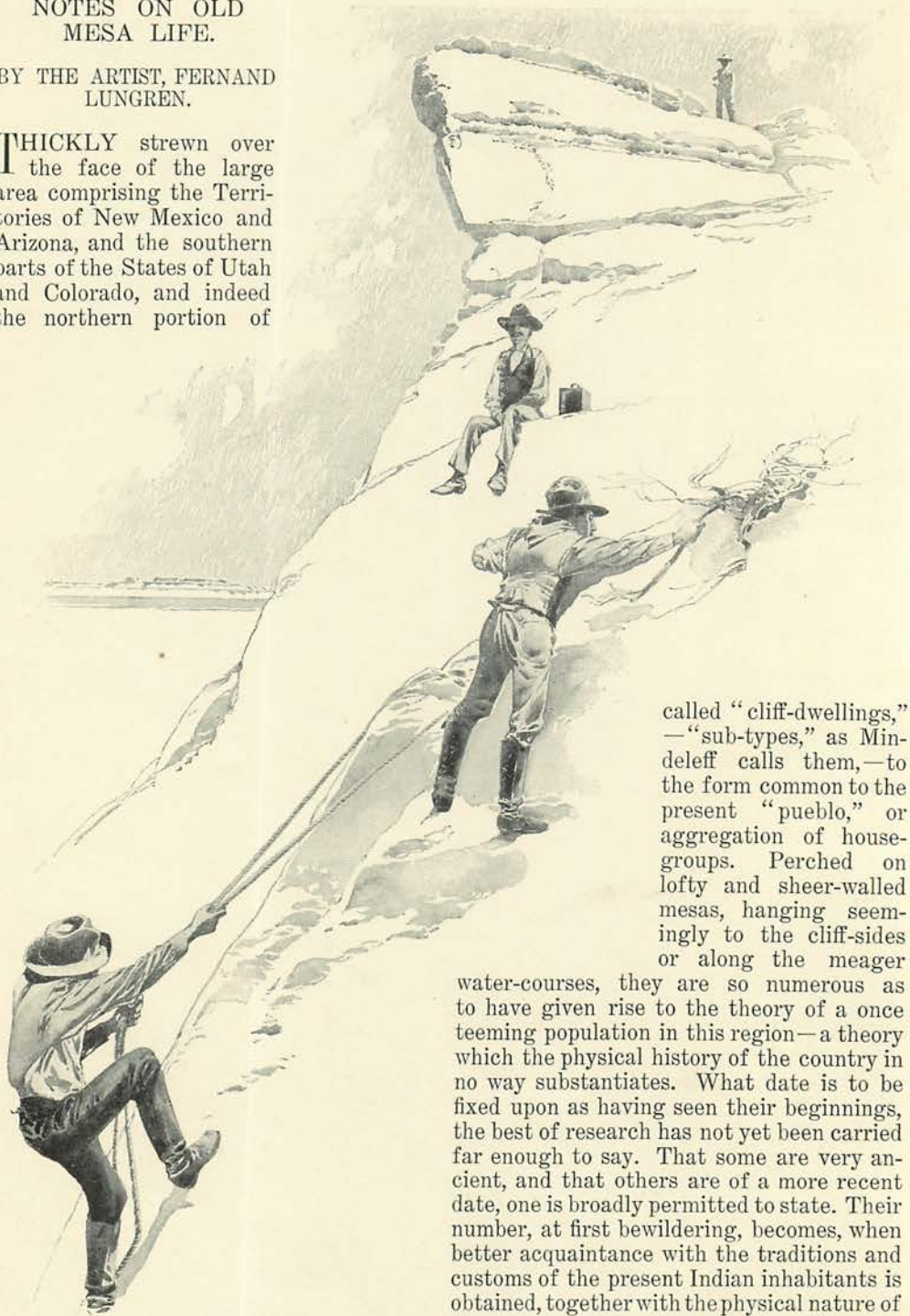


NOTES ON OLD
MESA LIFE.

BY THE ARTIST, FERNAND
LUNGREN.

THICKLY strewn over the face of the large area comprising the Territories of New Mexico and Arizona, and the southern parts of the States of Utah and Colorado, and indeed the northern portion of



NEARING THE TOP OF THE ENCHANTED MESA
(KATZÍMO).

Mexico, are innumerable remains of former human habitations, ranging from the cavate lodge, or "cave-dwelling," through the so-

called "cliff-dwellings," —"sub-types," as Mindeleff calls them,—to the form common to the present "pueblo," or aggregation of house-groups. Perched on lofty and sheer-walled mesas, hanging seemingly to the cliff-sides or along the meager

water-courses, they are so numerous as to have given rise to the theory of a once teeming population in this region—a theory which the physical history of the country in no way substantiates. What date is to be fixed upon as having seen their beginnings, the best of research has not yet been carried far enough to say. That some are very ancient, and that others are of a more recent date, one is broadly permitted to state. Their number, at first bewildering, becomes, when better acquaintance with the traditions and customs of the present Indian inhabitants is obtained, together with the physical nature of the country, not so inexplicable. The construction and situation of the habitations were largely matters of topographic and geographic environment; and, in a country where the facilities for building are great, owing to the remarkably convenient lamina-

tion of the sandstone of which nearly all the dwellings are constructed, their abandonment for various causes was not so grave a matter as it would be in other regions. The failure of the water-supply,—the vital question in the Southwest,—pestilence, or preference for a more advantageous site, was sufficiently strong reason for moving from place to place, erecting at each stoppage dwellings to take the place of those abandoned. In a modified degree, the same state of affairs is in progress now, adding others to the already large number of remains that slowly crumble to decay. It would be fairly accurate to say that all of these remains were the work of the present Pueblo Indians and their ancestors. Another theory concerning the cave- and cliff-dwellers, allotting to them a separate and distinct existence, usually giving them another physical type and a mysterious extinction, must give way, in common with their supposed intimate connection with the Aztecs. In the Southwest all aboriginal development is loosely and cheerfully attributed to the latter people.

Careful and prolonged investigation and comparison have proved, without much doubt, the common racial characteristics connect-

ing in direct descent the pueblos with the older stages of life and habitation; presumably because authorities are somewhat undecided whether all three forms were not coexistent, in two localities at least such having been the case—in the Cañon de Chelly, in Arizona, and on one of the old sites of Cochiti, in New Mexico. Leaving the order of priority aside, some of all the forms are of great antiquity, and present most interesting problems in the field of archæology and ethnology. To-day probably there does not exist a more fertile and valuable domain in these sciences than this high plateau, upheaved from the inland sea, carrying with it the story of the world before man came, and now rich with the remains of his occupancy from the earliest to the present day.

In endeavoring to trace man backward or forward, to establish his relationship to this or that family type, or to sever it, the first and always most valuable means is through his arts; and of these the arts of building and the manufacture of necessary implements leave the most indelible impressions. Take the architecture of any of the ruins abounding in this region, no matter how old,—the



PHOTOGRAPHED BY A. C. VROMAN.

MR. HODGE'S PARTY ON THE MESA SUMMIT AT THE TOP OF THE OLD TRAIL.

cliff-dwellings, if you will,—and their resemblance to the present mode of building, such modifications as natural deviation demands being allowed, is at once apparent.

The people, then, who built the present pueblo towns are the descendants of those who built the abandoned and ruined ones; and to-day they live in house-groups, many of which are still crowning the summit of precipitous mesas, where they were built as places of defense when these house-building, agricultural Indians were a prey to the nomadic and predatory tribes overrunning the same country down to within a few years.

The high mesas or flat-topped ridges, great headlands and promontories jutting out into seas of level plains and shifting sands, were the natural places of vantage from which they could resist their enemies, and therefore a large number of ruined pueblos are found upon them.

The "seven cities of Cibola," when Coronado found them in 1540, were on the plain. After the Indian revolt of 1680, when the Indians feared the Spaniards' revenge and punishment, they fled, and lived for twelve years on the summit of Tâaaiyalnoa, commonly known as Thunder Mountain, a thousand feet in the air. Acoma, however, has occupied its present mesa site ever since it has been known to history.

Of the traditions of a great number of these abandoned sites nothing remains; of others, again, fairly accurate accounts are retained—and retained in a truthfulness possible only to a people having no written history, who by necessity have been conservative through hundreds of years, and to-day possess in purity traditions, folk-lore, and religious ceremonials virtually untouched by contact with outside influence.

When Mr. F. W. Hodge of the Bureau of American Ethnology succeeded in reaching the summit of Katzîmo (la Mesa Encantada, or the Enchanted Mesa), the perpendicular walls of which rise nearly four hundred and fifty feet above the valley, and found by the remains of trails and potsherds the more than probable evidence of a former occupancy, he proved the truth of the legend, and gratified the expectations of those knowing the Indian and therefore valuing his traditions and legends.

To reconstruct the life in such a pueblo as Katzîmo is not so very difficult when change from the old to the new life has been so gradual, and when are applied such valuable data as the researches of Bandelier and Hodge have given. It was undoubtedly, like

that of to-day, a story of constant struggle for existence where the conditions of life are, and always have been, hard.

Then, as to-day, when the men went down to the fields the pueblo was really in control of its rightful owners, the women. In these old communities the woman was the important partner in the household. She was the owner of the house and all it contained. She built it, and furnished it with its utensils of daily use. The children traced descent through the mother, and took her clan name. The man's position, other than mere provider, was that of an honored guest; and if he presumed disagreeably on his position, more likely than not he was sent back to his own home. Far from being the general slave and pack-animal that is her sister of the plains tribes, the Pueblo woman's duties were purely domestic; and if she ever worked in the field, it was for the common good, to save the scanty harvest in time of need.

The grinding of the many-colored corn for bread, the weaving, and the making of pottery were her principal occupations, and are to this day. The Pueblo Indians are, *par excellence*, the potters of the Southwest, and it will be confessed that they come fairly by the title, as an examination of some of the old-time ware will prove, although in this case, as in some others, the evolution has not been for the better.

In the small house-cell or in the white sunlight the potter sat, and, with scarcely any tools at all, fashioned such specimens of the potter's art as to challenge admiration from us, with all our appliances. The use of the potter's wheel was unknown, and the "throwing" of a shape by this means out of the question; but with a hollow bit of basketware or a piece of broken pot for a support, all the forms, from a simple food-bowl up to the largest and most elaborate water-jars, were built up by coil on coil of clay, smoothed or modeled in pattern as the vessel grew; and when one examines some of the ancient pieces, notably those excavated by Dr. Fewkes of the Smithsonian Institution, one can but marvel.

Then came the decorating; and in every case, from the simplest to the most elaborate and intricate symbolic design, one must confess that the Indian uses the truest inceptive and fundamental art principles. There never is any waste of energy in "effect"; the design always means a concrete thing which appeals to the understanding of the Indians for whose use the utensils are. Through these same pottery forms and their decoration runs one of the



PRIMITIVE PUEBLO WATER-CARRIERS.

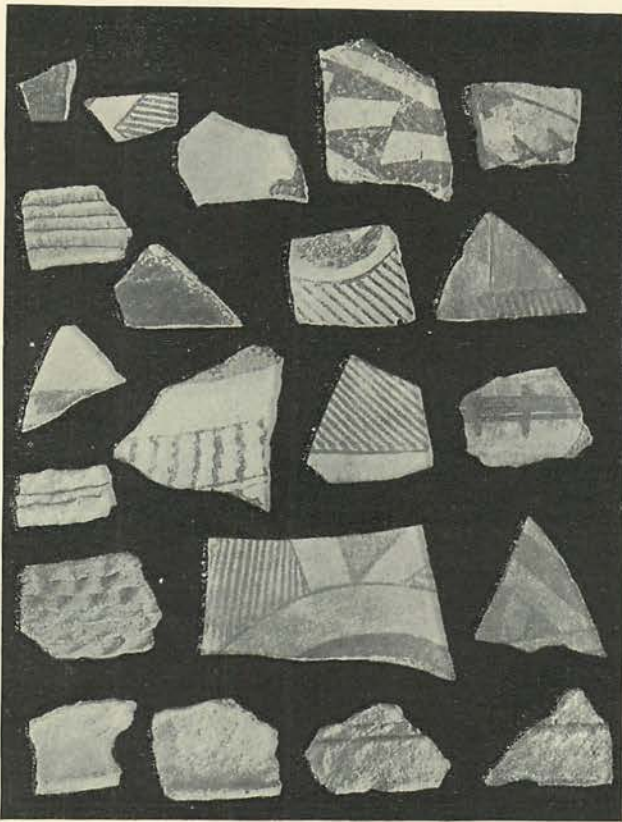
strongest chains binding the old to the new. Near me are two *tinajas*, or water-jars. One is many generations, perhaps centuries, old, the other perhaps five years; and yet in shape and general decoration they are much alike, and if the newer one was properly "toned" they would pass as of the same period. Near the potter, gossiping with her neighbor, sits a woman weaving; and here a change is seen.

They had no wool then, cotton and skins being, with the yucca, the only textiles. Yucca was to the Indian what the bamboo is to the Asiatic. It gave them needles and thread, and cloth to use them on, and entered in a hundred ways into the economies of daily life.

Near by, young girls and old women hung over the "mealing-box" of stones, and with the rubbing-stone ground the bright red,

blue, and yellow corn into fine-grained, variegated meal upon the *metate*,¹ and others, mixing it to a paste, quickly spread it in thin layers on a broad, hot stone, and then, deftly picking it up, rolled or folded it into many-hued bundles of peekee (*matsu*), or "paper" bread. So the day wore on, and when the sun had melted his way into the mesas in the west, flooding all the valley with a golden glory, barred at the horizon by long lines of blue

religious ceremonials. The subject is of such magnitude and importance that it cannot be discussed here, even briefly. It is enough to say that the ceremonials called "dances," for want of a better term, are survivals of thought and religious training going back over an indefinite time until lost in tradition. The yearly celebration of the dance and fiesta of San Estevan at Acoma, while owning a Christian saint's name, has nothing Chris-



PHOTOGRAPHED BY WELLS M. SAWYER.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC POTSDHERDS FOUND BY MR. HODGE ON THE TALUS OF KATZÍMO.

and purple cliffs, up the trail, between great towering masses of rock, came the women from the springs at the base of the mesa, each with graceful carriage poising upon her head an *olla*, or *tinaja*, of water for her household's comfort. Then the still, blue night, hung with great calm, golden stars, came softly down, or the moon, large and full, witched the world to fairyland.

In no one particular can one look for a closer connection between the old and the modern life than is found in the celebration of

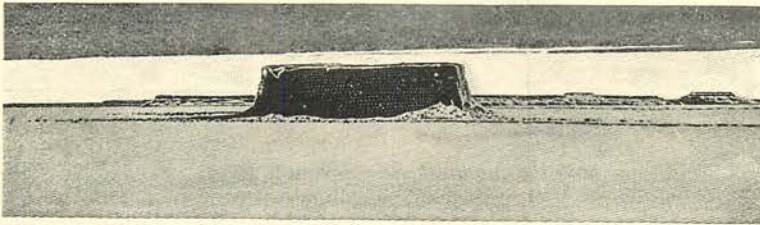
¹ Adapted from the Aztec *metall*, a stone on which grain is ground by rubbing with a *mano*, or muller, held in the hands.

tian about it; it is absolutely pagan. It is a savage celebration of an event widely distributed among all peoples, in all times, being, in fact, a "harvest home," or thanksgiving, primarily, with growths accruing from environment and natural causes. In nearly all of the Rio Grande pueblos the principal pagan ceremonial was given the name of that saint in the calendar whose day fell the nearest to the beginning of the celebration. This is only one of the opportunities seized upon and made the most of by the missionary monks in an endeavor to ingraft the Christian upon the pagan religious expression, being a repetition of the methods

of the early Christian church. Pagan these Indians are, and so they will remain for many generations; and this fact it would be well to bear in mind in the attempt to "civilize" them.

Associated with the religious ceremonies, and usually occurring afterward, come sports and contests of skill and endurance, hardly less religious in their inception than those which went before; for probably the Pueblo Indian is one of the most thoroughly religious creatures to be found on the earth. The most apparently trivial action or undertaking has religious significance for him. Races and fleetness of foot have for all time, in common with other peoples, been esteemed and cultivated by the Indian. A form of foot-race to be witnessed among the Pueblos during such ceremonials is a species of relay races, and is of much antiquity. The contestants are two groups, selected often from the married and unmarried men respectively; and these are stationed in equal numbers at each goal, which is marked by members of each faction gathered about a religious emblem attached to an upright pole. If, for convenience, the two groups of racers be designated by the terms "red" and "black," then the start is made by a couple, one "red," the other "black," who, at a signal, dart upon the course, which is usually about three hundred yards in length. At the goal to which they are running await another couple with tense nerves and ready muscles. The instant the foremost runner reaches the mark, the waiting man of his own color springs away over the backward

course like a startled deer, while the loser's partner must await his arrival before he may try to overhaul the already started one, each finding at the goal another partner to take up the race. In this way the advantage fluctuates according to the speed of the contesting runners, as, cheered on by the adherents of the opposing sides, they put forth every effort to gain time for their side, or to cut down the opponent's advantage. It is a "time" race, and often is kept up for hours together, ending at an appointed hour. The record throughout is accurately kept, and there is no dispute with the umpires. In some of the races the "points" aimed at are the number of times each runner can touch the *pungo*, or cue, of a runner in advance of him or save his own from capture. To-day the Indians frequently make numerous wagers on the result, and at the conclusion victors and vanquished join good-naturedly in a feast, for they are "good losers." The level plain about the base of Katzímo, sparsely dotted with cedars, offered an ideal selection of courses; and on a bright day, the air quivering with light and stimulus, the opposing contestants from the mesa-top must often have gathered about their respective standards, and cheered on the runners, who, striving in the splendid symmetry of sinewy nakedness, put forth renewed efforts, or husbanded their strength, as the occasion demanded, and finally won or lost—the victors, by some especial burst of speed or "generalship" of endurance, receiving, in panting pride, names from which to fashion a totem.



THE BIRTH OF LOVE.

BY GEORGE E. WOODBERRY.

THIS joy to feel the spirit leap
 Angelic from its childhood sleep,
 Pure as a star, fair as a flower,
 Eager with youth's unblasted power;
 Where every sense gives soft consent,
 To burst into love's element;
 To be all touch, all eye, all ear,
 And pass into love's burning sphere.