Santa Fe, New Mexico, within the walls of which are found the conical fireplaces of the Indians who lived here hundreds of years before the Spaniards came

To this, the Governor's Palace of Santa Fe is the one and complete exception in America. It flanks [Pg 155] the cottonwoods of the Plaza, yellow adobe in the sunlight—very old, very sleepy, very remote from latter-day life, but with a quaint, quiet atmosphere that travelers scour Europe to find. Look up to the *vigas*, or beams of the ceiling, yellowed and browned and mellowed with age. Those *vigas* have witnessed strange figures stalking the spacious halls below. If the ceiling beams could throw their memories on some moving picture screen, there would be such a panorama of varied personages as no other palace in the world has witnessed. Leave out the hackneyed tale of General Lew Wallace writing "Ben Hur" in a back room of the Palace; or the fact that three different flags flung their folds over old Santa Fe in a single century. He who knows anything at all about Santa Fe, knows that Spanish power gave place to Mexican, and the Mexican régime to American rule. Also, that General Lew Wallace wrote "Ben Hur" in a back room of the Palace, while he was governor of New Mexico. And you only have to use your eyes to know that Santa Fe, itself, is a bit of old Spain set down in the modern United States of America. The donkeys trotting

to market under loads of wood, the ragged peon riders bestriding burros no higher than a saw horse, the natives stalking past in bright serape or blanket, moccasined and hatless—all tell you that you are in a region remote from latter-day America.

But here is another sort of picture panorama! It is between 1680 and 1710.

A hatless youth, swarthy from five years of terrible exposure, hair straight as a string, gabbling French but speaking no Spanish, a slave white traded from Indian tribe to Indian tribe, all the way from the Gulf of Mexico to the interior of New Spain, is brought before the viceroy. Do you know who he is? He is Jean L'Archevêque, the French-Canadian lad who helped to murder La Salle down on Trinity Bay in Texas. What are the French doing down on Trinity Bay? Do they intend to explore and claim this part of America, too? In the abuses of slavery among the Indians for five years, the lad has paid the terrible penalty for the crime into which he was betrayed by [Pg 156] his youth. He is scarred with wounds and beatings. He is too guilt-stricken ever to return to New France. His information may be useful to New Spain; so he is enrolled in the guards of the Spanish Viceroy of Santa Fe; and he is sent out to San Ildefonso and Santa Clara, where he founds a family and where his records may be seen to this day. For those copy-book moralists who like to know that Divine retribution occasionally works out in daily life, it may be added that Jean L'Archevêque finally came to as violent a death as he had brought to the great French explorer, La Salle.

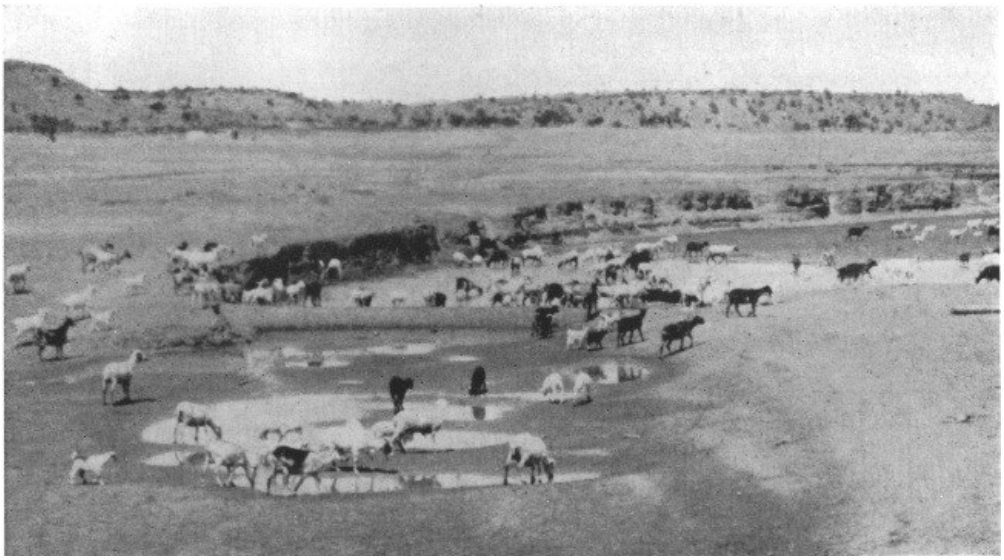
Or take a panorama of a later day. It is just before the fall of Spanish rule. The Governor sits in his Palace at Santa Fe, a mightier autocrat than the Pope in Rome; for, as the Russians say, "God is high in His Heavens," and the King is far away, and those who want justice in Santa Fe, must pay—pay—pay—pay in gold coin that can be put in the iron chest of the viceroy. (You can see specimens of those iron chests all through New Mexico yet—chests with a dozen secret springs to guard the family fortune of the hidden gold bullion.) A woman bursts into the presence of the Viceroy, and throws herself on her knees. It is a terrible tale—the kind of tale we are too finical to tell in these modern days, though that is not saying there are not many such tales to be told. The woman's young sister has married an officer of the Viceroy's ring. He has beaten her as he would [Pg 157] a slave. He has treated her to vile indecencies of which only Hell keeps record. She had fled to her father; but the father, fearing the power of the Viceroy, had sent her back to the man; and the man has killed her with his brutalities. (I have this whole story from a lineal descendant of the family.) The woman throws back her *rebozo*, drops to her knees before the Viceroy, and demands justice. The Viceroy thinks and thinks. A woman more or less! What does it matter? The woman's father had been afraid to act, evidently. The husband is a member of the government ring. Interference might stir up an ugly mess—revelations of extortion and so on! Besides, justice is worth so much per; and this woman—what has she to pay? This Viceroy will do nothing. The woman rises slowly, incredulous. Is this justice? She denounces the Viceroy in fiery, impassioned speech. The Viceroy smiles and twirls his mustachios. What can a woman do? The woman proclaims her imprecation of a court that fails of justice. (Do our courts fail of justice? Is there no lesson in that past for us?) Do you know what she did? She did what not one woman in a million could do to-day, when conditions are a thousand fold easier. She went back to her home. It was just about where the pretty Spanish house of Mr. Morley of the Archæological School stands to-day. She gathered up all the loose gold she could and bound it in a belt around her waist. Then she took the most powerful horse she had from the kraal, saddled him and rode out absolutely [Pg 158] alone for the city of Old Mexico—900 miles as the trail ran. Apaches, Comanches, Navajos, beset the way. She rode at night and slept by day. The trail was a desert waste of waterless, bare, rocky hills and quicksand rivers and blistering heat. God, or the Virgin to whom she constantly prayed, or her own dauntless spirit, must have piloted the way; for she reached the old city of Mexico, laid her case before the King's representatives, and won the day. Her sister's death was avenged. The husband was tried and executed: and the Viceroy was deposed. Most of us know of almost similar cases. I think of a man who has repeatedly tried for a federal judgeship in New Mexico, who has literally been guilty of every crime on the human calendar. Yet we don't at risk of life push these cases to retribution. Is that one of the lessons the past has for us? Spanish power fell in New Mexico because there came a time when there was neither justice nor retribution in any of the courts.

Other panoramas there were beneath the age-mellowed beams of the Palace ceiling, panoramas of Comanche and Navajo and Ute and Apache stalking in war feathers before a Spanish governor clad in velvets and laces. Tradition has it that a Ute was once struck dead in the Governor's presence. Certainly, all four tribes wrought havoc and raid to the very doors of the Palace. Within only the last century, a Comanche chief and his warriors came to Santa Fe demanding the daughter of a leading trader in marriage for the chief's son. The garrison was weak, in spite of [Pg 159] fustian and rusty helmets and battered breastplates and velvet doublets and boots half way to the waist—there were seldom more than 200 soldiers, and the pusillanimous Governor counseled deception. He told the Comanche that the trader's daughter had died, and ordered the girl to hide. The only peace that an Indian respects—or any other man, for that matter—is the peace that is a victory. The Indian suspected that the answer was the answer of the coward, a lie, and came back with his Comanche warriors. While the soldiers huddled inside the Palace walls, the town was raided. The trader was murdered and the daughter carried off to the Comanches, where she died of abuse. When these tragedies fell on daughters of the Pilgrims in New England, the Saxon strain of the warrior women in their blood rose to meet the challenge of fate; and they brained their captors with an ax; but no such warrior strain was in the blood of the daughters of Spain. By religion, by nationality, by tradition, the Spanish girl was the purely convent product: womanhood protected by a ten-foot wall. When the wall fell away, she was helpless as a hot-

house flower set out amid violent winds.

Diagonally across the Plaza from the Governor's Palace stands the old Fonda, or Exchange Hotel, whence came the long caravans of American traders on the Santa Fe Trail. Behind the Palace about a quarter of a mile, was the Gareta, a sort of combined custom house and prison. The [Pg 160] combination was deeply expressive of Spanish rule in those early days, for independent of what the American's white-tented wagon might contain—baled hay or priceless silks or chewing tobacco—a duty of $500 was levied against each mule-team wagon of the American trader. Did a trader protest, or hold back, he was promptly clapped in irons. It was cheaper to pay the duty than buy a release. The walls of both the Fonda and the Gareta were of tremendous thickness, four to six feet of solid adobe, which was hard as our modern cement. In the walls behind the Gareta and on the walls behind the Palace, pitted bullet holes have been found. Beneath the holes was embedded human hair.

Nothing more picturesque exists in America's past than the panorama of this old Santa Fe Trail. Santa Fe was to the Trail what Cairo was to the caravans coming up out of the Desert in Egypt. Twitchell, the modern historian, and Gregg, the old chronicler of last century's Trail, give wonderfully vivid pictures of the coming of the caravans to the Palace. "As the caravans ascended the ridge which overlooks the city, the clamorings of the men and the rejoicings of the bull whackers could be heard on every side. Even the animals seemed to participate in the humor of their riders. I doubt whether the first sight of Jerusalem brought the crusaders more tumultuous and soul-enrapturing joy."



A pool in the Painted Desert whither came thousands of goats and sheep, driven by Navajo girls on horseback

We talk of the picturesque fur trade of the North, when brigades of birch canoes one and two [Pg 161] hundred strong penetrated every river and lake of the wilderness of the Northwest. Let us take a look at these caravan brigades of the traders of the Southwest! Teams were hitched tandem to the white-tented wagons. Drivers did not ride in the wagons. They rode astride mule or horse, with long bull whips thick as a snake skin, which could reach from rear to fore team. I don't know how they do it; but when the drivers lash these whips out full length, they cause a crackling like pistol shots. The owner of the caravan was usually some gentleman adventurer from Virginia or Kentucky or Louisiana or Missouri; but each caravan had its captain to command, and its outriders to scout for Indians. These scouts were of every station in life with morals of as varied aspect as Joseph's coat of many colors. Kit Carson was once one of these scouts. Governor Bent was one of the traders. Stephen B. Elkins first came to New Mexico with a bull whacker's caravan. In the morning, every teamster would vie with his fellows to hitch up fastest. Teams ready, he would mount and call back—"All's set." An uproar of whinnying and braying, the clank of chains, and then the captain's shout—"Stretch out," when the long line of twenty or thirty white-tented wagons would rumble out for the journey of thirty to sixty days across the plains. Each wagon had five yoke of oxen, with six or eight extra mule teams behind in case of emergency. About three tons made a load. Twenty miles was a good day's travel. Camping places [Pg 162] near good water and pasturage were chosen ahead by the scouts. Wagons kept together in groups of four. In case of attack by Comanche or Ute, these wagons wheeled into a circle for defense with men and beasts inside the extemporized kraal. Campfires were kept away from wagons to avoid giving target to foes. Blankets consisted of buffalo robes, and the rations "hard tack," pork and such game as the scouts and sharpshooters could bring down. A favorite trick of Indian raiders was to wait till all animals were tethered out for pasturage, and then stampede mules and oxen. In the confusion, wagons would be overturned and looted.

As the long white caravans came to their journey's end at Santa Fe, literally the whole Spanish and Indian population crowded to the Plaza in front of the Palace. "Los Americanos! Los Carros! La Caravana!"—were the shouts ringing through the streets; and Santa Fe's perpetual siesta would be awakened to a week's fair or barter. Wagons were lined up at the custom house; and the trader presented himself before the Spanish governor, trader and governor alike dressed in their best regimentals. Very fair, very soft spoken, very profuse of compliments was the

interview; but divested of profound bows and flowery compliments, it ended in the American paying $500 a wagon, or losing his goods. The goods were then bartered at a staggering advance. Plain broadcloth sold at $25 a yard, linen at $4 a yard, and the price on other goods was [Pg 163] proportionate. Goods taken in exchange were hides, wool, gold and silver bullion, Indian blankets and precious stones.

Travelers from Mexico to the outside world went by stage or private omnibus with outriders and guards and sharpshooters. Young Spanish girls sent East to school were accompanied by such a retinue of defenders, slaves and servants, as might have attended a European monarch; and a whole bookful of stories could be written of adventures among the young Spanish nobility going out to see the world. The stage fare varied from $160 to $250 far as the Mississippi. Though Stephen B. Elkins went to New Mexico with a bull whacker's team, it was not long before he was sending gold bullion from mining and trading operations out to St. Louis and New York. How to get this gold bullion past the highwaymen who infested the stage route, was always a problem. I know of one old Spanish lady, who yearly went to St. Louis to make family purchases and used to smuggle Elkins' gold out for him in belts and petticoats and disreputable looking old hand bags. Once, when she was going out in midsummer heat, she had a belt of her husband's drafts and Elkins' gold round her waist. The way grew hotter and hotter. The old lady unstrapped the buckskin reticule—looking, for all the world, like a woman's carry-all—and threw it up on top of the stage. An hour later, highwaymen "went through" the passengers. Rings, watches, jewels, coin were taken off the travelers; and the mail bags were looted; but the bandits never thought of [Pg 164] examining the old bag on top of the stage, in which was gold worth all the rest of the loot.

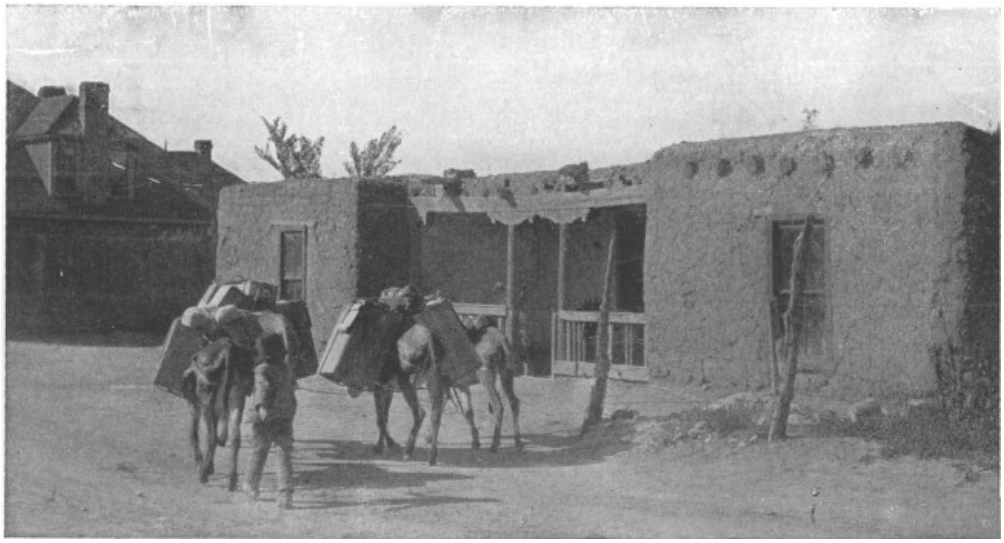
In those days, gambling was the universal passion of high and low in New Mexico; and many a Spanish don and American trader, who had taken over tens of thousands in the barter of the caravan, wasted it over the gaming table before dawn of the next day. The Fonda, or old Exchange Hotel, was the center of high play; but it may as well be acknowledged, the highest play of all, the wildest stakes were often laid in the Governor's Palace.

Luckily, the passion for destroying the old has not invaded Santa Fe. The people want their Palace preserved as it was, is, and ever shall be; and the recent restoration has been, not a reconstruction, but a taking away of all the modern and adventitious. Where modern pillars have been placed under the long front portico, they are being replaced by the old *portal* type of pillar—the fluted capital across the main column supporting the roof beams. This type of *portal* has come in such favor in New Mexico that it is being embodied in modern houses for arcades, porches and gardens.

The main entrance of the Palace is square in the center. You pass into what must have been the ancient reception room leading to an audience chamber on the left. What amazes you is the enormous thickness of these adobe walls. Each window casement is wider than a bench; and an open door laid back is not wider than the thickness of the wall. To-day the reception hall and, [Pg 165] indeed, the rooms of the center Palace present some of the finest mural paintings in America. These have been placed on the walls by the Archæological School of America which with the Historical Society occupies the main portions of the old building. You see drawings of the coming of the first Spanish caravels, of Coronado, of Don Diego de Vargas, who was the Frontenac of the Southwest, reconquering the provinces in 1680-94, about the same time that the great Frontenac was playing his part in French Canada. There are pictures, too, of the caravans crossing the plains, of the coming of American occupation, of the Moki and Hopi and Zuñi pueblos, of the Missions of which only ruins to-day mark the sites in the Jemez, at Sandia, and away out in the Desert of Abo.

To the left of the reception room is an excellent art gallery of Southwestern subjects. Here, artists of the growing Southwestern School send their work for exhibition and sale. It is significant that within the last few years prices have gone up from a few dollars to hundreds and thousands. Nausbaum's photographic work of the modern Indian is one of the striking features of the Palace. Of course, there are pictures by Curtis and Burbank and Sharpe and others of the Southwestern School; but perhaps the most interesting rooms to the newcomer, to the visitor, who doesn't know that we have an ancient America, are those where the mural drawings are devoted to the cave dwellers and prehistoric races. These were done by Carl Lotave of Paris out [Pg 166] on the ground of the ancient races. In conception and execution, they are among the finest murals in America.

Long ago, the Governor's Palace had twin towers and a chapel. Bells in the old Spanish churches were not tolled. They were struck gong fashion by an attendant, who ascended the towers. These bells were cast of a very fine quality of old copper; and the tone was largely determined by the quality of the cast. Old Mission bells are scarce to-day in New Mexico; and collectors offer as high as $1,500 and $3,000 for the genuine article. Vesper bells played a great part in the life of the old Spanish régime. Ladies might be promenading the Plaza, workmen busy over their tasks, gamblers hard at the wheel and dice. At vesper call, men, women and children dropped to knees; and for a moment silence fell, all but the calling of the vesper bells. Then the bells ceased ringing, and life went on in its noisy stream.



There are streets in Santa Fe where one may see box-like adobe houses beside dwellings of modern architecture

No account of the Governor's Palace would be complete without some mention of the marvels of dress among the dons and doñas of the old régime. Could we see them promenading the Plaza and the Palace as they paraded their gayety less than half a century ago, we would imagine ourselves in some play house of the French Court in its most luxurious days. Indians dressed then as they dress to-day, in bright-colored blankets fastened gracefully round hip and shoulders. Peons or peasants wore serapes, blankets with a slit in the center, over the shoulders. Women of position wore not hats but the silk *rebozo* or scarf, thrown over the head with one end back across the left shoulder. On the street, the face was almost covered by this scarf. Presumably the purpose was to conceal charms; but when you consider the combination of dark eyes and waving hair and a scarf of the finest color and texture that could be bought in China or the Indies, it is a question whether that scarf did not set off what it was designed to conceal. About the shawls used as scarfs there is much misconception. These are not of Spanish or Mexican make. They come down in the Spanish families from the days when the vessels of the traders of Mexico trafficked with China and Japan. These old shawls to-day bring prices varying all the way from $200 to $2,000. [Pg 167]

The don of fashion dressed even more gayly than his spouse. Jewelry was a passion with both men and women; and the finest type of old jewelry in America to-day is to be found in New Mexico. The hat of the don was the wide-brimmed sombrero. Around this was a silver or gold cord, with a gold or silver cockade. The jackets were of colored broadcloth with buttons of silver or gold, not brass; but the trousers were at once the glory and the vanity of the wearer. Gold and silver buttons ornamented the seams of the legs from hip to knee. There were gold clasps at the garter and gold clasps at the knee. A silk sash with tasseled cords or fringe hanging down one side took the place of modern suspenders. Leather leggings for outdoor wear were carved or embossed. A serape or velvet cape lined with bright-colored silk completed the costume. Bridles and horse trappings were gorgeous with silver, the pommel and stirrups being overlaid with it. The bridle was a barbarous silver thing with a bit cruel enough to control tigers; and the rowels of the spurs were two or three inches long. [Pg 168]

No, these were not people of French and Spanish courts. They were people of our own Western America less than a century ago; but though they were not people of the playhouse, as they almost seem to us, they are essentially a play-people. The Spaniard of the Southwest lived, not to work, but to play; and when he worked, it was only that he might play the harder. Los Americanos came and changed all that. They turned the Spanish play-world up side down and put work on top. Roam through the Governor's Palace! Call up the old gay life! We undoubtedly handle more money than the Spanish dons and doñas of the old days; but frankly—which stand for the more joy out of life; those laughing philosophers, or we modern work-demons?

CHAPTER X [Pg 169]

THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE OF SANTA FE (*Continued*)

Of all the traditions clinging round the old Palace at Santa Fe, those connected with Don Diego de Vargas, the reconqueror of New Mexico, are best known and most picturesque. Yearly, for two and a quarter centuries, the people of New Mexico have commemorated De Vargas' victory by a procession to the church which he built in gratitude to Heaven for his success. This procession is at once a great public festival and a sacred religious ceremony; for the image of the Virgin, which De Vargas used when he planted the Cross on the Plaza in front of the Palace and sang the Te Deum with the assembled Franciscan monks, is the same image now used in the theatrical procession of the religious ceremony yearly celebrated by Indians, Spanish and Americans.

The De Vargas procession is a ceremony unique in America. The very Indians whose ancestors De Vargas' arms subjugated, now yearly reënact the scenes of the struggles of their forefathers to throw off white rule. Young Mexicans, descendants of the very officers who marched with De Vargas in his campaigns of 1692-3-4, take the part of the conquering heroes. Costumes, march, [Pg 170] religious ceremonies of thanks, public festival—all have been kept as close to original historic fact as possible.

De Vargas, himself, was to the Southwest what Frontenac was to French Canada—a bluff soldier animated by religious motives, who believed only in the peace that is a victory, put the fear of God in the hearts of his enemies, and built on that fear a superstructure of reverence and love. It need not be told that such a character rode rough-shod over official red-tape, and had a host of envious curs barking at his heels. They dragged him down, for a period of short eclipse, these Lilliputian enemies, just as Frontenac's enemies caused his recall by a charge of misusing public funds; but in neither case could the charges be sustained. Bluff warriors, not counting house clerks, were needed; and De Vargas, like Frontenac, came through all charges unscathed.

The two heroes of America's Indian wars—Frontenac of the North, De Vargas of the South—were contemporaries. It will be remembered how up on the St. Lawrence and among the Mohawk tribes of New York, a wave of revolt against white man rule swept from 1642 to 1682. It was not unnatural that the red warrior should view with alarm the growing dominance and assumption of power on the part of the white. In Canada, we know the brandy of the white trader hastened the revolt and added horror to the outrages, when the settlements lying round Montreal and Quebec were ravaged and burnt under the very cannon mouths of the two impotent and terrified forts. [Pg 171] The same wave of revolt that scourged French Canada in the eighties, went like wild fire over the Southwest from 1682 to 1694. Was there any connection between the two efforts to throw off white man rule? To the historian, seemingly, there was not; but ask the Navajo or Apache of the South about traders in the North, and you will be astonished how the traditions of the tribes preserve legends of the Athabascan stock in the North, from whom they claim descent. Ask a modern Indian of the interior of British Columbia about the Navajos, and he will tell you how the wise men of the tribe preserve verbal history of a branch of this people driven far South—"those other Denes," he will tell you. Traders explain the wonderful way news has of traveling from tribe to tribe by the laconic expression, "moccasin telegram."

Whether or not the infection of revolt spread by "moccasin telegram" from Canada to Mexico, the storm broke, and broke with frightful violence over the Southwest. The immediate cause was religious interference. All pueblo people have secret lodges held in underground *estufas* or *kivas*. To these ceremonies no white man however favored is ever admitted. White men know as little of the rites practiced in these lodges by the pueblo people as when Coronado came in 1540. To the Spanish governors and priests, the thing was anathema—abomination of witchcraft and sorcery and secrecy that risked the eternal damnation of converts' souls. There was a garrison of only [Pg 172] 250 men at the Palace; yet already the church boasted fifty friars, from eleven to seventeen missions, and converts by the thousands. But the souls of the holy *padres* were sorely tried by these *estufa* rites, "*platicas de noche*," "night conversations"—the priests called them. Well might all New Spain have been disturbed by these "night conversations." The subject bound under fearful oath of secrecy was nothing more nor less than the total extermination of every white man, woman and child north of the Rio Grande.

Some unwise governor—Trevino, I think it was—had issued an edict in 1675 forbidding the pueblos to hold their secret lodges in the *estufas*. By way of enforcing his edict, he had forty-seven of the wise men or Indian priests (he called them "sorcerers") imprisoned; hanged three in the jail yard of the Palace as a warning, and after severe whipping and enforced fasts, sent the other forty-four home. Picture the situation to yourself! The wise men or governors of the pueblos are always old men elected out of respect for their superior wisdom, men used to having their slightest word implicitly obeyed. Whipped, shamed, disgraced, they dispersed from the Palace, down the Rio Grande to Isleta, west to the city on the impregnable rocks of Acoma, north to that whole group of pueblo cities from Jemez to Santa Fe and Pecos and Taos. What do you think they did? Fill up the underground *estufas* and hang their heads in shame among men? Then, you don't know the Indian! You may break his neck; but you can't bend it. The very first thing they did was to gather their young warriors in the *estufas*. Picture that scene to yourself, too! An old rain priest at San Ildefonso, through the kindness of Dr. Hewitt of the Archæological School, took us down the *estufa* at that pueblo, where some of the bloodiest scenes of the rebellion were enacted. Needless to say, he took us down in the day time, when there are no ceremonies.

An adobe gateway of old-world charm in Santa Fe

The *estufa* is large enough to seat three or four hundred men. It is night time. A few oil tapers are burning in stone saucers, the pueblo lamp. The warriors come stealing down the ladder. No woman is admitted. The men are dressed in linen trousers with colored blankets fastened Grecian fashion at the waist. They seat themselves silently on the adobe or cement benches around the circular wall. The altar place, whence comes the Sacred Fire from the gods of the under world, is situated just under the ladder. The priests descend, four or five of them, holding their blankets in a square that acts as a drop curtain concealing the altar. When all have descended, a trap door of brush above is closed. The taper lamps go out. The priests drop their blankets; and behold on the altar the sacred fire; and the outraged wise man in impassioned speech denouncing white man rule, insult to the Indian gods, destruction of the Spanish ruler! [Pg 173]

Of the punished medicine men, one of the most incensed was an elderly Indian called Popé, said to be originally from San Juan, but at that time living in Taos. I don't know what ground there is for it, but tradition has it that when Popé effected the curtain drop round the sacred fire of the *estufa* in Taos, he produced, or induced the warriors looking on breathlessly to believe that he produced, three infernal spirits from the under world, who came from the great war-god Montezuma to command the pueblo race to unite with the Navajo and Apache in driving the white man from the Southwest. If there be any truth in the tradition, it is not hard to account for the trick. Tradition or trick, it worked like magic. The warriors believed. Couriers went scurrying by night from town to town, with the knotted cord—some say it was of deer thong, others of palm leaf. The knots represented the number of days to the time of uprising. The man, for instance, who ran from Taos to Pecos, would pull out a knot for each day he ran. A new courier would carry the cord on to the next town. There was some confusion about the untying of those knots. Some say the rebellion was to take place on the 11th of August, 1682; others, on the 13th. Anyway, the first blow was struck on the 10th. Not a pueblo town failed to rally to the call, as the Highlanders of old responded to the signal of the bloody cross. New Mexico at this time numbered some 3,000 Spanish colonists, the majority living on ranches up and down the Rio Grande and surrounding Santa Fe. The captain-general, who had had nothing to do with the foolish decrees that produced the revolt, happened to be Don Antonio de Otermin, with Alonzo Garcia as his lieutenant. In spite of no women being admitted to the secret, the secret leaked out. Popé's son-in-law, the governor of San Juan, was setting out to betray the whole plot to the Spaniards, when he was killed by Popé's own hand. [Pg 174] [Pg 175]

Such widespread preparations could not proceed without the Mission converts getting some inkling; and on August 9, Governor Otermin heard that two Indians of Tesuque out from Santa Fe had been ordered to join a rebellion. He had the Indians brought before him in the audience chamber on the 10th. They told him all they knew; and they warned him that any warrior refusing to take part would be slain. Here, as always in times of great confusion, the main thread of the

story is lost in a multiplicity of detail. Warning had also come down from the alcalde at Taos. Otermin scarcely seems to have grasped the import of the news; for all he did was to send his own secret scouts out, warning the settlers and friars to seek refuge in Isleta, or Santa Fe; but it was too late. The Indians got word they had been betrayed and broke loose in a mad lust of revenge and blood that very Saturday when the governor was sending out his spies.

It would take a book to tell the story of all the heroism and martyrdom of the different Missions. Parkman has told the story of the martyrdom of the Jesuits in French Canada; and many other books have been written on the subject. No Parkman has yet risen to tell the story of the [Pg 176] martyrdom of the Franciscans in New Mexico. In one fell day, before the captain-general knew anything about it, 400 colonists and twenty-one missionaries had been slain—butchered, shot, thrown over the rocks, suffocated in their burning chapels. Popé was in the midst of it all, riding like an incarnate fury on horseback wearing a bull's horn in the middle of his forehead. Apaches and Navajos, of course, joined in the loot. At Taos, out of seventy whites, two only escaped; and they left their wives and children dead on the field and reached Isleta only after ten days' wandering in the mountains at night, having hidden by day. At little Tesuque, north of Santa Fe, only the alcalde escaped by spurring his horse to wilder pace than the Indians could follow. The alcalde had seen the friar flee to a ravine. Then an Indian came out wearing the priest's shield; and it was blood-spattered. At Santa Clara, soldiers, herders and colonists were slain on the field as they worked. The women and children were carried off to captivity from which they never returned. At Galisteo, the men were slain, the women carried off. Rosaries were burned in bonfires. Churches were plundered and profaned. At Santo Domingo, the bodies of the three priests were piled in a heap in front of the church, as an insult to the white man faith that would have destroyed the Indian *estufas*. Down at Isleta, Garcia, the lieutenant, happened to be in command, and during Saturday night and Sunday morning, he rounded inside the walls of Isleta [Pg 177] seven missionaries and 1,500 settlers, of whom only 200 had firearms.

What of Captain-General Otermin, cooped up in the Governor's Palace of Santa Fe, awaiting the return of his scouts? The reports of his scouts, one may guess. Reports came dribbling in till Tuesday, and by that time there were no Spanish left alive outside Santa Fe and Isleta. Then Otermin bestirred himself mightily. Citizens were called to take refuge in the Palace. The armory was opened and arquebuses handed out to all who could bear arms. The Holy Sacrament was administered. Then the sacred vessels were brought to the Governor's Palace and hidden. There were now 1,000 persons cooped up in the Governor's Palace, less than 100 capable of bearing arms. Trenches were dug, windows barricaded, walls fortified. Armed soldiers mounted the roofs of houses guarding the Plaza and in the streets approaching it were stationed cannon.

Having wiped out the settlements, the pueblos and their allies swooped down on Santa Fe, led by Juan of Galisteo riding with a convent flag round his waist as sash. To parley with an enemy is folly. Otermin sent for Juan to come to the Palace; and in the audience chamber upbraided him. Juan, one may well believe, laughed. He produced two crosses—a red one and a white one. If the Spaniards would accept the white one and withdraw, the Indians would desist from attack; if not—then—red stood for blood. Otermin talked about "pardon for treason," when he should have [Pg 178] struck the impudent fellow to earth, as De Vargas, or old Frontenac, would have done in like case.

When Juan went back across the Plaza, the Indians howled with joy, danced dervish time all night, rang the bells of San Miguel, set fire to the church and houses, and cut the water supply off from the yard of the Palace. The valor of the Spaniards could not have been very great from August 14th to 20th, for only five of the 100 bearing arms were killed. At a council of war on the night of August 19th, it was decided to attempt to rush the foe, trampling them with horses, and to beat a way open for retreat. Otermin says 300 Indians were killed in this rally; but it is a question. The Governor himself came back with an arrow wound in his forehead and a flesh wound near his heart. Within twenty-four hours, he decided—whichever way you like to put it —"to go to the relief of Isleta," where he thought his lieutenant was; or "to retreat" south of the Rio Grande. The Indians watched the retreat in grim silence. The Spanish considered their escape "a miracle." It was a pitiful wresting of comfort from desperation.

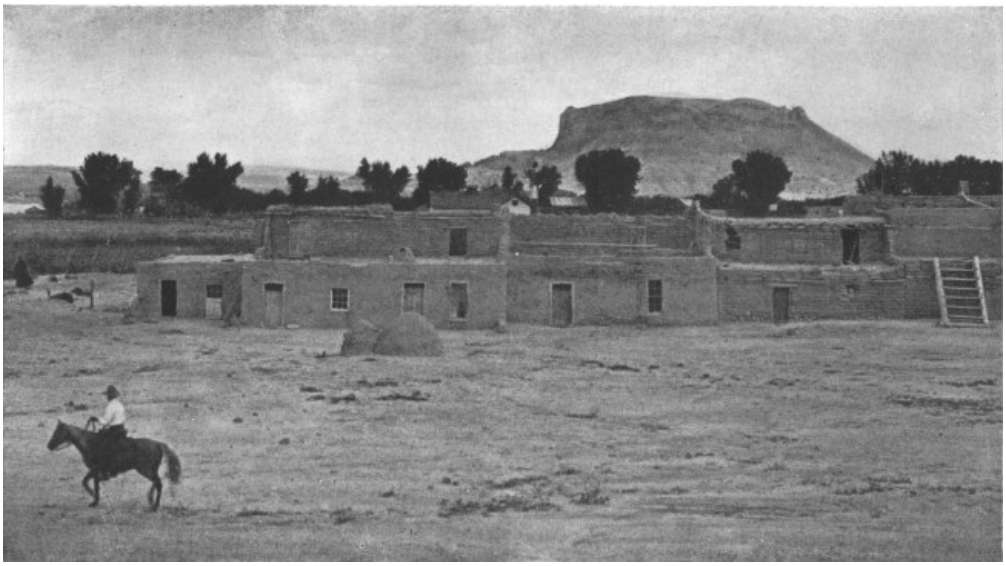
But at Isleta, the Governor found that his lieutenant had already retreated taking 1,500 refugees in safety with him. It was the end of September when Otermin himself crossed the Rio Grande, at a point not far from modern El Paso. At Isleta, the people will tell you to this day legends of the [Pg 179] friar's martyrdom. Every Mexican believes that the holy *padre* buried in a log hollowed out for coffin beneath the chapel rises every ten years and walks through the streets of Isleta to see how his people are doing. Once every ten years or so, the Rio Grande floods badly; and the year of the flood, the ghost of the friar rises to warn his people. Be that as it may, a few years ago, a deputation of investigators took up the body to examine the truth of the legend. It lies in a state of perfect preservation in its log coffin.

The pueblos had driven the Spanish south of the Rio Grande and practically kept them south of the Rio Grande for ten years. Churches were burned. Images were profaned. Priestly vestments decked wild Indian lads. Converts were washed in Santa Fe River to cleanse them of baptism. All the records in the Governor's Palace were destroyed, and the Palace itself given over to wild orgies among the victorious Indians; but the victory brought little good to the tribes. They fell back to their former state of tribal raid and feud. Drought spoiled the crops; and perhaps, after all, the consolation and the guidance of the Spanish priests were missed. When the Utes heard that the Spanish had retreated, these wild marauders of the northern desert fell on the pueblo towns like wolves. There is a legend, also, that at this time there were great earthquakes and

many heavenly signs of displeasure. Curiously enough, the same legends exist about Montreal and Quebec. Otermin hung timidly on the frontier, crossing and recrossing the Rio Grande; but he could make no progress in resettling the colonists. [Pg 180]

Comes on the scene now—1692-98—Don Diego de Vargas. It isn't so much what he did; for when you are brave enough, you don't need to do. The doors of fate open before the golden key. He resubjugated the Southwest for Spain; and he resubjugated it as much by force of clemency as force of cruelty. But mark the point—it was *force that did it, not pow-wowing and parleying and straddling cowardice with conscience*. De Vargas could muster only 300 men at El Paso, including loyal Indians. On August 21, 1692, he set out for the north.

It has taken many volumes to tell of the victories of Frontenac. It would take as many again to relate the victories of De Vargas. He was accompanied, of course, by the fearless and quenchless friars. All the pueblos passed on the way north he found abandoned; but when he reached Santa Fe on the 13th of September, he found it held and fortified by the Indians. The Indians were furiously defiant; they would perish, but surrender—never! De Vargas surrounded them and cut off the water supply. The friars approached under flag of truce. Before night, Santa Fe had surrendered without striking a blow. One after another, the pueblos were visited and pacified; but it was not all easy victory. The Indians did not relish an order a year later to give up occupation of the Palace and retire to their own villages. In December they closed all entrances to the Plaza and refused to surrender. De Vargas had prayers read, raised the picture of the Virgin on the battle flag, and advanced. Javelins, boiling water, arrows, assailed the advancing Spaniards; but the gate of the Plaza stockade was attacked and burned. Reinforcements came to the Indians, and both sides rested for the night. During the night, the Indian governor hanged himself. Next morning, seventy of the Indians were seized and court-martialed on the spot. De Vargas planted his flag on the Plaza, erected a cross and thanked God.



A view of part of San Ildefonso, New Mexico, showing the famous Black Mesa in the background

One of the hardest fights of '94 was out on the Black Mesa, a huge precipitous square of basalt, frowning above San Ildefonso. This mesa was a famous prayer shrine to the Indians and is venerated as sacred to this day. All sides are sheer but that towards the river. Down this is a narrow trail like a goat path between rocks that could be hurled on climbers' heads. De Vargas stormed the Black Mesa, on top of which great numbers of rebels had taken refuge. Four days the attack lasted, his 100 soldiers repeatedly reaching the edge of the summit only to be hurled down. After ten days the siege had to be abandoned, but famine had done its work among the Indians. For five years, the old general slept in his boots and scarcely left the warpath. It was at the siege of the Black Mesa that he is said to have made the vow to build a chapel to the Virgin; and it is his siege of Santa Fe that the yearly De Vargas Celebration commemorates to this day. And in the end, he died in his boots on the march at Bernalillo, leaving in his will explicit directions that he should be buried in the church of Santa Fe "under the high altar beneath the place where the priest puts his feet when he says mass." The body was carried to the parish church in his bed of state and interred beneath the altar; and the De Vargas celebration remains to this day one of the quaintest ceremonies of the old Governor's Palace. [Pg 181] [Pg 182]

CHAPTER XI [Pg 183]

TAOS, THE PROMISED LAND AND ANCIENT CAPITAL OF THE SOUTHWEST

As Quebec is the shrine of historical pilgrims in the North, and Salem in New England; so Taos is the Mecca of students of history and lovers of art in the Southwest. Here came the Spanish

knights mounted and in armor plate half a century before the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock. They had not only crossed the sea but had traversed the desert from Old Mexico for 900 miles over burning sands, amid wild, bare mountains, across rivers where horses and riders swamped in the quicksands. To Taos came Franciscan *padres* long before Champlain had built stockades at Port Royal or Quebec. Just as the Jesuits won the wilderness of the up-country by martyr blood, so the Franciscans attacked the strongholds of paganism amid the pueblos of the South. Spanish *conquistadores* have been represented as wading through blood to victory, with the sword in one hand, the cross in the other; but that picture is only half the truth. Let it be remembered that the Spanish were the only conquerors in America who gave the Indians perpetual title, intact and forever, to the land occupied when the Spanish came—which titles the [Pg 184] Indians hold to this day. Also, while rude soldiers, or even officers, might be guilty of such unprovoked attacks as occurred at Bernalillo in Coronado's expedition of 1540, the crown stood sponsor for the well-being and salvation of the Indian's soul. Wherever the conqueror marched, the sandaled and penniless Franciscan remained and too often paid the penalty of the soldier's crimes. In the Tusayan Desert, at Taos, at Zuñi, at Acoma, you will find Missions that date back to the expedition of Coronado; and at every single Mission the *padres* paid for their courage and their faith with their lives.

But Taos traditions date back farther than the coming of the white man. Christians have their Christ, northern Indians their Hiawatha, and the pueblo people their Bah-tah-ko, or grand cacique, who led their people from the ravages of Apache and Navajo in the far West to the Promised Land of verdant plains and watered valleys below the mighty mountains of Taos. Montezuma was to the Southwest, not the Christ, but the Adam, the Moses, the Joseph. Casa Grande in southern Arizona was the Garden of Eden, "the place of the Morning Glow;" but when war and pestilence and ravaging foe and drouth drove the pueblos from their Garden of Eden, the Bah-tah-ko was the Moses to lead them to the Promised Land at Taos. When did he live? The oldest man does not know. The pueblos had been at Taos thousands of years, when the Spanish came in 1540; and, it may be added, they live very much the same to-day at Taos as they did [Pg 185] when the white man first came. The men wear store trousers instead of woven linen ones; some wear hats instead of a red head band; and there are wagons instead of drags attached to a dog in shafts. But apart from these innovations, there is little difference at Taos between 1912 and 1540. The whitewashed Mission church stands in the center of the pueblo; but the old *estufas*, or *kivas*, are still used for religious ceremony, and election of rulers, and maintenance of Indian law. You can still see the Indians threshing their grain by the trampling of goats on a threshing floor, or the run of burros round and round a kraal chased by a boy, while a man scrapes away the grain and forks aside the chaff. There are white man's courts and white man's laws, down at the white man's town of Taos; but the Indian has little faith in, and less respect for, these white man courts and laws, and out at Taos has his own court, his own laws, his own absolute and undisputed governor, his own police, his own prison and his own penalties. The wealth of Midas would not tempt a Taos Indian to exchange his life in the tiered adobe villages for all that civilization could offer him. Occasionally a Colonel Cody, or Showman Jones, lures him off for a year or two to the great cities of the East; but the call of the wilds lures him back to his own beehive houses. He has plenty to eat and plenty to wear, the love of his family, the open fields and the friendship of his gods—what more can life offer? [Pg 186]

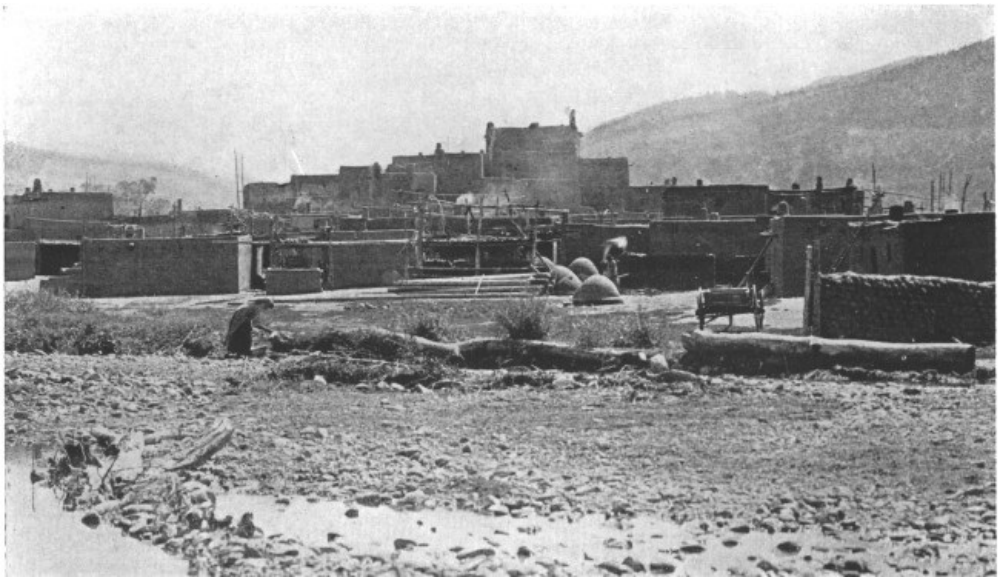
Don't leave the Southwest without seeing Taos. It might be part of Turkey, or Persia, or India. It is the most un-American thing in America; and yet, it is the most typical of those ancient days in America, when there was no white man. Just here, before the ethnologist arises to correct me, let it be put on record that the Taos people do not consider themselves Indians. They claim descent rather from the Aztecs, or Toltecs of the South. While the Navajo and Apache and Ute legends are of a great migration from Athabasca of the North, the pueblo legend is of a coming from the Great Underworld of the South.

The easiest way to reach Taos is by the ancient city of Santa Fe. You go by rail to Servilleta, or Barrancas, then stage it out to the Indian pueblos. Better wire for your stage accommodation from the railroad. We did not wire, and when we left the railroad, we found seven people and a stage with space for only four. The railroad leads almost straight north from Santa Fe over high, clear mesas of yellow ocher covered with scrub juniper. There is little sign of water after you leave the Rio Grande, for water does not flow uphill; and you are at an altitude of 8,000 feet when you cross the Divide. You pass through fruit orchards along the river, low headed and heavy with apples. Then come the Indian villages, San Ildefonso, and Española, and Santa Clara, where the strings of red chile bake in the sunlight against the glare adobe. Women go up from the pools [Pg 187] with jars of water on their heads. Children come selling the famous Santa Clara black pottery at the train windows; and on the trail across the river, you see Mexican drovers with long lines of burros and pack horses winding away into the mountains. Women and girls in bright blankets and with eyes like black beads and skin like wrinkled parchment stand round the doors of the little square adobe houses; and sitting in the shade are the old people—people of a great age, 104 one old woman numbered her years. As you ascend the Upper Mesas of the Rio Grande, you are in a region where nothing grows but piñon and juniper. There is not a sign of life but the browsing sheep and goats. Just where the train shoots in north of San Ildefonso, if you know where to look on the right, you can see the famous Black Mesa, a huge square of black basaltic rock almost 400 feet high, which was the sacred shrine of all Indians hereabouts for a hundred miles. On its crest, you can still see its prayer shrines, and the footworn path where refugees

from war ran down to the river for water from encampment on the crest. Away to the left, the mountains seem to crumple up in purple folds with flat tops and white gypsum gashed precipices. One of these gashes—White Rock Cañon—marks Pajarito Plateau, the habitat of the ancient cave dwellers. On the north side of the Black Mesa, you can see the opening to a huge cave. This was a prayer shrine and refuge in time of war for the Santa Clara Indians. [Pg 188]

Then, when you have reached almost the top of the world and see no more sheep herds, the trains pull up at an isolated, forsaken little station; and late in the afternoon you get off at Servilleta.

A school teacher, his wife and his two children, also left the train at this point. Our group consisted of three. The driver of the stage—a famous frontiersman, Jo. Dunn—made eight; and we packed into a two-seated vehicle. It added piquancy, if not sport, to the twilight drive to know that one of the two bronchos in harness had never been driven before. He was, in fact, one of the bands of wild horses that rove these high juniper mountains. Mexicans, or Indians, watch for the wild bands to come out to water at nightfall and morning, and stampede them into a pound, or rope them. The captive is then sold for amounts varying from $5 to $15 to anyone who can master him. It need not be told here, not every driver can master an unbroken wild horse. It is a combination of confidence and dexterity, rather than strength. There is a rigging to the bridle that throws a horse if he kicks; and our wild one not only kept his traces for a rough drive of nearly twenty miles but suffered himself to be handled by a young girl of the party.



The pueblo of Taos, New Mexico, whose inhabitants trace their lineage back centuries before the advent of the Spanish conquistadores

Twilight on the Upper Mesas is a thing not to be told in words and only dimly told on canvas. [Pg 189] There is the primrose afterglow, so famous in the Alps. The purple mountains drape themselves in lavender veils. Winds scented with oil of sagebrush and aroma of pines come soughing through the juniper hills. The moon comes out sickle-shaped. You see a shooting star drop. Then a dim white group of moving forms emerges from the pines of the mountains—wild horses with leader scenting the air for foe, coming out for the night run to the drinking pools. Or your horses give a little sidewise jump from the trail, and you see a coyote loping along abreast not a gun-shot away. This is a sure-enough-always-no-man's-land, a jumping-off place for all the earth—too high for irrigation farming, too arid for any other kind of farming, and so an unclaimed land. In the twenty-mile drive, you will see, perhaps, three homesteaders' shanties, where settlers have fenced off a square and tried ranching; but water is too deep for boring. Horses turned outside the square join the wild bands and are lost; and two out of every three are abandoned homesteads. The Dunn brothers have cut a road in eighteen miles to the Arroyo Hondo, where their house is, halfway to Taos; and they have also run a telephone line in.

Except for the telephone wires and the rough trail, you might be in an utterly uninhabited land on top of the world. The trail rises and falls amid endless scented juniper groves. The pale moon deepens through a pink and saffron twilight. The stillness becomes almost palpable—then, suddenly, you jump right off the edge of the earth. The flat mesa has come to an edge. You look down, sheer down, 1,000 feet straight as a plummet—two cañons narrow as a stone's toss have [Pg 190] gashed deep trenches through the living rocks and with a whir of swift waters come together at the famous place known as the Bridge. You have come on your old friend the Rio Grande again, narrow and deep and blue from the mountain snows, an altogether different stream from the muddy Rio of the lower levels. Here it is joined by the Arroyo Hondo, another cañon slashed through the rocks in a deep trench—both rivers silver in the moonlight, with a rush of rapids coming up the great height like wind in trees, or the waves of the sea.

What a host of old frontier worthies must have pulled themselves up with a jerk of amaze and dumb wonder, when they first came to this sheer jump off the earth! First the mailed warriors under Coronado; then the cowled Franciscans; then Fremont and Kit Carson and Beaubien and Governor Bent and Manuel Lisa, the fur trader, and a host of other knights of modern adventure.

I suppose a proper picture of the Bridge, or Arroyo Hondo, cannot be taken; for a good one never has been taken, though travelers and artists have been coming this way for a hundred years. The two cañons are so close together and so walled that it is impossible to get both in one picture except from an airship. It is as if the earth were suddenly rent, and you looked down on that underworld of which Indian legend tells so many wonder yarns. Don't mind wondering how you will go down! The bronchos will manage that, where an Eastern horse would break his neck and [Pg 191] yours, too. The driver jams on brakes; and you drop down a terribly steep grade in a series of switchbacks, or zigzags, to the Bridge. It is the most spectacularly steep road I know in America. It could not be any steeper and not drop straight; and there isn't anything between you and the drop but your horses' good sense. It is one of the places where you don't want to hit your horse; for if he jumps, the wagon will not keep to the trail. It will go over taking you and the horse, too.

But, before you know it, you have switched round the last turn and are rattling across the Bridge. Some Mexican teamsters are in camp below the rock wall of the river. The reflection of the figures and firelight and precipices in the deep waters calls up all sorts of tales of Arabian Nights and road robbers and old lawless days. Then, you pull up sharp at the toll house for supper, as quaint an inn as anything in Switzerland or the Himalayas. The back of the house is the rock wall of the cañon. The front is adobe. The halls are long and low and narrow, with low-roofed rooms off the front side only. From the Bridge you can go on to Taos by motor in moonlight; but the whole way by stage and motor in one day makes a hard trip, and there is as much of interest at the Bridge as at Taos. You don't expect to find settlers in this dim silver underworld, do you? Well, drive a few miles up the Arroyo Hondo, where the stream widens out into garden patch farms, and you will find as odd specimens of isolated humans as exist anywhere in the world— [Pg 192] relics of the religious fanaticism of the secret lodges, of the Middle Ages—Penitentes, or Flagellantes, or Crucifixion people, who yearly at Lent re-enact all the sorrows of the Procession to the Cross, and until very recent years even re-enacted the Crucifixion.

After supper we strolled out down the cañon. It is impossible to exaggerate its beauty. Each gash is only the width of the river with sides straight as walls. The walls are yellow and black basalt, all spotted with red where the burning bush has been touched by the frosts. The rivers are clear, cold blue, because they are but a little way from the springs in the snows. Snows and clear water and frost in the Desert? Yes: that is as the Desert is in reality, not in geography books. Below the Bridge, you can follow the Rio Grande down to some famous hot springs; and in this section, the air is literally spicy with the oil of sagebrush. At daybreak, you see the water ousels singing above the rapids, and you may catch the lilt of a mocking-bird, or see a bluebird examining some frost-touched berries. It is October; but the goldfinches, which have long since left us in the North, are in myriads here.

The second day at the Bridge, we drove up the Arroyo Hondo to see the Penitentes. It is the only way I know that you can personally visit a people who in every characteristic belong to the Twelfth Century. The houses of the Arroyo Hondo are very small and very poor; for the Penitente [Pg 193] is thinking not of this world but of the world to come. The orchards are amazingly old. These people and their ancestors must have been here for centuries and as isolated from the rest of the world as if living back five centuries. The Penitente is not an Indian; he is a peon. Pueblo Indians repudiate Penitente practices. Neither is the Penitente a Catholic. He is really a relic of the secret lodge orders that overran Europe with religious disorders and fanatic practices in the Twelfth Century. Except for the Lenten processions, rites are practiced at night. There are the Brothers of the Light—La Luz—and the Brothers of the Darkness—Las Tinieblas. The meeting halls are known as Morados; and those seen by us were without windows and with only one narrow door. Women meet in one lodge, men in another. The sign manual of membership is a cross tattooed on forehead, chin or back. When a death occurs, the body is taken to the Morado, and a wake held. After Penitente rites have been performed, a priest is called in for final services; and up to the present, the priests have been unable to break the strength of these secret lodges. Members are bound by secret oath to help each other and stand by each other; and it is commonly charged that politicians join the Penitentes to get votes and doctors to get patients. Easter and Lent mark the grand rally of the year. On one hill above the Arroyo Hondo, you can see a succession of crosses where Penitentes have whipped themselves senseless with cactus [Pg 194] belts, or dropped from exhaustion carrying a cross; and only last spring—1912—a woman marched carrying a great cross to which the naked body of her baby was bound. We passed one cross erected to commemorate a woman who died from self-inflicted injuries suffered during the procession of 1907.

The procession emerges from the Morado chanting in low, doleful tune the Miserere. First come the Flagellantes, or marchers, scourging their naked backs with cactus belts and whips. Next march the cross carriers with a rattling of iron chains fastened to the feet; then, the general congregation. The march terminates at a great cross erected on a hilltop to simulate Golgotha. Why do the people do it? "To appease divine wrath," they say; but they might ask us—why have we dipsomaniacs and kleptomaniacs and monstrosities in our civilized life? Because "Julia O'Grady and the Captain's lady are the same as two pins under their skins." Because human nature dammed up from wholesome outlet of emotions, will find unwholesome vent; and these dolorous processions are only a reflex of the dark emotions hidden in a narrow cañon shut off from the rest of the world.

They were not dolorous emotions that found vent as we drove back down Arroyo Hondo to the Bridge. Our driver got out a mouth organ. Then he played and sang snatches of dance tunes of the old, old days in the True West. [Pg 195]

"Allamahoo, right hand to your partner
And grand hodoo."

"Watch your partner and watch her close;
And when you catch her, a double doze."

"The cock flies out and the hen flies in—
All hands round and go it agen."

In fact, if you want to find the old True West, you'll find it undiluted and pristine on the trip to Taos.

CHAPTER XII

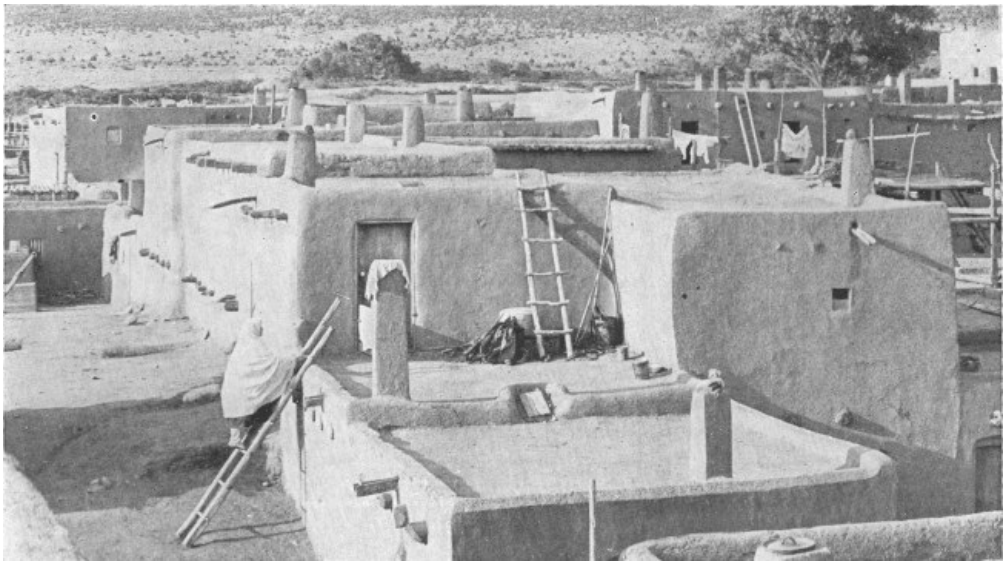
[Pg 196]

TAOS, THE MOST ANCIENT CITY IN AMERICA

Taos, Santa Fe and El Paso—these were to the Southwest what Port Royal, Quebec and Montreal were to French Canada, or Boston, Salem and Jamestown to the colonists of the pre-Revolutionary days on the Atlantic. El Paso was the gateway city from the old Spanish Dominions of the South. Santa Fe was the central military post, and Taos was the watch tower on the very outskirts of the back-of-beyond of Spanish territory in the wilderness land of the New World.

Before Santa Fe became the terminus of the trail for American traders from Missouri and Kansas, Taos was the terminus of the old fur trader trail, in the days when Louisiana extended from New Orleans to Oregon. Here, such famous frontiersmen as Jim Bridgar and Manuel Lisa and Jedediah Smith and Colonel Ashley and Kit Carson came to barter beads and calico and tobacco and firewater for hides and fur and native-woven blankets and turquoise and rude silver ornaments hammered out of Spanish bullion into necklace and bracelet. What Green's Hole and the Three Tetons were to the Middle West, Taos was to the Southwest. Mountains round Taos rise 14,000 feet from sea level. Snow glimmers from the peaks more than half the year; and mountain [Pg 197] torrents water the valley with a system of irrigation that never fails. Coming out of the mountains from the north, Taos was the natural halfway house on the trail south to Old Mexico. Coming out of the Desert from the south, Taos was the last walled city seen before the plunge into the wilderness of forests and mountains in the No-Man's-Land of the north. "Walled city," you say, "before the coming of white men to the West?" Yes, you can see those very walls to-day, walls antedating the coming of Coronado in 1540 by hundreds of years.

No motor can climb up and down the steep switchback to the Arroyo Hondo of the Bridge. Cars taken over that trail must be towed; but from the Bridge, you can go on to Taos by motor. As you ascend the mesa above the river bed, you see the mountains ahead rise in black basalt like castellated walls, with tower and battlement jagged into the very clouds. Patches of yellow and red splotch the bronzing forests, where frost has touched the foliage; and you haven't gone very many miles into the lilac mist of the morning light—shimmering as it always shimmers above the sagebrush blue and sandy gold of the Upper Mesas—before you hear the laughter of living waters coming down from the mountain snows. One understands why the Indians chose the uplands; while the white man, who came after, had to choose the shadowy bottoms of the walled-in cañons. Someone, back in the good old days when we were not afraid to be poetic, said [Pg 198] something about "traveling on the wings of the morning." I can't put in words what he meant; but you do it here—going up and up so gradually that you don't realize that you are in the lap, not of mountains, but of mountain peaks; breathing, not air, but ozone; uplifted by a great weight being taken off spirit and body; looking at life through rose-colored tints, not metaphorically, but really; for there is something in this high rare air—not dust, not moisture—that splits white light into its seven prismatic hues. You look through an atmosphere wonderfully rare, but it is never clear, white light. It is lavender, or lilac, or primrose, or gold, or red as blood according to the hours and the mood of hours; and if you want to carry the metaphor still farther, you may truthfully add that the hours on these high uplands are dancing hours. You never feel time to be a heavy, slow thing that oppresses the soul.



Climbing home over your neighbor's roof and bolting your door by pulling up the ladder is customary in Taos

As the streams laugh down from the mountains, ranches grow more and more frequent. It is [Pg 199] characteristic of the West that you don't cross the *acequias* on bridges. You cross them on two planks, with risk to your car if the driver swerve at the steering wheel. All the houses are red earth adobe, thick of wall to shut out both heat and cold, with a smell of juniper wood in the fireplaces of each room. Much of this land—nearly all of it, in fact—is owned by the Taos Indians and held in common for pasturage and cultivation. Title was given by Spain four centuries ago, and the same title holds to-day in spite of white squatters' attempt to break down the law by cutting the wire of the pasture fences and taking the case to the courts. It was in this way that squatters broke down the title of old Spanish families to thousands and hundreds of thousands of acres granted before American occupation. To be sure, an American land commission took evidence on these titles, in the quarrel between Yankee squatter and Spanish don; but the squatter had "friends in court." The old Spanish don hadn't. He saw titles that had held good from 1540 slipping from his neighbor's hands; and he either contested the case to lose out before he had begun, or sold and sold at a song to save the wreckage of his fortunes. Of all the Spanish land grants originally partitioning off what is now New Mexico, I know of only one held by the family of the original grantee; and it is now in process of partition. It is an untold page of Southwestern history, this "stampeding" of Spanish titles. Some day, when we are a little farther away from it, the story will be told. It will not make pleasant reading, nor afford a bill of health to some family fortunes of the Southwest. Perjuries, assassinations, purchase in open markets of judges drawing such small pittances that they were in the auction mart for highest bid, forged documents, incendiary fires to destroy true titles—these were the least and most decent of the crimes of this era. "Ramona" tells what happened to Indian titles in California. Paint Helen Hunt Jackson's colors red instead of gray; multiply the crimes by ten instead of two; and you have a faint picture of the land-jockey period of New Mexican history. Something of this sort is going on [Pg 200] at Taos to-day among the pueblos for their land, and down at Sacaton among the Pimas for water. Treaty guaranteed the Indian his rights, but at Taos the squatter cut the pueblo fences and carried the case to court. At Sacaton, the big squatter, the irrigation company, took the Pimas' water; so that the Indian can no longer raise crops. If you want to know what the courts do in these cases, ask the pueblo governor at Taos; or the Pima chief at Sacaton.

It is late September. A parrot calls out in Spanish from the center of the patio where our rooms look out on an arcade running round the court in a perfect square. A mocking-bird trills saucily from his cage amid the cosmos bloom. Donkeys and burros amble past the rear gate with loads of wood strapped to their backs. Your back window looks out on the courtyard. Your front window faces the street across from a plaza, or city square. Stalwart, thick-set, muscular figures, hair banded back by red and white scarfs, trousers of a loose, white pantaloon sort, tunic a gray or white blanket, wrapped Arab fashion from shoulders to waist, stalk with quick, nervous tread along the plaza; for it is the feast of Saint Geronimo presently. The whole town is in festal attire. There will be dancing all night and all day, and rude theatricals, and horse and foot races; and the plaza is agog with sightseers. No, it is not Persia; and it is not Palestine; and it is not Spain. It [Pg 201] is just plain, commonplace America out at Taos—white man's Taos, at the old Columbia Hotel, which is the last of the old-time Spanish inns.

As you motor into the town, the long rows of great cottonwoods and poplars attest the great age of the place. Through windows deep set in adobe casement and flush with the street, you catch glimpses of inner patios where oleanders and roses are still in bloom. Then you see the roof windows of artists' studios, and find yourself not only in an old Spanish town but in the midst of a modern art colony, which has been called into being by the unique coloring, form and antiquity of life in the Southwest. A few years ago, when Lungren and Philips and Sharpe and a dozen others began portraying the marvelous coloring of the Southwestern Desert with its almost Arab life, the

public refused to accept such spectacular, un-American work as true. Such pictures were diligently "skied" by hanging committees, and a few hundred dollars was deemed a good price. To-day, Southwestern art forms a school by itself; and where commissions used to go begging at hundreds of dollars, they to-day command prices of thousands and tens of thousands. When I was in Taos, one artist was filling commissions for an Eastern collector that would mount up to prices paid for the best work of Watts and Whistler. It is a brutal way to put art in terms of the dollar bill; but it is sometimes the only way to make a people realize there are prophets in our own country.

Columbia Hotel is really one of the famous old Spanish mansions occupying almost the entire side [Pg 202] of a plaza square. From its street entrance, you can see down the little alleyed street where dwelt Kit Carson in the old days. His old home is almost a wreck to-day, and there does not seem to be the slightest movement to convert it into a shrine where the hundreds of sightseers who come to the Indian dances could brush up memories of old frontier heroes. There are really only four streets in Taos, all facing the Plaza or town square. Other streets are alleys running off these, and when you see a notary's sign out as "alcalde," it does not seem so very far back to the days when Spanish dons lounged round the Plaza wearing silk capes and velvet trousers and buckled shoes, and Spanish *conquistadores* rode past armed cap-à-pie, and Spanish grand dames stole glances at the outside world through the lattices of the mansion houses. In some of these old Spanish houses, you will find the deep casement windows very high in the wall. I asked a descendant of one of the old Spanish families why that was. "For protection," she said.

"Indians?" I asked.

"No—Spanish women were not supposed to see, or be seen by, the outside world."

The pueblo proper lies about four miles out from the white man's town. Laguna, Acoma, Zuñi, the Three Mesas of the Tusayan Desert—all lie on hillsides, or on the very crest of high acclivities. Taos is the exception among purely Indian pueblos. It lies in the lap of the valley among the mountains, two castellated, five story adobe structures, one on each side of a mountain stream. [Pg 203] In other pueblo villages, while the houses may adjoin one another like stone fronts in our big cities, they are not like huge beehive apartment houses. In Taos, the houses are practically two great communal dwellings, with each apartment assigned to a special clan or family. In all, some 700 people dwell in these two huge houses. How many rooms are there? Not less than an average of three to each family. Remnants of an ancient adobe wall surround the entire pueblo. A new whitewashed Mission church stands in the center of the village, but you can still see the old one pitted with cannon-ball and bullet, where General Price shelled it in the uprising of the pueblos after American occupation. Men wear store trousers and store hats. You see some modern wagons. Except for these, you are back in the days of Coronado. All the houses can be entered only by ladders that ascend to the roofs and can be drawn up—the pueblo way of bolting the door. The houses run up three, four and five stories. They are adobe color outside, that is to say, a pinkish gray; and whitewashed spotlessly inside. Watch a woman draped in white linen blanket ascending these ladders, and you have to convince yourself that you are not in the Orient. Down by the stream, women with red and blue and white shawls over their heads, and feet encased in white puttees, are washing blankets by beating them in the flowing water. Go up the succession of ladders to the very top of a five storied house, and look out. You can see the pasture fields, [Pg 204] where the herds graze in common. On the outskirts of the village, men and boys are threshing, that is—they are chasing ponies round and round inside a kraal, with a flag stuck up to show which way the wind blows, one man forking chaff with the wind, another scraping the grain outside the circle.

Glance inside the houses. The upstairs is evidently the living-room; for the fireplace is here, and the pot is on. Off the living-room are corn and meal bins, and you can see the *metate* or stone on which the corn is ground by the women as in the days of Old Testament record. Though there is a new Mission church dating from the uprising in the forties, and an old Mission church dating almost from 1540, you can see from the roof dozens of *estufas*, where the men are practicing for their dances and masked theatricals. Tony, the assistant governor, an educated man of about forty who has traveled with Wild West shows, acts as our guide, and tells us about the squatters trying to get the Indian land. How would you like an intruder to sit down in the middle of your farm and fence off 160 acres? The Indians didn't like it, and cut the fences. Then the troops were sent out. That was in 1910—a typical "uprising," when the white man has both troops and courts on his side. The case has gone to the courts, and Tony doesn't expect it to be settled very soon. In fact, Tony likes their own form of government better than the white man's. All this he tells you in [Pg 205] the softest, coolest voice, for Tony is not only assistant governor: he is constable to keep white men from bringing in liquor during the festal week. They yearly elect their own governor. That governor's word is absolutely supreme for his tenure of office. Is there a dispute over crops, or cattle? The governor's word settles it without any rigmarole of talk by lawyers.

"Supposing the guilty man doesn't obey the governor?" we ask.

"Then we send our own police, and take him, and put him in the stocks in the lock-up," and he takes us around and shows us both the stocks and the lock-up. These stocks clamp down a man's head as well as his hands and feet. A man with his neck and hands anchored down between his feet in a black room naturally wouldn't remain disobedient long.

The method of voting is older than the white man's ballot. The Indians enter the *estufa*. A mark is drawn across the sand. Two men are nominated. (No—women do not vote; the women rule the house absolutely. The men rule fields and crops and village courtyard.) The voters then signify

their choice by marks on the sand.

Houses are built and occupied communally, and ground is held in common; but the product of each man's and each woman's labor is his or her own and not in common—the nearest approach to socialistic life that America has yet known. The people here speak a language different from the other pueblos, and this places their origin almost as far back as the origin of Anglo-Saxon [Pg 206] races. Another feature sets pueblo races apart from all other native races of America. Though these people have been in contact with whites nearly 400 years, intermarriage with whites is almost unknown. Purity of blood is almost as sacredly guarded among Pueblos as among the ancient Jews. The population remains almost stationary; but the bad admixtures of a mongrel race are unknown.

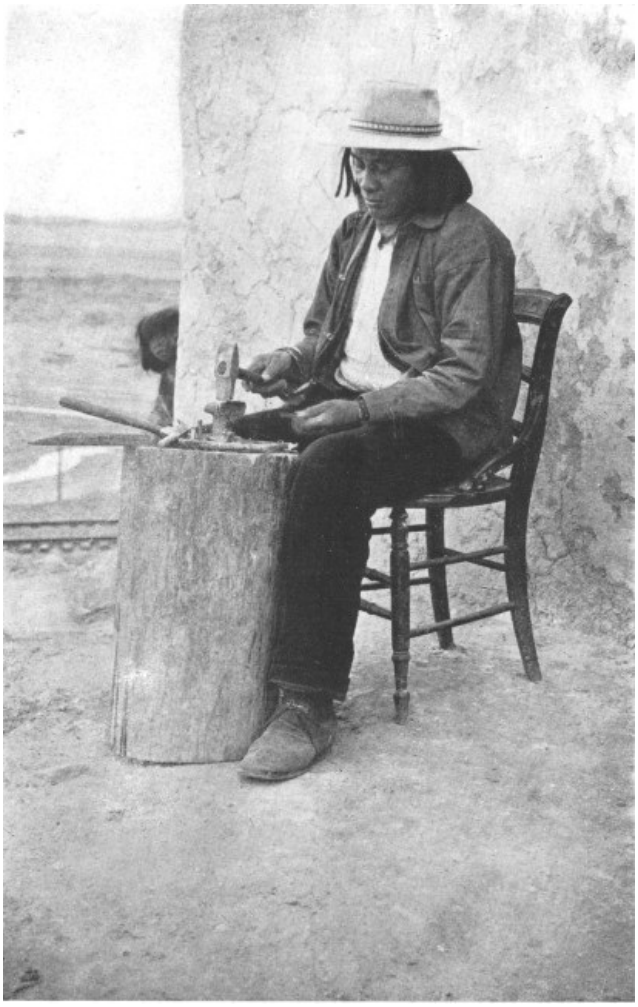
We call the head man of the pueblo the governor, but the Spanish know him as a *cacique*. Associated with him are the old men—*mayores*, or council; and this council of wise old men enters so intimately into the lives of the people that it advises the young men as to marriage. We have preachers in our religious ranks. The Pueblos have proclaimers who harangue from the housetops, or *estufas*. As women stoop over the *metates* grinding the meal, men sing good cheer from the door. The chile, or red pepper, is pulverized between stones the same as the grain. Though openly Catholic and in attendance on the Mission church, the pueblo people still practice all the secret rites of Montezuma; and in all the course of four centuries of contact, white men have never been able to learn the ceremonies of the *estufas*.

Women never enter the *estufas*.

Who were the first white men to see Taos? It is not certainly known, but it is vaguely supposed they were Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions, shipwrecked on the coast of Florida in the Narvaez expedition, who wandered westward across the continent from Taos to Laguna and [Pg 207] Acoma. As the legend runs, they were made slaves by the Indians and traded from tribe to tribe from 1528 to 1536, when they reached Old Mexico. Anyway, their report of golden cities and vast, undiscovered land pricked New Spain into launching Coronado's expedition of 1540. Preceding the formal military advance of Coronado, the Franciscan Fray Marcos de Niza and two lay brothers guided by Cabeza de Vaca's negro Estevan, set out with the cross in their hands to prepare the way. Fray Marcos advanced from the Gulf of California eastward. One can guess the weary hardship of that footsore journeying. It was made between March and September of 1539. Go into the Yuma Valley in September! The heat is of a denseness you can cut with a knife. Imagine the heat of that tramp over desert sands in June, July and August! When Fray Marcos sent his Indian guides forward to Zuñi, near the modern Gallup, he was met with the warning "Go back; or you will be put to death." His messengers refusing to be daunted, the Zuñi people promptly killed them and threw them over the rocks. Fray Marcos went on with the lay brothers. Zuñi was called "*cibola*" owing to the great number of buffalo skins (*cibolas*) in camp.

Fray Marcos' report encouraged the Emperor of Spain to go on with Coronado's expedition. That trip need not be told here. It has been told and retold in half the languages of the world. The Spaniards set out from Old Mexico 300 strong, with 800 Indian escorts and four priests including [Pg 208] Marcos and a lay brother. What did they expect? Probably a second Peru, temples with walls of gold and images draped in jewels of priceless worth. What did they find? In Zuñi and the Three Mesas and Taos, small, sun-baked clay houses built tier on tier on top of each other like a child's block house, with neither precious stones, nor metals of any sort, but only an abundance of hides and woven cloth. When the soldiers saw Zuñi, they broke out in jeers and curses at the priest. Poor Fray Marcos was thinking more of souls saved from perdition than of loot, and returned in shamed embarrassment to New Spain.

Across the Desert to the Three Mesas and the Cañon of the Colorado, east again to Acoma and the Enchanted Mesa, up to the pueblo town now known as the city of Santa Fe, into the Pecos, and north, yet north of Taos, Coronado's expedition practically made a circuit of all the Southwest from the Colorado River to East Kansas. The knightly adventurers did not find gold, and we may guess, as winter came on with heavy snows in the Upper Desert, they were in no very good mood; for now began that contest between white adventurers and Pueblos which lasted down to the middle of the Nineteenth Century. At the pueblo now known as Bernalillo, the soldiers demanded blankets to protect them from the cold. The Indians stripped their houses to help their visitors, but in the mêlée and no doubt in the ill humor of both sides there were attacks and insults by the white aggressors, and a state of siege lasted for two months. Practically from that date to 1840, the pueblo towns were a unit against the white man.



A fashionable metal-worker of Taos, New Mexico, who has not adhered to the native costume

The last great uprising was just after the American Occupation. Bent, the great trader of Bent's [Pg 209]
Fort on the Arkansas, was governor. Kit Carson, who had run away from the saddler's trade at sixteen and for whom a reward of one cent was offered, had joined the Santa Fe caravans and was now living at Taos, an influential man among the Indians. According to Col. Twitchell, whose work is the most complete on New Mexico and who received the account direct from the governor's daughter, Governor Bent knew that danger was brewing. The Pueblos had witnessed Spanish power overthrown; then, the expulsion of Mexican rule. Why should they, themselves, not expel American domination?

It was January 18, 1847. Governor Bent had come up from Santa Fe to visit Taos. He was warned to go back, or to get a military escort; but a trader all his life among the Indians, he flouted danger. Traders' rum had inflamed the Indians. They had crowded in from their pueblo town to the plaza of Taos. Insurrectionary Mexicans, who had cause enough to complain of the American policy regarding Spanish land titles, had harangued the Indians into a flare of resentful passion. Governor Bent and his family were in bed in the house you can see over to the left of the Plaza. In the kraal were plenty of horses for escape, but the family were awakened at daybreak by a rabble [Pg 210]
crowding into the central courtyard. Kit Carson's wife, Mrs. Bent, Mrs. Boggs and her children hurried into the shelter of an inner room. Young Alfredo Bent, only ten years old, pulled his gun from the rack with the words—"Papa, let us fight;" but Bent had gone to the door to parley with the leaders.

Taking advantage of the check, the women and an Indian slave dug a hole with a poker and spoon under the adobe wall of the room into the next house. Through this the family crawled away from the besieged room to the next house, Mrs. Bent last, calling for her husband to come; but it was too late. Governor Bent was shot in the face as he expostulated; clubbed down and literally scalped alive. He dragged himself across the floor, to follow his wife; but Indians came up through the hole and down over the roof and in through the windows; and Bent fell dead at the feet of his family.

The family were left prisoners in the room without food, or clothing except night dresses, all that day and the next night. At daybreak friendly Mexicans brought food, and the women were taken away disguised as squaws. Once, when searching Indians came to the house of the old Mexican who had sheltered the family, the rescuer threw the searchers off by setting his "squaws" to grinding meal on the kitchen floor. Kit Carson, at this time, unfortunately happened to be in California. He was the one man who could have restrained the Indians. [Pg 211]

The Indians then proceeded down to the Arroyo Hondo to catch some mule loads of whiskey and provisions, which were expected through the narrow cañon. The mill where the mules had been

unharnessed was surrounded that night. The teamsters plugged up windows and loaded for the fray that must come with daylight. Seven times the Indians attempted to rush an assault. Each time, a rifle shot puffed from the mill and an Indian leaped into the air to fall back dead. Then the whole body of 500 Indians poured a simultaneous volley into the mill. Two of the Americans inside fell dead. A third was severely wounded. By the afternoon of the second day, the Americans were without balls or powder. The Indians then crept up and set fire to the mill. The Americans hid themselves among the stampeding stock of the kraal. Night was coming on. The Pueblos were crowding round in a circle. The surviving Americans opened the gates and made a dash in the dark for the mountains. Two only escaped. The rest were lanced and scalped as they ran; and in the loot of the teams, the Indians are supposed to have secured some well-filled chests of gold specie.

By January 23rd, General Price had marched out at the head of five companies, from old Fort Marcy at Santa Fe for Taos. He had 353 men and four cannon. You can see the marks yet on the old Mission at Taos, where the cannon-balls battered down the adobe walls. The Indians did not wait his coming. They met him 1,500 strong on the heights of a mesa at Santa Cruz. The Indians [Pg 212] made wild efforts to capture the wagons to the rear of the artillery; but when an Indian rabble meets artillery, there is only one possible issue. The Indians fled, leaving thirty-six killed and forty-five wounded. No railway led up the Rio Grande at that early date; and it was a more notable feat for the troops to advance up the narrowing cañons than to defeat the foe. At Embudo, six or seven hundred Pueblos lined the rock walls under hiding of cedar and piñon. The soldiers had to climb to shoot; and again the Indians could not withstand trained fire. They left twenty killed and sixty wounded here. Two feet of snow lay on the trail as the troops ascended the uplands; and it was February 3rd before they reached Taos. Every ladder had been drawn up, every window barricaded, and the high walls of the tiered great houses were bristling with rifle barrels; but rifle defense could not withstand the big shells of the assailants. The two pueblos were completely surrounded. A six pounder was brought within ten yards of the walls. A shell was fired—the church wall battered down, and the dragoons rushed through the breach. By the night of Feb. 4th, old men, women and children bearing the cross came suing for peace. The ringleader, Tomas, was delivered to General Price; and the troops drew off with a loss of seven killed and forty-five wounded. The Pueblos loss was not less than 200. Thus ended the last attempt of the Pueblos to overthrow alien domination; and this attempt would not have been made if the Indians had not been spurred on by Mexican revolutionaries, with counter plots of [Pg 213] their own.

We motored away from Taos by sunset. An old Indian woman swathed all in white came creeping down one of the upper ladders. They could not throw off white rule—these Pueblos—but for four centuries they have withstood white influences as completely as in the days when they sent the couriers spurring with the knotted cord to rally the tribes to open revolt.

CHAPTER XIII [Pg 214]

SAN ANTONIO, THE CAIRO OF AMERICA

If you want to plunge into America's Egypt, there are as many ways to go as you have moods. You explain that the ocean voyage is half the attraction to European travel. There may be a difference of opinion on that, as I know people who would like to believe that the Atlantic could be bridged; but if you are keen on an ocean voyage, you can reach the Egypt of America by boat to Florida, then west by rail; or by boat straight to any of the Texas harbors. By way of Florida, you can take your fill of the historic and antique and the picturesque in St. Augustine and Pensacola and New Orleans; and if there are any yarns of rarer flavor in all the resorts of Europe than in the old quarters of these three places, I have never heard of them. You can drink of the spring of the elixir of life in St. Augustine, and lose yourself in the trenches of old Fort Barrancas at Pensacola, and wander at will in the old French town of New Orleans. Each place was once a pawn in the gambles of European statesmen. Each has heard the clang of armed knights, the sword in one hand, the cross in the other. Each has seen the pirate fleet with death's head on the flag at the masthead come tacking up the bays, sometimes to be shattered and sunk by cannon shot from [Pg 215] the fort bastions. Sometimes the fort itself was scuttled by the buccaneers; once, at least, at Fort Barrancas, it suffered loot at terrible, riotous, drunken hands, when a Spanish officer's daughter who was captured for ransom succeeded in plunging into the sea within sight of her watching father.

But whether you enter the Egypt of America by rail overland, or by sea, San Antonio is the gateway city from the south to the land of play and mystery. It is to the Middle West what Quebec is to Canada, what Cairo is to Egypt—the gateway, the meeting place of old and new, of Latin and Saxon, of East and West, of North and South. Atmosphere? Physically, the atmosphere is champagne: spiritually, you have not gone ten paces from the station before you feel a flavor as of old wine. There are the open Spanish plazas riotous with bloom flanked by Spanish-Moorish ruins flush on the pavement, with skyscraper hotels that are the last word in modernity. Live oaks heavy with Spanish moss hang over sleepy streams that come from everywhere and meander

nowhere. You see a squad of soldiers from Fort Sam Houston wheeling in measured tread around a square (only there isn't anything absolutely square in all San Antonio) and they have hardly gone striding out of sight before you see a Mexican burro trotting to market with a load of hay tied on its back. A motor comes bumping over the roads—such roads as only the antique can boast—and if it is fiesta time, or cowboy celebration, you are apt to see cowboys cutting such [Pg 216] figure eights in the air as a motor cannot execute on antique pavement.

You enter a hotel and imagine you are in the Plaza, New York, or the Ritz, London; but stay! The frieze above the marble walls isn't gilt; and it isn't tapestry. The frieze is a long panel in bronze *alto-relievo*. I think it is a testimonial to San Antonio's sense of the fitness of things that that frieze is not of Roman gladiators, or French gardens with beringed ladies and tame fawns. It is a frieze of the cowboys taking a stampeding herd up the long trail—drifting and driving but held together by a rough fellow in top boots and sombrero; and the rotunda has a frieze of cowboys because that three million-dollar hotel was built out of "cow" money. Old and new, past and present, Saxon and Latin, North and South, East and West—that is San Antonio. You can never forget it for a minute. It is such a shifting panorama as you could only get from traveling thousands of miles elsewhere, or comparing a hundred Remington drawings. San Antonio is a curious combination of Remington and Alma Tadema in real life; and I don't know anywhere else in the world you can get it. There are three such huge hotels in San Antonio besides a score of lesser ones, to take care of the 30,000 tourists who come from the Middle West to winter in San Antonio; but remember that while 30,000 seems a large number of tourists for one place, that is only one-tenth the number of Americans who yearly see Europe. [Pg 217]

And never for a moment can you forget that as Cairo is the gateway to Eastern travel, so San Antonio is on the road to Old Mexico and all the former Spanish possessions of the South. It was here that Madero's band of revolutionists lived and laid the plans that overthrew Diaz. Long ago, before the days of railway, it was here that the long caravans of mule trains used to come with, silver and gold from the mines of Old Mexico. It was here the highwaymen and roughs and toughs and scum of the earth used to lie in wait for the passing bullion; and it was here the Texas Rangers came with short, quick, sharp shrift for rustlers and robbers. There is one corner in San Antonio where you can see a Mission dating back to the early seventeen hundreds, and not a stone's throw away, one of the most famous gambling joints of the wildest days of the wild Southwest—the site of the old Silver King, where cowboys and miners from the South used to come in "to clean out" their earnings of a year, sometimes to ride horses over faro tables, or pot-shot rows of champagne. A man had "to smile" when he called his "pardner" pet names in the Silver King; or there would be crackle of more than champagne corks. Men would duck for hiding. A body would be dragged out, sand spread on the floor, and the games went on morning, noon and night. The Missions are crumbling ruins. So is the Silver King. Frontiersmen will tell you regretfully of the good old days forever gone, when the night passed but dully if the cowboys [Pg 218] did not shoot up all the saloons and "hurdle" the gaming tables.

Yesterday, it was cowboy and mines in San Antonio. To-day, it is polo and tourist; and the transition is a natural growth. One would hate to think of the risks of the Long Trail, for miners from Old Mexico to Fort Leavenworth, for cowboys from Fort Worth to Wyoming and St. Louis, and not see the risks rewarded in fortunes to these trail makers. The cowboy and miner of the olden days—the cowboy and miner who survived, that is—are the capitalists taking their pleasure in San Antonio to-day. It was natural that the cow pony bred to keeping its feet in mid-air, or on earth, should develop into the finest type of polo pony ever known. For years, the polo clubs of the North, Lenox, Long Island, Milbrook, have made a regular business of scouring Texas for polo ponies. Horses giving promise of good points would be picked up at $80, $100, $150. They would then be rounded on a ranch and trained. San Antonio is situated almost 700 feet up on a high, clear plateau rimmed by blue ridges in the distance. Recently, a polo ground of 3,200 acres has been laid out; and the polo clubs of the North are to be invited to San Antonio for the winter fiestas. As Fort Sam Houston boasts one of the best polo clubs of the South, competition is likely to attract the sportsmen from far and near. [Pg 219]

You know how it is in all these new Western cities. They are feverish with a mania of progress. They have grown so fast they cannot keep track of their own hobble-de-hoy, sprawling limbs. They are drunk with prosperity. In real estate alone, fortunes have come, as it were, overnight. All this San Antonio has not escaped. They will tell you with pardonable pride how this little cow town, where land wasn't worth two cents an acre outside the Mission walls, has jumped to be a metropolitan city of over 100,000; how it is the center of the great truck and irrigation farm district. Fort Sam Houston always has 700 or 800 soldiers in garrison, and sometimes has as many as 4,000; and when army maneuvers take place, there is an immense reservation outside the city where as many as 20,000 men can practice mimic war. The day of two cents or even $20 an acre land round San Antonio is forever past. Land under the ditch is too valuable for the rating of twenty acres to one steer.

All this and more you will see of modern San Antonio; but still if at sundown you set out on a vagrant and solitary tour of the old Missions, I think you will feel as I felt that it was the dauntless spirit of the old régime that fired the blood of the moderns for the new day that is dawning. I don't know why it is, but anything in life that is worth having seems to demand service and sacrifice and, oftener than not, the martyrdom of heroic and terrible defeat. Then, when you think that the flag of the cause is trampled in a mire of bloodshed, phœnix-like the cause rises on [Pg 220]

eagles' wings to new height, new daring, new victory. It was so in Texas.

When you visit the Missions of San Antonio, go alone; or go with a kindred spirit. Don't talk! Let the mysticism and wonder of it sink in your soul! Soak yourself in the traditions of the Past. Let the dead hand of the Past reach out and touch you. You will live over again the heroism of the Alamo, the heroism that preceded the Alamo—that of the Franciscans who tramped 300 leagues across the desert of Old Mexico to establish these Missions; the heroism that preceded the Franciscans—that of La Salle traveling thrice 300 leagues to establish the cross on the Gulf of Mexico, and perishing by assassin's hand as he turned on the backward march. You will see the iron cross to his memory at Levaca. It was because La Salle, the Frenchman, found his way to the Gulf, that Spain stirred up the viceroys of New Mexico to send sword and cross over the desert to establish forts in the country of the Tejas (Texans).

Do you realize what that means? When I cross the arid hills of the Rio Grande, I travel in a car cooled by electric fans, with two or three iced drinks between meals. These men marched—most of them on foot, the cowled priests in sandals, the knights in armor plate from head to heel—over cactus sands. Do you wonder that they died on the way? Do you wonder that the marchers coming into the well-watered plains of the San Antonio with festooned live oaks overhanging the green waters, paused here and built their string of Missions of which the chief was the one now known as "The Alamo"—the Mission of the cottonwood trees?

An excellent example of the entrance to an adobe house of the Southwest, embodying the best traditions of this kind of architecture

Six different flags have flown over the land of the Tejas: the French, the Spanish, the Mexican, the Republic of Texas, the Confederate, the Union. In such a struggle for ascendancy, needless to tell, much blood was shed righteously and unrighteously; but of the battle fought at the Alamo, no justification need be given. It is part of American history, but it is the kind of history that in other nations goes to make battle hymns. Details are in every school book. Santa Ana, the newly risen Mexican dictator, had ordered the 30,000 Americans who lived in Texas, to disarm. Sam Houston, Crockett, Bowie, Travis, had sprung to arms with a call that rings down to history yet: [Pg 221]

> "Fellow citizens and compatriots," wrote Travis from the doomed Alamo Mission, to Houston and the other leaders outside, "I am besieged by a thousand or more Mexicans under Santa Ana. I have sustained a continued bombardment for twenty-four hours and have not lost a man.... The garrison is to be put to the sword if the place is taken. I have answered the summons with a cannon shot and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender, nor retreat. I call on you in the name of liberty, and of everything dear to the American character, to come to our aid with all despatch. The enemy is receiving reinforcements daily, and will no [Pg 222] doubt increase to 3,000 or 4,000 in four or five days. Though this call may be neglected, I am determined to sustain myself as long as possible and die like a soldier who forgets not what is due to his own honor and that of his country—Victory or Death!
>
> W. Barrett Travis
> Lieut.-Col. Commanding."

In the fort with Travis were 180 men under Bowie and Crockett. The siege began on Feb. 23, 1836, and ended on March 6th. Besides the frontiersmen in the fort were two women, two children and two slaves. The Mission was arranged in a great quadrangle fifty-four by 154 yards with *acequias* or irrigation ditches both to front and rear. The garrison had succeeded in getting inside the walls about thirty bushels of corn and eighty beef cattle; so there was no danger of famine. The big courtyard was in the rear. The convent projected out in front of the courtyard. To the left angle of the convent was the chapel or Mission of the Alamo. Santa Ana had come across the desert with 5,000 men. To the demand for surrender, Travis answered with a cannon shot. The Mexican leader then hung the red flag above his camp and ordered the band to play "no

quarter." For eight days, shells came hurtling inside the walls incessantly, dawn to dark, dark to dawn. Just at sunset on March 3rd, there was a bell. Travis collected his men and gave them their choice of surrendering and being shot, or cutting their way out through the besieging line. The [Pg 223] besiegers at this time consisted of 2,500 infantrymen bunched close to the walls of the Alamo—too close to be shot from above, and 2,500 cavalry and infantry back on the Plaza and encircling the Mission to cut off all avenue of escape.

Travis drew a line on the ground with his sword.

"Every man who will die with me, come across that line! Who will be first? March!"

Every man leaped over the line but Bowie, who was ill on a cot bed.

"Boys, move my cot over the line," he said.

At four o'clock next morning, the siege was resumed. The bugle blew a single blast. With picks, crowbars and ladders, the Mexicans closed in. The besieged waited breathlessly. The Mexicans placed the ladders and began scaling. The sharpshooters inside the walls waited till the heads appeared above the walls—then fired. As the top man fell back, the one beneath on the ladder stepped in the dead man's place. Then the Americans clubbed their guns and fought hand to hand. By that, the Mexicans knew that ammunition was exhausted and the defenders few. The walls were scaled and battered down first in a far corner of the convent yard. Behind the chapel door, piles of sand had been stacked. From the yard, the Texans were driven to the convent, from the convent to the chapel. Travis fell shot at the breach in the yard wall. Bowie was bayoneted on the cot where he lay. Crockett was clubbed to death just outside the chapel door to the left. By [Pg 224] nine o'clock, no answering shot came from the Alamo. The doors were rammed and rushed. Not a Texan survived. Two women, two children and a couple of slaves were pulled out of hiding from chancel and stalls. These were sent across to the main camp. The bodies of the 182 heroes were piled in a pyramid with fagots; and fired. So ended the Battle of the Alamo, one of the most terrible defeats and heroic defenses in American history. It is unnecessary to relate that Sam Houston exacted from the Mexicans on the battlefield of San Jacinto a terrible punishment for this defeat. Captured and killed, his toll of defeated Mexicans down at Houston came to almost 1,700.

Such is the story of one of San Antonio's Missions. One other has a tale equally tragic; but all but two are falling to utter ruin. I don't know whether it would be greater desecration to lay hand on them and save them, or let them fall to dust. It was nightfall when I went to the three on the outskirts of the city. Two have little left but the walls and the towers. A third is still used as place of worship by a little settlement of Mexicans. The slant light of sunset came through the darkened, vacant windows, the tiers of weathered stalls, the empty, twin-towered belfries. You could see where the well stood, the bake house, the school. Shrubbery planted by the monks has grown wild in the courtyards; but you can still call up the picture of the cowled priests chanting prayers. The Missions are ruins; but the hope that animated them, the fire, the heroism, the [Pg 225] dauntless faith, still burn in Texas blood as the sunset flame shines through the dismantled windows.

CHAPTER XIV [Pg 226]

CASA GRANDE AND THE GILA

If someone should tell you of a second Grand Cañon gashed through wine-colored rocks in the purple light peculiar to the uplands of very high mountains—a second Grand Cañon, where lived a race of little men not three feet tall, where wild turkeys were domesticated as household birds and every man's door was in the roof and his doorstep a ladder that he carried up after him—you would think it pure imagination, wouldn't you? The Lilliputians away out in "Gulliver's Travels," or something like that? And if your narrator went on about magicians who danced with live rattlesnakes hanging from their teeth and belted about their waists, and played with live fire without being burned, and walked up the faces of precipices as a fly walks up a wall—you would think him rehearsing some Robinson Crusoe tale about two generations too late to be believed.

Yet there is a second Grand Cañon not a stone's throw from everyday tourist travel, wilder in game life and rock formation if not so large, with prehistoric caves on its precipice walls where sleeps a race of little mummied men behind doors and windows barely large enough to admit a half-grown white child. Who were they? No one knows. When did they live? So long ago that they [Pg 227] were cave men, stone age men; so long ago that neither history nor tradition has the faintest echo of their existence. Where did they live? No, it was not Europe, Asia, Africa or Australia. If it were, we would know about them. As it happens, this second Grand Cañon is only in plain, nearby, home-staying America; so when boys of the Forest Service pulled Little Zeke out of his gypsum and pumice stone dust and measured him up and found him only twenty-three inches long, though the hair sticking to the skull was gray and the teeth were those of an adult—as it happened in only matter-of-fact, commonplace America, poor Little Zeke couldn't get shelter. They trounced his little dry bones round Silver City, New Mexico, for a few months. Then they boxed him up and shipped him away to be stored out of sight in the cellars of the Smithsonian, at Washington. As Zeke has been asleep since the Ice Age, or about ten to eight thousand years B.

C., it doesn't make very much difference to him; but one wonders what in the world New Mexico was doing allowing one of the most wonderful specimens of a prehistoric dwarf race ever found to be shipped out of the country.

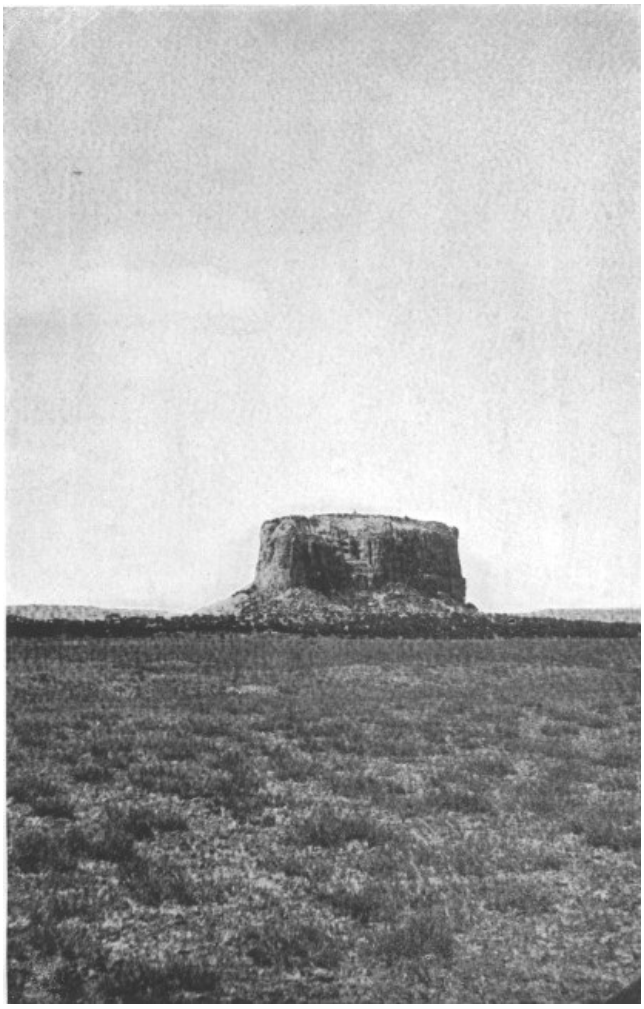
It was in the Gila Cañon that the Forestry Service boys found him. By some chance, they at once dubbed the little mummy "Zeke." The Gila is a typical box-cañon, walled as a tunnel, colored in fire tints like the Grand Cañon, literally terraced and honeycombed with the cave dwellings of a [Pg 228] prehistoric race. It lies some fifty miles as the crow flies from Silver City; but the way the crow flies and the way man travels are an altogether different story in the wild lands of the Gila Mountains. You'll have to make the most of the way on horseback with tents for hotels, or better still the stars for a roof. Besides, what does it matter when or how the little scrub of a twenty-three-inch man lived anyway? We moderns of evolutionary smattering have our own ideas of how cave men dwelt; and we don't want those ideas disturbed. The cave men—ask Jack London if you don't believe it—were hairy monsters, not quite tailless, just cotton-tail-rabbity in their caudal appendage—hairy monsters, who munched raw beef and dragged women by the hair of the head to pitch-black, dark as night, smoke-begrimed caves. That is the way they got their wives. (Perhaps, if Little Zeke could speak, he would think he ought to sue moderns for libel. He might think that our "blond-beast" theories are a reflex of our own civilization. He might smile through his grinning jaws.)

Anyway, there lies Little Zeke, a long time asleep, wrapped in cerements of fine woven cloth with fluffy-ruffles and fol-de-rols of woven blue jay and bluebird and hummingbird feathers round his neck. Zeke's people understood weaving. Also Zeke wears on his feet sandals of yucca fiber and matting. I don't know what our ancestors wore—according to evolutionists, it may have been hair and monkey pads. So if you understood as much about Zeke's history as you do about the [Pg 229] Pyramids, you'd settle some of the biggest disputes in theology and ethnology and anthropology and a lot of other "ologies," which have something more or less to do with the salvation and damnation of the soul.

How is it known that Zeke is a type of a race, and not a freak specimen of a dwarf? Because other like specimens have been found in the same area in the last ten years; and because the windows and the doors of the cave dwellings of the Gila would not admit anything but a dwarf race. They may not all have been twenty-four and thirty-six and forty inches; but no specimens the size of the mummies in other prehistoric dwellings have been found in the Gila. For instance, down at Casa Grande, they found skeletons buried in the gypsum dust of back chambers; but these skeletons were six-footers, and the roofs of the Casa Grande chambers were for tall men. Up in the Frijoles cave dwellings, they have dug out of the *tufa* dust of ten centuries bodies swathed in woven cloth; but these bodies are of a modern race five or six feet tall. You have only to look at Zeke to know that he is not, as we understand the word, an Indian. Was he an ancestor of the Aztecs or the Toltecs?

Though you cannot go out to the Gila by motor to a luxurious hotel, there are compensations. You will see a type of life unique and picturesque as in the Old World—countless flocks of sheep herded by soft-voiced peons. It is the only section yet left in the West where freighters with [Pg 230] double teams and riders with bull whips wind in and out of the narrow cañons with their long lines of tented wagons. It is still a land where game is plentiful as in the old days, trout and turkey and grouse and deer and bear and mountain lion, and even bighorn, though the last named are under protection of closed season just now. I'm always afraid to tell an Easterner or town dweller of the hunt of these old trappers of the box cañons; but as many as thirteen bear have been killed on the Gila in three weeks. The altitude of the trail from Silver City to the Gila runs from 6,000 to 9,150 feet. When you have told that to a Westerner, you don't need to tell anything else. It means burros for pack animals. In the Southwest it means forests of huge yellow pines, open upland like a park, warm, clear days, cool nights, and though in the desert, none of the heat nor the dust of the desert.

It is the ideal land for tuberculosis, though all invalids should be examined as to heart action before attempting any altitude over 4,000 feet. And the Southwest has worked out an ideal system of treatment for tuberculosis patients. They are no longer housed in stuffy hotels and air tight, super-heated sanitariums. Each sanitarium is now a tent city—portable houses or tents floored and boarded halfway up, with the upper half of the wall a curtain window, and a little stove in each tent. Each patient has, if he wants it, a little hospital all to himself. There is a central dining-room. There is also a dispensary. In some cases, there are church and amusement hall. Where means permit it, a family may have a little tent city all to itself; and they don't call the tent city a sanitarium. They call it "Sun Mount," or "Happy Cañon," or some other such name. The percentage of recoveries is wonderful; but the point is, the invalids must come in time. Wherever you go along the borders of Old and New Mexico searching for prehistoric ruins, you come on these tent cities.



The Enchanted Mesa of Acoma, as high as three Niagaras, and its top as flat as a billiard table

Where can one see these cliff and cave dwellings of a prehistoric dwarf? Please note the points. [Pg 231] Cliff and cave dwellings are not the same. Cliff dwellings are houses made by building up the front of a natural arch. This front wall was either in stone or sun-baked adobe. Cave dwellings are houses hollowed out of the solid rock, a feat not so difficult as it sounds when you consider the rock is only soft pumice or tufa, that yields to scraping more readily than bath brick or soft lime. The cliff dwellings are usually only one story. The cave dwellings may run five stories up inside the rock, natural stone steps leading from tier to tier of the rooms, and tiny porthole windows looking down precipices 500 to 1,000 feet. The cliff dwellings are mostly entered by narrow trails leading along the ledge of a precipice sheer as a wall. The first story of the cave dwellings was entered by a light ladder, which the owner could draw up after him. Remember it was the Stone Age: no metals, no firearms, no battering rams, nor devices for throwing [Pg 232] projectiles. A man with a rock in his hand in the doorway of either type of dwelling could swiftly and deftly and politely speed the parting guest with a brickbat on his head. Similar types of pottery and shell ornament are found in both sorts of dwellings; but I have never seen any cliff dwellings with evidences of such religious ceremony as in the cave houses. Perhaps the difference between cliff folk and cave folk would be best expressed by saying that the cliff people were to ancient life what the East Side is to us: the cave people what upper Fifth Avenue represents. One the riff-raff, the weak, the poor, driven to the wall; the other, the strong, the secure and defended.

You go to one section of ruins, and you come to certain definite conclusions. Then you go on to another group of ruins; and every one of your conclusions is reversed. For instance, what drove these races out? What utterly extinguished their civilization so that not a vestige, not an echo of a tradition exists of their history? Scientists go up to the Rio Grande in New Mexico, see evidence of ancient irrigation ditches, of receding springs and decreasing waters; and they at once pronounce—desiccation. The earth is burning up at the rate of an inch or two of water in a century; moisture is receding toward the Poles as it has in Mars, till Mars is mostly arid, sun-parched desert round its middle and ice round the Poles. Good! When you look down from the cliff dwellings of Walnut Cañon, near Flagstaff, that explanation seems to hold good. There [Pg 233] certainly must have been water once at the bottom of this rocky box-cañon. When the water sank below the level of the springs, the people had to move out. Very well! You come on down to the cave dwellings of the Gila. The bottom falls out of your explanation, for there is a perpetual gush of water down these rock walls from unfailing mountain springs. Why, then, did the race of little people move out? What wiped them out? Why they moved in one can easily understand. The box cañons are so narrow that half a dozen pigmy boys deft with a sling and stones could keep out an army of enemies. The houses were so built that a child could defend the doorway with a club; and where the houses have long hallways and stairs as in Casa Grande, the passages are so narrow as

to compel an enemy to wiggle sideways; and one can guess the inmates would not be idle while the venturesome intruder was wedging himself along. Also, the bottoms of these box-cañons afforded ideal corn fields. The central stream permitted easy irrigation on each side by tapping the waterfall higher up; and the wash of the silt of centuries ensured fertility to men, whose plowing must have been accomplished by the shoulder blade of a deer used as a hoe.

Modern pueblo Indians claim to be descendants of these prehistoric dwarf races. So are we descendants of Adam; but we don't call him our uncle; and if he had a say, he might disown us. Anyway, how have modern descendants of the dwarf types developed into six-foot modern Pimas and Papagoes? It is said the Navajo and Apache came originally from Athabasca stock. Maybe; but the Pimas and Papagoes claim their Garden of Eden right in the Southwest. They call their Garden of Eden by the picturesque name of "Morning Glow." [Pg 234]

How reach the caves of the dwarf race?

To the Gila group, you must go by way of Silver City; and better go in with Forest Service men, for this is the Gila National Forest and the men know the trails. You will find ranch houses near, where you can secure board and room for from $1.50 to $2 a day. The "room" may be a boarded up tent; but that is all the better. Or you may take your own blanket and sleep in the caves. Perfectly safe—believe me, I have fared all these ways—when you have nearly broken your neck climbing up a precipice to a sheltered cave room, you need not fear being followed. The caves are clean as if kalsomined from centuries and centuries of wash and wind. You may hear the wolves bark—bark—bark under your pillowed doorway all night; but wolves don't climb up 600-foot precipice walls. Also if it is cold in the caves, you will find in the corner of nearly all, a small, high fireplace, where the glow of a few burning juniper sticks will drive out the chill.

What did they eat and how did they live, these ancient people, who wore fine woven cloth at an era when Aryan races wore skins? Like all desert races, they were not great meat eaters; and the probabilities are that fish were tabooed. You find remains of game in the caves, but these are chiefly feather decorations, prayer plumes to waft petitions to the gods, or bones used as tools. On the other hand, there is abundance of dried corn in the caves, of gourds and squash seeds; and every cave has a *metate*, or grinding stone. In many of the caves, there are alcoves in the solid wall, where meal was stored; and of water jars, urns, ollas, there are remnants and whole pieces galore. It is thought these people used not only yucca fiber for weaving, but some species of hemp and cotton; for there are tatters and strips of what might have been cotton or linen. You see it wrapped round the bodies of the mummies and come on it in the accumulation of volcanic ash. [Pg 235]

Near many of the ruins is a huge empty basin or pit, which must have been used as a reservoir in which waters were impounded during siege of war. Like conies of the rocks, or beehives of modern skyscrapers, these denizens lived. The most of the mummies have been found in sealed up chambers at the backs of the main houses; but these could hardly have been general burying places, for comparatively few mummies have yet been found. Who, then, were these dwarf mummies, placed in sealed vaults to the rear of the Gila caves? Perhaps a favorite father, brother, or sister; perhaps a governor of the tribe, who perished during siege and could not be taken out to the common burial ground.

Picture to yourself a precipice face from 300 to 700 feet high, literally punctured with tiny porthole windows and doll house open cave doors. It is sunset. The rocks of these box-cañons in the Southwest are of a peculiar wine-colored red and golden ocher, or else dead gray and gypsum white. Owing to the great altitude—some of the ruins are 9,000 feet above sea level, 1,000 above valley bottom—the atmosphere has that curious quality of splitting white light into its seven prismatic hues. Artists of the Southwestern School account for this by the fact of desert dust being a silt fine as flour, which acts like crystal or glass in splitting the rays of white light into its prismatic colors; but this hardly explains these high box-cañons, for there is no dust here. My own theory (please note, it is only a theory and may be quite wrong) is that the air is so rare at altitudes above 6,000 feet, so rare and pure that it splits light up, if not in seven prismatic colors, then in elementary colors that give the reds and purples and fire tints predominance. Anyway, at sunset and sunrise, these box-cañons literally swim in a glory of lavender and purple and fiery reds. You almost fancy it is a fire where you can dip your hand and not be burned; a sea in which spirits, not bodies, swim and move and have their being; a sea of fiery rainbow colors. [Pg 236]

The sunset fades. The shadows come down like invisible wings. The twilight deepens. The stars prick through the indigo blue of a desert sky like lighted candles; and there flames up in the doorway of cavern window and door the deep red of juniper and cedar log glow in the fireplaces at the corner of each room. The mourning dove utters his plaintive wail. You hear the yap-yap of fox and coyote far up among the big timbers between you and the snows. Then a gong rings. (Gong? In a metal-less age? Yes, the gong is a flint bar struck by the priest with a bone clapper.) The dancers come down out of the caves to the dancing floors in the middle of the narrow cañon. You can see the dancing rings yet, where the feet of a thousand years have beaten the raw earth hard. Men only dance. These are not sex dances. They are dances of thanks to the gods for the harvest home of corn; or for victory. The gong ceases clapping. The campfires that scent the cañon with juniper smells, flicker and fade and die. The rhythmic beat of the feet that dance ceases and fades in the darkness. [Pg 237]

That was ten thousand years agone. Where are the races that danced to the beat of the priest's clapper gong?

I wakened one morning in one of the Frijoles caves to the mournful wail of the turtle dove; and there came back that old prophecy—it used to give me cold shivers down my spine as a child—that the habitat of the races who fear not God shall be the haunt of bittern and hoot owl and bat and fox.

I don't know what reason there is for it, neither do the Indians of the Southwest know; but Casa Grande, the Great House, or the Place of the Morning Glow, is to them the Garden of Eden of [Pg 238] their race traditions; the scene of their mythical "golden age," when there were no Apaches raiding the crops, nor white men stealing land away; when life was a perpetual Happy Hunting Ground, only the hunters didn't kill, and all animals could talk, and the Desert was an antelope plain knee-deep in pasturage and flowers, and the springs were all full of running water.

Casa Grande is undoubtedly the oldest of all the prehistoric ruins in the United States. It lies some eighteen to twenty-five miles, according to the road you follow, south of the station called by that name on the Southern Pacific Railroad. It isn't supposed to rain in the desert after the two summer months, nor to blow dust storms after March; but it was blowing a dust storm to knock you off your feet when I reached Casa Grande early in October; and a day later the rain was falling in floods. The drive can be made with ease in an afternoon; but better give yourself two days, and stay out for a night at the tents of Mr. Pinkey, the Government Custodian of the ruins.

The ruin itself has been set aside as a perpetual monument. You drive out over a low mesa of rolling mesquite and greasewood and cactus, where the giant suaharo stands like a columned ghost of centuries of bygone ages.

"How old are they?" I asked my driver, as we passed a huge cactus high as a house and twisted in contortions as if in pain. From tip to root, the great trunk was literally pitted with the holes [Pg 239] pecked through by little desert birds for water.

"Oh, centuries and centuries old," he said; "and the queer part is that in this section of the mesa water is sixty feet below the surface. Their roots don't go down sixty feet. Where do they get the water? I guess the bark acts as cement or rubber preventing evaporation. The spines keep the desert animals off, and during the rainy season the cactus drinks up all the water he's going to need for the year, and stores it up in that big tank reservoir of his. But his time is up round these parts; settlers have homesteaded all round here for twenty-five miles, and next time you come back we'll have orange groves and pecan orchards."

Far as you could look were the little adobe houses and white tents of the pioneers, stretching barb wire lines round 160-acre patches of mesquite with a faith to put Moses to shame when he struck the rock for a spring. These settlers have to bore down the sixty feet to water level with very inadequate tools; and you see little burros chasing homemade windlasses round and round, to pump up water. It looks like "the faith that lays it down and dies." Slow, hard sledding is this kind of farming, but it is this kind of dauntless faith that made Phœnix and made Yuma and made Imperial Valley. Twenty years ago, you could squat on Imperial Valley Land. To-day it costs $1,000 an acre and yields high percentage on that investment. To-day you can buy Casa Grande lands from $5 to $25 an acre. Wait till the water is turned in the ditch, and it will not seem such [Pg 240] tedious work. If you want to know just how hard and lonely it is, drive past the homesteads just at nightfall as I did. The white tent stands in the middle of a barb wire fence strung along juniper poles and cedar shakes; no house, no stable, no buildings of any sort. The horses are staked out. A woman is cooking a meal above the chip fire. A lantern hangs on a bush in front of the tent flap. Miles ahead you see another lantern gleam and swing, and dimly discern the outlines of another tent—the homesteader's nearest neighbor. Just now Casa Grande town boasts 400 people housed chiefly in one story adobe dwellings. Come in five years, and Casa Grande will be boasting her ten and twenty thousand people. Like mushrooms overnight, the little towns spring up on irrigation lands.

You catch the first glimpse of the ruins about eighteen miles out—a red roof put on by the Government, then a huge, square, four story mass of ruins surrounded by broken walls, with remnants of big elevated courtyards, and four or five other compounds the size of this central house, like the bastions at the four corners of a large, old-fashioned walled fort. The walls are adobe of tremendous thickness—six feet in the house or temple part, from one to three in the stockade—a thickness that in an age of only stone weapons must have been impenetrable. The doors are so very low as to compel a person of ordinary height to bend almost double to enter; [Pg 241] and the supposition is this was to prevent the entrance of an enemy and give the doorkeeper a chance to eject unwelcome visitors. Once inside, the ceilings are high, timbered with *vigas* of cedar strengthened by heavier logs that must have been carried in a horseless age a hundred miles from the mountains. The house is laid out on rectangular lines, and the halls straight enough but so narrow as to compel passage sidewise. In every room is a feature that has puzzled scientists both here and in the cave dwellings. Doors were, of course, open squares off the halls or other rooms; but in addition to these openings, you will find close to the floor of each room, little round "cat holes," one or two or three of them, big enough for a beam but without a beam. In the cave dwellings these little round holes through walls four or five feet thick are frequently on the side of the room opposite the fireplace. Fewkes and others think they may have been ventilator shafts to keep the smoke from blowing back in the room, but in Casa Grande they are in rooms where there is no fireplace. Others think they were whispering tubes, for use in time of

war or religious ceremony; but in a house of open doors, would it not have been as simple to call through the opening? Yet another explanation is that they were for drainage purpose, the cave man's first rude attempt at modern plumbing; but that explanation falls down, too; for these openings don't drain in any regular direction. Such a structure as Casa Grande must have housed [Pg 242] a whole tribe in time of religious festival or war; so you come back to the explanation of ventilator shafts.

The ceilings of Casa Grande are extraordinarily high; and bodies found buried in sealed up chambers behind the ruins of the other compounds are five or six feet long, showing this was no dwarf race. The rooms do not run off rectangular halls as our rooms do. You tumble down stone steps through a passage so narrow as to catch your shoulders into a room deep and narrow as a grave. Then you crack your head going up other steps off this room to another compartment. Bodies found at Casa Grande lie flat, headed to the east. Bodies found in the caves are trussed up knees to chin, but as usual the bodies found at Casa Grande have been shipped away East to be stored in cellars instead of being left carefully glassed over, where they were found.

Lower altitude, or the great age, or the quality of the clays, may account for the peculiarly rich shades of the pottery found at Casa Grande. The purples and reds and browns are tinged an almost iridescent green. Running back from the Great House is a heavy wall as of a former courtyard. Backing and flanking the walls appear to have been other houses, smaller but built in the same fashion as Casa Grande. Stand on these ruined walls, or in the doorway of the Great House, and you can see that five such big houses have once existed in this compound. Two or three curious features mark Casa Grande. Inside what must have been the main court of the [Pg 243] compound are elevated earthen stages or platforms three to six feet high, solid mounds. Were these the foundations of other Great Houses, or platforms for the religious theatricals and ceremonials which enter so largely into the lives of Southwestern Indians? At one place is the dry bed of a very ancient reservoir; but how was water conveyed to this big community well? The river is two miles away, and no spring is visible here. Though you can see the footpath of sandaled feet worn in the very rocks of eternity, an irrigation ditch has not yet been located. This, however, proves nothing; for the sand storms of a single year would bury the springs four feet deep. A truer indication of the great age of the reservoir is the old tree growing up out of the center; and that brings up the question how we know the age of these ancient ruins—that is, the age within a hundred years or so. Ask settlers round how old Casa Grande is; and they will tell you five or six hundred years. Yet on the very face of things, Casa Grande must be thousands of years older than the other ruins of the Southwest.

Why?

First as to historic records: did Coronado see Casa Grande in 1540, when he marched north across the country? He records seeing an ancient Great House, where Indians dwelt. Bandelier, Fewkes and a dozen others who have identified his itinerary, say this was not Casa Grande. Even by 1540, Casa Grande was an abandoned ruin. Kino, the great Jesuit, was the first white man [Pg 244] known to have visited the Great House; and he gathered the Pimas and Papagoes about and said mass there about 1694. What a weird scene it must have been—the Sacaton Mountains glimmering in the clear morning light; the shy Indians in gaudy tunics and yucca fiber pantaloons crowding sideways through the halls to watch what to them must have been the gorgeous vestments of the priest. Then followed the elevation of the host, the bowing of the heads, the raising of the standard of the Cross; and a new era, that has not boded well for the Pimas and Papagoes, was ushered in. Then the Indians scattered to their antelope plains and to the mountains; and the priest went on to the Mission of San Xavier del Bac.

The Jesuits suffered expulsion, and Garcez, the Franciscan, came in 1775, and also held mass in Casa Grande. Garcez says that it was a tradition among the Moki of the northern desert that they had originally come from the south, from the Morning Glow of Casa Grande, and that they had inhabited the box-cañons of the Gila in the days when they were "a little people." This establishes Casa Grande as prior to the cave dwellings of the Gila or Frijoles; and the cave dwellings were practically contemporaneous with the Stone Age and the last centuries of the Ice Age. Now, the cave dwellings had been abandoned for centuries before the Spaniards came. This puts the cave age contemporaneous with or prior to the Christian era.

In the very center of the Casa Grande reservoir, across the doorways of caves in Frijoles Cañon, [Pg 245] grew trees that have taken centuries to come to maturity.

The Indian tradition is that soon after a very great flood of turbulent waters, in the days when the Desert was knee-deep in grass, the Indian Gods came from the Underworld to dwell in Casa Grande. (Not so very different from theories of evolution and transmigration, is it?) The people waxed so numerous that they split off in two great families. One migrated to the south—the Pimas, the Papagoes, the Maricopas; the others crossed the mountains to the north—the Zuñis, the Mokis, the Hopis.

Yet another proof of the great antiquity is in the language. Between Papago and Moki tongue is not the faintest resemblance. Now if you trace the English language back to the days of Chaucer, you know that it is still English. If you trace it back to 55 B. C. when the Roman and Saxon conquerors came, there are still words you recognize—thane, serf, Thor, Woden, moors, borough, etc. That is, you can trace resemblances in language back 1,900 years. You find no similarity in dialects between Pima and Moki, and very few similarities in physical conformation. The only likenesses are in types of structure in ancient houses, and in arts and crafts. Both people build tiered houses. Both people make wonderful pottery and are fine weavers, Moki of blankets and

Pima of baskets; and both people ascribe the art of weaving to lessons learned from their goddess, the Spider Maid. [Pg 246]

There are few fireplaces among the ancient dwellings of the Pimas and Papagoes, but lots of fire pits—*sipapus*—where the spirits of the Gods came through from the Underworld. Dancing floors, may pole rings, abound among the cave dwellings: mounds and platforms and courts among the Casa Grande ruins. The sun and the serpent were favored symbols to both people, a fact which is easily understood in a cloudless land, where serpents signified nearness of water springs, the greatest need of the people. You can see among the cave dwellings where earthquakes have tumbled down whole masses of front rooms; and both Moki and Papago have traditions of "the heavens raining fire."

It has been suggested by scientists that the cliffs were cities of refuge in times of war, the caves and Great Houses were permanent dwellings. This is inferred because there were no *kivas* or temples among the cliff ruins, and many exist among the caves and Great Houses. Cushing and Hough and I think two or three others regard Casa Grande as a temple or great community house, where the tribes of the Southwest repaired semi-annually for their religious ceremonies and theatricals.

We moderns express our emotions through the rhythm of song, of dance, of orchestra, of play, of opera, of art. The Indian had his pictographs on the rocks for art, and his pottery and weaving to express his craftsmanship; but the rest of his artistic nature was expressed chiefly by religious ceremonial or theatrical dance, similar to the old miracle plays of the Middle Ages. For instance, the Indians have not only a tradition of a great flood, but of a maiden who was drawn from the Underworld by her lover playing a flute; and the Flute Clans celebrate this by their flute dance. The yearly cleansing of the springs was as great a religious ceremony as the Israelites' cleansing of personal impurity. Each family belonged to a clan, and each clan had a religious lodge, secret as any modern fraternal order.

It isn't America at all! It's Arabia, and the Bedouins of the Painted Desert are Navajo boys

The mask dances of the Southwest are much misunderstood by white people. We see in them only what is grotesque or perhaps obscene. Yet the spirits of evil and the spirits of goodness are represented under the Indian's masked dances, just as the old miracle plays represented Faith, Hope, Charity, Lust, Greed, etc. There is the Bird Dance representing the gyrations of hummingbird, mocking-bird, quail, eagle, vulture. There is the dance of the "mud-heads." Have we no "mud-heads" befuddling life at every turn of the way? There is the dance of the gluttons and the monsters. Have we no unaccountable monsters in modern life? Read the record of a single day's crime; and ask yourself what mad motive tempted humans to such certain disaster. We explain a whole rigmarole of motives and inheritance and environment. The Indian shows it up by his dance of the monsters. [Pg 247]

Perhaps one of the most beautiful ceremonials is the corn dance. Picture to yourself the *kivas* crowded with spectators. The priests come down bearing blankets in a circle. The blanket circle surrounds the altar fire. The audience sits breathless in the dark. Musicians strike up a beating on the stone gong. A flute player trills his air. The blankets drop. In the flare of the altar fire is seen a field of corn, round which the actors dance. The priests rise. The blankets hide the fire. It is the Indian curtain drop. When you look again, there is neither pageant of dancers, nor field of corn. So the play goes on—a dozen acts typifying a dozen scenes in a single night. [Pg 248]

Good counsel, too, they gave in those miracle plays and ceremonial dances. "If wounded in battle, don't cry out like a child. Pull out the arrow. Slip off and die with silence in the throat." "When you go to the hunt, travel with a light blanket." We talk of getting back to Mother Earth. The Indian chants endless songs to the wonder of the Great Earth Magician, creator of life and crops. Fire, too, plays a mysterious part in all theories of life creation; and this, too, is the subject of a dance.

Then came dark days. Tribes from the far Athabasca came down like the Vandals of Europe—Navajo and Apache, relentless warriors. From Great Houses the people of the Southwest retired to cliffs and caves. When the Spaniards came with firearms and horses, the situation was almost one of extermination for the sedentary Indians; and they retired to such heights as the high mesas of the Tusayan Desert. Whether when white man stopped raid by the warlike tribes, it was better or worse for the peaceful Pima and Papago and Moki, it is hard to say; for the white man [Pg 249] began to take the Indian's water and the Indian's land. It's a story of slow tragedy here. In the days of the overland rush to California, when every foot of the trail was beset by Apache and Navajo, it was the Pima and Papago offered shelter and protection to the white overlander. What does the Indian know of "prior rights" in filing for water? Have not these waters been his since the days of his forefathers, when men came with their families from the Morning Glow to the box-cañons of the Gila and Frijoles? If prior rights mean anything, has not the Pima prior rights by ten thousand years? But the Pima has not a little slip of government paper called a deed. The big irrigation companies have tapped the streams above the Indian Reserve; and the waters have been diverted. They don't come to the Indians any more. All the Indian gets is the overflow of the torrential rains—that only brings the alkali wash to the surface of the land and does not flush it off. The Pima can no longer raise crops. Slowly and very surely, he is being reduced to starvation in a country overflowing with plenty, in a country which has taken his land and his waters, in a country whose people he loyally protected as they crossed the continent to California.

What are the American people going to do about it? Nothing, of course. When the wrong has been done and the tribe reduced to extermination by inches of starvation, some muckraker will rise and write an article about it, or some ethnologist a brochure about an exterminated people. [Pg 250] Meantime, the children of the Pimas and Papagoes have not enough to eat owing to the white man taking all their water. They are the people of "the Golden Age," "the Morning Glow."

We drove back from Casa Grande by starlight over the antelope plains. I looked back to the crumbling ruins of the Great House, and its five compounds, where the men and women and children of the Morning Glow came to dance and worship according to all the light they had. Its falling walls and dim traditions and fading outlines seemed typical of the passing of the race. Why does one people pass and another come?

Christians say that those who fear not God, shall pass away from the memory of men, forever.

Evolutionists say that those who are not fit, shall not survive.

The Spaniard of the Southwest shrugs his gay shoulders under a tilted sombrero hat, and says *Quien sabe?* "Who knows?"

CHAPTER XV [Pg 251]

SAN XAVIER DEL BAC MISSION, TUCSON, ARIZONA

It is the Desert. Incense and frankincense, fragrance of roses and resin of pines, cedar smells smoking in the sunlight, scent the air. Sunrise comes over the mountain rim in shafts of a chariot wheel; and the mountains, engirting the Desert round and round, are themselves veiled in a mist, intangible and shimmering as dreams—a mist shot with the gold of sunlight; and the air is champagne, ozone, nectar. Except in the dead heat of midsummer, snow shines opal from the mountain peaks; and in the outline of yon Tucson Range, the figure of a giant can be seen lying prone, face to sunlight, face to stars, face to the dews of heaven, as the faces of god-like races ever are.

You wind round a juniper grove—"cedars of Lebanon," the Old Testament would call it. There is the silver tinkle of a bell; and the flocks come down to the watering pools, flocks led by maidens, as in the days of Rachael and Jacob; and the shepherds—only they call them "herders," fight for first place round the water pool, as they did in the days of Rachael and Jacob. Then, you come to a walled spring where date palms shade the ground. And the maidens are there, "drawing water [Pg 252] from the well," carrying water in ollas on their heads, bronzed statues of perfect poise and perfect grace, daughters of the Desert, hard lovers, hard haters, veiled as all mysteries are veiled.

You turn but a spur in the mountains: you dip into a valley smoking with the dews of the morning; or come up a mesa,—and a winged horseman spurs past, hair tied back by red scarf, pantaloons of white linen, sash of rainbow colors; and you are amid the dwellings of men. Strings of red chile like garlands of huge red corals hang against the sun-baked brick or clay. Curs come out and bark at the heels of your horse—that is why the Oriental always called an enemy "a dog." Pottery makers look up from their kiln fires of sheep manure, at you, the remote passerby. The basket workers weave and weave like the Three Fates of Life. One old woman is so aged and wizened and infirm that she must sit inside her basket to carry out the pattern of what life is to her; and the sunlight strikes back from the heat-baked walls in a glare that stabs the eye; and you hear the tinkle of the bells from the watering pools.

Then, suddenly, for the first time, you see It.

You have turned a spur of the Mountains, dipped into a valley, come up on the Mesa into the

sunlight, and there It is—the eternal mountains with their eternal lavender veil round the valley like the tiered seats of a coliseum, the mist like a theater drop curtain where you may paint your own pictures of fancy, and in the midst of the great amphitheater rises an island rock; and on the [Pg 253] island rock is a grotto; and in the grotto is the figure of the Mother of Christ—in purplish blue, of course, as betokens eternal purity—and below the island of rock in the midst of the amphitheater something swims into your ken that is neither of Heaven nor earth. White, glaringly white as the very spotlessness of Heaven, twin-towered as befitting the dual nature of man, flesh and spirit; pointed in its towers and minarets and belfries, betokening the reaching of the spirit of Man up to God; lions between the arches of the roofed piazzas, as betokening the lion-hearted spirit of Man fighting his enemies of Flesh and Spirit up to God!

Palms before arched white walls shut out the world—Peace and Seclusion and Purity!

You dip into a valley, the scent of the cedars in your nostrils and lungs, the peace of God in your heart. Then you come up to a high mesa and you see the vision of the white symbol swimming between earth and sky but always pointing skyward.

Where are you, anyway: in Persia amid floating palaces, on the Nile, approaching the palaces of Allahabad in India, or coming up to Moorish minarets and twin towns of the Alhambra in Spain?

Believe me, you are in neither Europe, Asia, nor Africa. You are in a much despised land called "America," whence wealth and culture run off to Europe, Asia and Africa, to find what they call "art" and "antiquity." [Pg 254]

It is October 3rd in Tucson, Arizona; not far from the borders of Old Mexico as the rest of the world reckon distance. The rain has been falling in torrents. Rain is not supposed to fall in the Desert, but it has been coming down in slant torrents and the sky is reflected everywhere in the roadside pools. The air is soft as rose petals, for the altitude is only 2,000 feet; too high to be languid, too low for the sting of autumn frosts.

We motor, first, through the old Spanish town—relics of a grandeur that America does not know to-day, a grandeur more of spirit than display. The old Spanish grandee never counted his dollars, nor measured up the value of a meal to a guest. But he counted honor dear as the Virgin Mary, and made a gamble of life, and hated tensely as he loved. The old mansion houses are fallen in disrepute, to-day. They are given over, for the most part to Chinese and Japanese merchants; but through the open windows you can still see plazas and patios of inner courtyards, where oleanders are in perpetual bloom and roses climb the trellis work, and the parrot calls out "swear words" of Spanish pirate and highwayman. St. Augustine Mission, where heroes shed martyr blood, is now a saloon and dance hall, but where rags and tatters flaunted from the clothes lines of negro and Japanese and Chinese tenant, I could not but think of the torn flags that mark the most heroic action of regiments.

The Mission of the San Xavier at Tucson, Arizona, one of the most ancient in the New World, has an almost Oriental aspect

From the Spanish Town of Tucson, which any other nation would have treasured as a landmark [Pg 255] and capitalized in dollars for the tourist, you pass modern mansions that wisely follow the Spanish-Moorish type of architecture, most suited to Desert atmosphere.

Then you come on the Tucson Farms Company Irrigation project, now sagebrush and cactus land put under the ditch from Santa Cruz River and turned over to settlers from Old Mexico—who were driven out by the Revolution—for $25 an acre. You see the lonely eyed woman pioneer sitting at the door of the tent flap.

Moisture steams up from the river like a morning incense to the sun. The Tucson Range of mountains shimmers. Giant cactus stand ghost-like, centuries old, amid the mesquite bush; and in the columnar hole of the cactus trees you see the holes where the little desert wren has pecked through for water in a waterless season.

Then, before you know it, you are in the Papago Indian Reserve. The finest basket makers of the world, these Papagoes are. They make baskets of such close weave that they will hold water, and you see the Papago Indian women with jars—ollas—of water on their head going up and down from the water pools. Basket makers weave in front of the sun-baked adobe walls where hang the red strings of chile like garlands. On the whole, the Indian faces are very happy and good. They do not care for wealth, these children of the Desert. Give them "this day their daily bread," and they are content, and thank God. [Pg 256]

Then the mountains close in a cup round the shimmering valley. In the center of the valley rises an island of rock, the rock of the Grotto of the Virgin; and a white dome and twin towers show, glare white, almost unearthly, with arches pointing to Heaven, and lions in white all along the roof typifying the strength that is of God. There is a dome in the middle of the roof line—that is the Moorish influence brought in by Spain. There are twin towers on each side; and in the towers on the right hand side are three brass bells to call to work and matins and vespers. It may be said here that the French Mission may always be known by its single spire and cross; the Spanish Mission by its twin towers and bells. The French Mission rings its bell. The Spanish Mission strikes its bells with a hammer or gong. One utters cheer. The other sounds a rich, low, mellow call to worship. The walls and pillars and arches are all marble white; and you are looking on one of the most ancient Missions of the New World—San Xavier del Bac, of Tucson, Arizona.

The whole effect is so oriental as to be startling. The white dome might be Indian or Persian, but the pointed arches and minarets are unmistakably Moorish—that is, Moorish brought across by Spain. The entrance is under an arched white wall, and the courtyard looks out behind through arched white gateway to the distant mountains.

Here four sisters of St. Joseph conduct a school for the little Papagoes; and what a school it is! It might do honor to the Alhambra. Palms line the esplanade in front of the arched, walled [Pg 257] entrance. Collie dogs rise lazily under the deep embrasures of the arched plazas. A parrot calls out some Spanish gibberish of bygone days. A snow-white Persian kitten frisks its plumy tail across the brick-paved walk of the inner patio; and across the courtyard I catch a glimpse of two Shetland ponies nosing for notice over a fence beside an ancient Don Quixote nag that evidently does duty for dignitaries above Shetland ponies. An air of repose, of antiquity, of apartness, rests on the marble white Mission, as of oriental dreams and splendor or European antiquity and culture.

I ring the bell of the reception room to the right of the church entrance. Not a sound but the echo of my own ring! I enter, cross through the parlor and come on the Spanish patio or central courtyard. What a place for prayers and meditation and the soul's repose! Arched promenades line both sides of the inner court. Here Jesuit and Franciscan monks have walked and prayed and meditated since the Sixteenth Century. By the hum as of busy bees to the right, I locate the schoolrooms, and come on the office of the Mother Superior Aquinias.

What a pity so many of us have an early impress of religion as of vinegar aspect and harsh duty hard as flint and unhuman as a block of wood. This Mother Superior is merry-faced and red-blooded and human and dear. She evidently believes that goodness should be warmer, dearer, truer, more attractive and kindly than evil; and all the little Indian wards of the four schoolrooms [Pg 258] look happy and human and red-blooded as the Mother Superior.

A collie pup flounders round us up and down the court walk where the old missionary monks suffered cruel martyrdom. Poll, the parrot, utters sententious comment; and the Shetland ponies whinny greetings to their mistress. All this does not sound like vinegar goodness, does it?

But it is when you enter the church that you get the real surprise. Three times, the desertion of this Mission was forced by massacre and pillage. Twice it was abandoned owing to the expulsion of Jesuit and Franciscan by temporal power. For seventy years, the only inhabitants of a temple stately as the Alhambra were the night bats, the Indian herders, the border outlaws of the United States and Mexico. Yet, when you enter, the walls are covered with wonderful mural painting. Saints' statues stand about the altar, and grouped about the dome of the groined ceiling are such paintings as would do honor to a European Cathedral.

The brick and adobe walls are from two to six feet thick. Not a nail has ever been driven in the adobe edifice. The doors are of old wood in huge panels mortised and dovetailed together. The latch is an iron bar carved like a Damascus sword. The altar is a mass of gilding and purple. To be sure, the saints' fingers have been hacked off by wandering cowboy and outlaw and Indian; but you find that sort of vandalism in the British Museum and Westminster Abbey. The British Museum had careful custodians. For over seventy years, this ancient Mission stood open to the [Pg 259] winds of heaven and the torrential rains and the midnight bats. Only the faithfulness of an old Indian chief kept the sacred vessels from desecration. When the fathers were expelled for political reasons, old José, of the Papagoes, carried off the sacred chalices and candles till the *padres* should return, when he brought them from hiding.

Gothic temples are usually built in one long, clear arch. The roof of San Xavier del Bac is a series of the most perfect groined domes, with the deep embrasures of the windows on each side colored shell tints in wave-lines. Because of the height and depth of the windows, the light is wonderfully clear and soft. The church is used now only by Indian children; and did Indian children ever have such a magnificent temple in which to worship? To the left of the entrance is a wonderful old baptismal font of pure copper, which has been the envy of all collectors. One wonders looking at the ancient vessel whether it was baptized with the blood of all the martyrs

who died for San Xavier—Francesca Garcez, for instance? There is a window in this baptistry, too, that is the envy of critics and collectors. It is set more deeply in the wall than any window in the Tower of London, with pointed Gothic top that sends shafts of sunlight clear across the earthen floor.

From the baptistry I ascended to the upper towers. The stairs are old timber set in adobe and [Pg 260] brick, through solid walls of a thickness of six feet. The view from the belfries above is wonderful. You see the mountains shimmering in the haze. You see the little square adobe matchbox houses of Papago Indians, with the red chile hanging against the wall, and the women coming from the spring, and the men husking the corn. You wonder if when San Xavier was besieged and besieged and besieged yet again by Apache and Navajo and Pima, the beleaguered priests took refuge in these towers, and came down to die, only to save their Mission. Against Indian arms, it may be said, San Xavier would be an impregnable fortress. Yet the priests of San Xavier were three times utterly destroyed by Indians.

When you come to seek the history of San Xavier, you will find it as difficult to get, as a guide out to the Mission. As a purely tourist resort, leaving out all piety and history, it should be worth hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to Tucson. Yet it took me the better part of a day to find out that San Xavier is only nine miles and not eighteen from Tucson.

And this is typical of the difficulty of getting the real history of the place. Jesuit Relations of New France have been published in every kind of edition, cheap and dear. Jesuit Relations of New Spain, who knows? The Franciscans succeeded the Jesuits; and the Franciscans do not read the history of the Jesuits. It comes as a shock to know that Spanish *padres* were on the Colorado and Santa Cruz at the time Jacques Cartier was exploring the St. Lawrence. We have always believed [Pg 261] that Spanish *conquistadores* slaughtered the Indians most ruthlessly. Study the mission records and you get another impression, an impression of penniless, friendless, unprotected friars "footing" it 600, 700, 900 miles from Old Mexico to the inmost recesses of the Desert cañons. In late days, when a friar set out on his journey, twenty mounted men acted as his escort; and that did not always save him from death; for there were stretches of the journey ninety miles without water, infested every mile of the way by Apaches; and these stretches were known as the Journeys of Death. When you think of the ruthless slaughter of the *conquistadores*, think also of the friars tramping the parched sand plains for 900 miles.

While Fray Juan de la Asuncion and Pedro Nadol are the first missionaries known in Arizona about 1538, Father Kino was the great missionary of 1681 to 1690, officiating at the Arizona Missions of San Xavier del Bac and Tumacacori. There are reports of the Jesuits being among the Apaches as early as 1630—say early as the days of the Jesuits in Canada; but who the missionaries were, I am unable to learn. Rebellion and massacre devastated the Missions in 1680 and in 1727; but by 1754, the missionaries were back at San Xavier and had twenty-nine stations commanding seventy-three different pueblos. In 1767, for political reasons, the Jesuits suffered expulsion; and the Franciscans came in—tramping, as told before, 600 and 900 miles. It was [Pg 262] under the Franciscans that the present structure of San Xavier was built. Garcez was the most famous of the Franciscans. He spent seven years among the Pimas and Papagoes and Yumas; but one hot midsummer Sunday—July 17, 1781—during early mass, the Indians rose and slew four priests, all the Spanish soldiers and all the Spanish servants. Garcez was among the martyrs. San Xavier, as it at present stands, is supposed to have been completed in 1797; but in 1827-9, came another political turnover and all foreign missionaries were expelled. Tumacacori and San Xavier were always the most important of the Arizona Missions. Originally quite as magnificent a structure as San Xavier, Tumacacori has been allowed to go to ruin. Of late, it has been made a United States monument. It is a day's journey from Tucson.

To describe San Xavier is quite impossible, except through canvas and photograph. There is something intangibly spiritual and unearthly in its very architecture; and this is the spirit in which it was originally built. At daybreak, a bell called the builders to prayers of consecration. At nightfall, vesper bells sent the laborer home with the blessing of the church. For the most part, the workers were Mexicans and Indians; and as far as can be gathered from the annals, voluntary workers. The Papagoes and Pimas at that time numbered 5,000, of whom 500 lived round the Missions, the rest spending the summers hunting in the mountains.

On top of the world—a Moki city on a Mesa in the Painted Desert. At the left are the ends of a ladder leading from an underground council chamber

When the American Government took over Arizona, San Xavier went under the diocese of New Mexico. From Santa Fe, New Mexico, to Tucson was 600 miles across desert mountains and cañons, every foot of the way infested by Apache warriors; and the heroism of that trail was marked by the same courage and constancy as signalized the founding and maintenance of the other early Spanish Missions. [Pg 263]

It would be a mistake to say that San Xavier has been restored. Restoration implies innovation; and San Xavier stands to-day as it stood in the sixteen hundreds, when Father Kino, the famous mathematician and Jesuit from Bavaria, came wandering up from the Missions of Lower California, preaching to the Yumas and Pimas of the hot, smoking hot, Gila Desert, and held mass in Casa Grande, the Great House or Garden of Eden of the Indian's Morning Glow. A lucky thing it is that restoration did not imply change in San Xavier; for the Mission floats in the shimmering desert air, unearthly, eerie, unreal, a thing of beauty and dreams rather than latter day life, white as marble, twin-towered, roof domed and so dazzling in the sunlight to the unaccustomed eye that you somehow know why rows of restful, drowsy palms were planted in line along the front of the wall.

Perhaps it is that it comes on you as such a complete surprise. Perhaps it is the desert atmosphere in this cup of the mountains; but all the other missions of the Southwest are adobe gray, or earth color showing through a veneer of drab whitewash. [Pg 264]

There is the giant, century-old desert cactus twisted and gnarled with age like the trees in Dante's Inferno, but with bird nests in the pillared trunks, where little wrens peck through the bark for water. You look again. A horseman has just dismounted beneath the shade of a fine old twisted oak; but beyond the oak the vision is there, glare, dazzling, white, twin-towered and arched, floating in mid-air, a vision of beauty and dreams.

Life seems to sleep at San Xavier. The mountains hemming in the valley seem to sleep. The shimmering blue valley sleeps. The sunlight sleeps against the glare white walls. The huge old mortised door to the church stands open, all silent and asleep. The door of the Mission parlor stands open—sunlight asleep on a checkered floor. You enter. Your footsteps have an echo of startling impudence—modern life jumping back into past centuries! You ring the gong. The sound stabs the sleeping silence, and you almost expect to see ghosts of Franciscan friar and Jesuit priest come walking along the arcaded pavement of the inner courtyard to ask you what all this modern noise is about; but no ghosts come. In fact, no one comes. San Xavier is all asleep. You cross through the parlor to the inner patio or courtyard, arched all around three sides with the fourth side looking through a wonderfully high arched gateway out to the far mountains. Polly turns on her perch in her cage, and goes back to sleep. The white Persian kitten frisks his white-plumed tail; and also turns over and goes to sleep. Two collie dogs don't even emit a "woof." They arch their pointed noses with the fine old aristocratic air of the unspoken question: what are you of the Twenty Century doing wandering back into the mystery and mysticism and quietude of the religious sixteen hundred? But if you keep on going, you will find the gentle-voiced sisterhood teaching the little Pimas and Papagoes in the schoolrooms. [Pg 265]

San Xavier, architecturally, is sheer delight to the eye. The style is almost pure Moorish. The yard walls are arched in harmony with the arched outline of the roof; and in the inner courtyard you will notice the Spanish lion at the intersection of all the roof arches. In front of the Mission buildings is a walled space of some sixty by forty feet, where the Indians used to assemble for discussion of secular matters before worship. On the front wall in high relief are placed the arms of St. Francis of Assisi, and in the sacristry to the right of the altar you will find mural drawings and a painting of Saint Ignatius. Thus San Xavier claims as her founders and patrons both Franciscan and Jesuit. This is easily explained. The Franciscans came up overland across the Desert from the City of Mexico. The Jesuits came up inland from their Mission on the Gulf of

California. Father Kino, the Jesuit, from a Bavarian university, was the first missionary to hold services among the Pimas and Papagoes, and if he did not lay the foundations of San Xavier, then [Pg 266] they were laid by his immediate successors. The escutcheon of the Franciscans on the wall is a twisted cord and a cross on which are nailed the arms of the Christ and the arm of St. Francis. The Christ arm is bare. The Franciscan's arm is covered.

Unlike other Missions built of adobe, San Xavier is of stone and brick. It is 100 by thirty feet. The transept on each side of the nave runs out twenty-one feet square. The roof above the nave is supported by groined arches from door to altar. The cupola above the altar is fifty feet to the dome. The other vaults are only thirty feet high. The windows are high in the clearstory and set so deeply in the casement that the light falling on the mural paintings and fresco work is sifted and softened. Practically all the walls, cupola, dome, transept, nave, are covered with mural paintings. There is the coming of the Spirit to the Disciples. There is the Last Supper. There is the Conception. There is the Rosary. There is the Hidden Life of the Lord.

The main altar has evidently been constructed by the Jesuits; for the statue of St. Francis Xavier stands below the Virgin between figures of St. Peter and St. Paul and God, the Creator. On the groined arches of the dome are figures of the Wise Men, the Flight to Egypt, the Shepherds, the Annunciation. Gilded arabesques colored in Moorish shell tints adorn the main altar. Statues of the saints stand in the alcoves and niches of the pillars and vaults. Two small doors lead up to the [Pg 267] towers from the main door. Look well at these doors and stairways. Not a nail has been driven. The doors are mortised of solid pieces. The first flight of stairs leads to the choir. Around the choir are more mural paintings. Two more twists of the winding stair; and you are in the belfry. Twenty-two more steps bring you to the summit of the tower—a galleried cupola, seventy-five feet above the ground, where you may look out on the whole world.

Pause for a moment, and look out. The mountains shimmer in their pink mists. The sunlight sleeps against the adobe walls of the scattered Indian house. You can hear the drone of the children from the schoolrooms behind the Mission. You can see the mortuary chapel down to the right and the lions supporting the arches of the Mission roof. Father Kino was a famous European scholar and gentleman. He threw aside scholarship. He threw aside comfort. He threw aside fame; and he came to found a Mission amid arabs of the American Desert. The hands that wrought these paintings on the walls were not the hands of bunglers. They were the hands of artists, who wrought in love and devotion. Three times, San Xavier was dyed in martyr blood by Indian revolt.

Priests, whose names even have been lost in the chronicles, were murdered on the altars here, thrown down the stairs, cut to pieces in their own Mission yard. Before a death which they coveted as glory, what a life they must have led. To Tucson Mission was nine miles; but to [Pg 268] Tumacacori was eighty; to Old Mexico, 900. Occasionally, they had escort of twelve soldiers for these long trips; but the soldiers' vices made so much trouble for the holy fathers that the missionaries preferred to travel alone, or with only a lay brother. Sandaled missionaries tramped the cactus desert in June, when the heat was at its height; and they traversed the mountains when winter snows filled all the passes. They have not even left annals of their hardships. You know that in such a year, Father Kino tramped from the Gulf of California to the Gila, and from the Gila to the Rio Grande. You know in such another year, nineteen priests were slain in one day. On such another date, a missionary was thrown over a precipice; or slain on the high altar of San Xavier. And always, the priests opposed the outrages of the soldiery, the injustice of the ruling rings. Father Kino petitions the royal house of Spain in 1686 that converts be not forcibly seized and "dragged off to slavery in the mines, where they were buried alive and seldom survived the abuse." He gets a respite from the King for all converts for twenty years. He does not permit converts to be taken as slaves in the mines or slaves in the pearl fisheries; so the ruling rings of Old Mexico obstruct his enterprises, lie about his Missions, slander him to the patrons who supply him with money, and often reduce his missions to desperate straits; but wherever there is a Mission, Father Kino sees to it that there are a few goats. The goats supply milk and meat. [Pg 269]

The fathers weave their own clothing, grow their own food, and hold the fort against the enemy as against the subtle designs of the Devil. These fathers mix their own mortar, make their own bricks, cut their own beams, lay the plaster with their own hands. Now, remember that the priests who did all this were men who had been artists, who had been scholars, who had been court favorites of Europe. Father Kino was, himself, of the royal house of Bavaria. But jealousy left the Missions unprotected by the soldiers. Soldier vices roused the Indians to fury; and the priests were the first to fall victims. Go across the Moki Desert. You will find peach orchards planted by the friars; but you cannot find the graves of the dead priests. We considered the Apaches a dangerous lot as late as 1880. In 1686, in 1687, in 1690, Father Kino crossed Apache land alone. I cannot find any record of the Spanish Missions at this period ever receiving more than $15,000 a year for their support. Ordinarily, a missionary's salary was about $150 a year. Out of that, if he employed soldiers, he must pay their wages and keep.

Well, by and by, the jealousy of the governing ring, kept from abusing the Indians by the priests, brought about the expulsion of the Jesuits. The Franciscans took up the work where the Jesuits left off. Came another political upheaval. The Franciscans were driven out. San Xavier's broken windows blew to the rains and winds of the seven heavens. Cowboys, outlaws, sheep herders, housed beneath mural paintings and frescoes that would have been the pride of a European [Pg 270] palace. Came American occupation; and San Xavier was—not restored—but redeemed. It was completely cleaned out and taken over by the church as a Mission for the Indians.

To-day, no one worships in San Xavier but the little Indian scholars. Look at the drawings of Christ, of the Virgin, of the Wise Men! Look at the dreams of faith wrought into the aged and beautiful walls! Frankly—let us be brutally frank and truthful, was it all worth while? Wouldn't Kino have done better to have continued to grace the courts of Bavaria?

In the old days, Pima and Papago roped their wives as in a hunt, and if the fancy prompted, abused them to death. On the walls of San Xavier is the Annunciation to the Virgin, another view of birth and womanhood. In the old days, the Indians killed a child at birth, if they didn't want it. On the walls of San Xavier are pictured the wise men adoring a Child. Spanish rings and trusts wanted little slaves of industry as American rings and trusts want them to-day. Behold a Christ upon the walls setting free the slaves! Was it all worth while? It depends on your point of view and what you want. Though the winds of the seven heavens blew through San Xavier for seventy years and bats habited the frescoed arches, it stands to-day as it stood two centuries ago, a thing unearthly, of visions and dreams; pointing the way, not to gain, but to goodness; making for a little space of time on a little space of Desert earth what a peaceful heaven life might be. [Pg 271]

THE END

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