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Returning from the field.

INDIANS OF THE STONE HOUSES*

By Edward S. Curtis

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE AUTHOR

THE average reader, when thinking of the American Indian, thinks only of the statuesque, picturesque, buffalo-hunting Indians of the northern prairies, or, perhaps, the gayly dressed warrior in his bark canoe travelling the waters of the lakes and streams of the forests. These characteristic types do form a good portion of our Indian people, but far from the whole, and decidedly not the most interesting.

When the mail-clothed Spanish soldiers

of fortune forced their way into the desert lands of the South-west, the land that we now call Arizona and New Mexico, they found it dotted here and there with human habitations, habitations apparently as time-worn as those of old Spain. They were communal structures of stone, cliff-perched, their six stories or more towering high toward the blue dome, so high that when we look up to them from the plain they seem to be on the level with the high-soaring eagles. For miles across the outlying desert or along the valley stretched their farmlands. Peculiarly administered communities they were, with so advanced a

* See former articles by Mr. Curtis in SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE for May and June, 1906.



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The mealing trough—Hopi.

form of government that the remnants of it, though shadowed by three centuries of white men's greed and politics, remain praiseworthy to the present day. To quote Lummis, in "Poco Tiempo," "There were many American Republics before the sailing of Columbus."

The booty-loving Spaniards, who first found this land, were in search of the seven cities of Cibola, with their fabled hoards of gold and portals of turquoise, the cities of the many-times-told and exaggerated tales of the Negro Estevan and the Friar Marcos. Rather than the expected riches, equaling those of the Incas in the Perus, they found no gold and little turquoise, only simple Indians without riches, but with a life far advanced from that of the nomadic tribes, possessed of many arts and crafts. They were tilling fields of corn and beans, and from wild cotton wove cloth which would do credit to any art-loom of to-day, and fashioning from clay utensils of superb workmanship, decorated with highly con-

ventionalized designs; they were tanners, dyers and workers in gems, and beyond all the arts of their domestic life was the ritual of their ancient pagan one, a life exceedingly rich in religious ceremony; while their astronomical and astrological lore is even to-day a thing of wonder to the student.

The women held legally a higher place in the domestic scheme of life at the coming of the white man, three centuries ago, than is granted by the laws of many states to the white mother and wife to-day. The Pueblo wife was the owner of the home and the children. Descent was traced through her clan, not that of the father. In case of a defection of a husband, the wife could divorce him; if he returned to the home to find his personal belongings placed outside the door, it meant that her decree of divorce was sealed; in which case, if he saw fit to apply to the council in hopes of a reversal of judgment, he might secure sympathy and even assistance from her clan, but not from his own.



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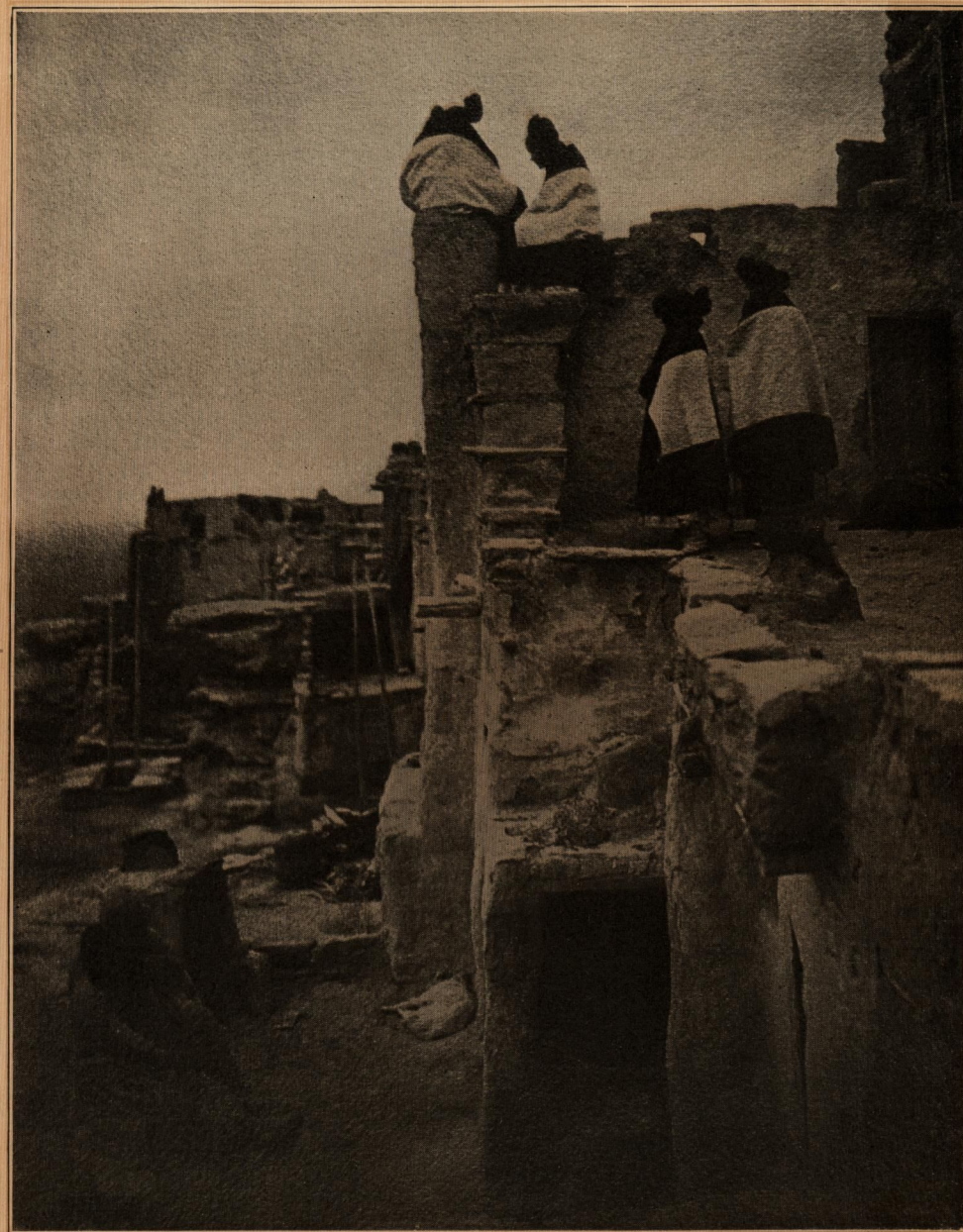
Hopi girls.



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The winding stairway to cliff-perched Shipaulovi.

The dwellers of many of the villages are a people of peace through religious principle and in obedience to the command of their God. Poseyamo, the Creator and God, according to the Tanoan religion, commanded his people to live in peace until his return, and the stars in the sky will make signs to the earth-people in the day



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Hopi life—Walpi.

of his coming to his own children. Then, if they are to fight, he will lead them. They are a peaceful people who go not forth to battle, but when assailed they have written their names large in the blood of the Apache, Piute and Navajo. Meanwhile, they wait for the signs in the sky.

Of the stone villages where the dwellers still live and go about their daily tasks, much as they did a century ago, are the seven cliff-perched villages of the Hopi: Walpi, Shongopovi, Shipaulovi, Mishongnovi, Sichomovi, Hano and Oraibi; Acoma, the beautiful, whose only rival is Walpi of Hopi-land; Zuni, all that is left of the seven cities of Cibola; Laguna, of a later day, but conveniently skirted by the railroad, giving the tourist a glimpse of the Pueblo life without the effort of leaving the Pullman; Isleta, with its primitive and interesting life, also close to the railroad; Sandia, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Sia, Jemez, far up in the mountains, Pecos, Tesuque, San Ildefonso, the almost extinct Pojuaque; Nambe, old and interesting, but fast blending its blood into the Mexican; Santa Clara, San Juan, Picuris, and lastly Taos, the courageous and primitive, nestling in the forested foot-hills of the Don Fernandez Mountains.

At none of these villages can the interesting and picturesque life be studied as well as with the Hopi. Their life is rich in ceremony and mythology and they are comparatively less secretive. The reader must not suppose by this that the Kiva, their primitive sanctuary, is open to those who would enter; far from it! but by long and serious effort much can be seen and gleaned. Their life is one intricate network of ceremonies, each following the other in their regular order. Scarcely a day of the year but the naked bronze-skinned participants of the holy orders can be seen running from Kiva to a far-away spring, to deposit their prayer plumes at the life-giving waters, that the gods of the North, West, South and East may see and answer their people's prayer. The Hopi home is in the thirsty desert land where water is life. What more natural than that all live springs should be prayer shrines for receiving the *pahos* as visible offerings!

The greatest of all the Indian ceremonies is the Snake Dance of the Hopi; in it we see the devout followers of the primitive religion of their forefathers going into the desert and gathering snakes, which are to them sacred. Day by day, through the mystic circle of Four, they gather and carry them back to the Kiva. Here, in the underground chamber, lit only by the opening in the top, we see enacted strange rites,

which must equal those of the snake-charmers of India; and then, at the sinking of the sun on the ninth and last day of the ceremony, they carry the snakes, as messengers to the gods, back to the desert whence they were gathered.

The village and home life of the Hopi is almost as interesting as their ceremonial one. At the coming of the yellow light in the eastern summer sky the village crier goes to the housetop and, in a loud voice, cries out to the village the plans of the day, urging the men and women in their duties to the community and to the family. He is more than a newspaper. He is the executive, in direct communication with every subject, adult and child. By the close of the morning exhortations to the people, the men are preparing for the work in the field. The burros, two or a dozen, as the case may be, are driven from the small stone corrals at the mesa's edge. The Hopi uses one as a beast of burden and drives the others before him. The way is down the winding trail cut in the rock cliff and across the sand-dunes far out to the tiny farms in the desert. These farms are small spots of ground in which are grown corn, beans, melons, squash and pumpkins, and are usually in the drifted sands of low-lying spots in the desert, situated at points where they can catch the freshet water as it flows down from the table-lands above. Patiently the Hopi farmer tends his crops, and daily, thrice daily and hourly, prays to his gods that the low-hanging clouds may come walking and pour out their life-giving showers.

The men are but started for the fields when the women take up the labors of the day. From the homes we hear the low song of the women at the mealing-troughs. These mealing-troughs are at one end of the living room. The grinding stones are placed side by side, and here the maids and matrons take their position and, with rhythmic stroke, crush the corn into fine meal. With the sound of the grinding comes that of the accompanying song. One begins with the yellow light before the sun appears; then comes the song of the approaching sun, followed, perhaps, by the flying of the butterfly, and so on. Once a group of women were singing the songs that I might make a record of them. A neighboring woman came in anger to the door,



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Ah Pah of Taos.



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Nampeyo, the potter.

asking, "Why do you sing the songs of before the sun comes at the hour when the sun is half spent? The gods will be angry with you."

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While some of the women go to the meal-ing-troughs, others take the earthenware jars and start on the long, tiresome trudge to the foot of the cliff in quest of water. If



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The Piki maker.

your camp is at the base of the cliff and you are, perhaps, dozing off after being awakened by the calling of the crier and the song of the farmer on his way to the field,

you will again be aroused by the patter of many feet of the women as they travel to the springs. Generation after generation of bare feet has toiled up and down these

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same trails until the path is deep-worn in the rock.

By ten o'clock the farmers whose fields lie not too far out in the desert return to the village and have their first meal of the day, rest, and again return to the fields. Many of the men have their farms a great distance away, and will remain out all day, or perhaps for several days. With the closing of the day the women again go to the springs for water. The farmers return from the desert, and the youth or aged shepherd, whose flock drifted tide-like across the sand-dunes in the early day, will be seen drifting back to the corrals half-way up the cliffs. The evening life is one full of village cheer. It is the hour when all are gathered about the home. With the setting of the sun the crier again calls out in wise council to his people the news of the day and the plans for the morrow. Men and women go from house-top to housetop; wrinkled old priests of the order have a quiet smoke with their brother priests; young men, with youth's blood pulsing in their veins, join the family group, hoping to catch a glimpse from the dark-eyed maiden, whose quaint hair-dressing symbolizes the sacred squash-blossom of the desert. Low songs in the caressing tone of the Hopi float out on the still evening air. The very atmosphere seems to breathe of contentment, and one has but to close his eyes to the few things of modern life which have crept in to feel that this is as it has been for untold generations.

Five days' march to the east of the Hopi Villages is Zuni, all that is left of the seven cities of Cibola, the goal of Coronado's great march into the desert, the scene of much of Cushing's life-work; a group of proud villages dwindled to a single one having a life most complete in mythology. It is a life so rich, in fact, that Mrs. Stevenson found it a task of many years to record it in its entirety, and her magnificent work is a splendid illustration of the religion and philosophy of the Indian. Many of the Zuni ceremonies are like those of the Hopi. Each has, without doubt, borrowed from the other many features of ritualistic work. The Zuni is delightfully conservative. They accepted the teachings of the church at the point of Coronado's guns. As it was accepted then, so it is now; evidently it did

not penetrate very far into the Zuni body. From that day to this many of the children are baptized into the church, but this does not lessen one of the thousands of prayer plumes planted to the gods of their fathers. After generations of labor and martyrdom by the patient Friars the church was abandoned and has long since fallen into decay. All that is left of it is the plot of the dead. Here for generation after generation they have buried their dead, clinging to the sacred spot as only an Indian can. Neither priest nor chief can drive them from it.

Acoma, the dauntless, was first noted by Fray Marcos de Niza in 1539, but was first visited by Coronado's men a year later. Then for forty-three years the Acomas were undisturbed by the Castilians. The second visit was by Antonio de Espejo in 1583. After this Juan de Oñate visited the Pueblos in 1598, and later this same year Juan de Zaldivar visited them with a small troop. The Acomas showed resentment of this encroachment by killing one-half the number. This was followed, some months later, by a second force of the Spaniards, who stormed and subdued the village, killing a large portion of the tribe. Theirs was a stubborn resistance against the encroachment of the white man. In them we see emphasized the character of all the Pueblo people. Superficially smiling and hospitable, and, as long as all goes to their liking, most kindly. Anger them, and they are fiends. A purring cat with an ever-ready claw.

To fortify this cunning the Acomas have far more bravery than the other people of the Pueblos. They claim never to have been conquered. Spanish history, however, does not bear them out in this. It is one of the three most picturesque of the Pueblos: Walpi, in Arizona; Acoma and Taos, in New Mexico.

In days of old, to get from the valley to the mesa and reach the street of Acoma, we had only the choice of winding, precipitous trails cut in the walls of the rock. Of late years there is a new trail for the use of man and beast, more winding and picturesque, entering the village through a fortress-like natural gateway.

The water-supply of the village is, in most part, from small reservoirs in the rock filled from the rainfall, and as a reserve supply there are two large, deep



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At the portal—Walpi.

reservoirs, one fed by a tiny spring. The women, with beautifully decorated earthen jars poised gracefully on their heads, coming and going from the wells, make a picture long living in the mind.

The Acoma fields are far away at Acomita. There, during the summer, they dwell in tiny box-like adobe houses and till their small but well-kept farms, journeying back to their cliff-perched home for all ceremonial occasions. They are, as a people, and have been for generations, devout followers of the Catholic Church. This fact has not, however, in any way seriously affected their primitive religion or crowded out one of their pagan ceremonies. They are a positive argument that a people can be loyal followers of two religious creeds at one and the same time.

In the valley of the Rio Grande we find many small villages. The buildings are usually one story in height, and, from their location in the valley, lack the picturesque features of Walpi and Acoma. Here, differing from Hopiland, and like Zuni and Acoma, farming is by irrigation. Compared to the Hopi, it is princely. Compared to the white man's farming, theirs is petty. Prehistoric irrigation by the dwellers in this region was probably of the simplest order—small ditches drawn from the stream, the water dipped in earthen jars and carried out to the crops. This form of irrigation necessarily meant that very limited areas could be cultivated. Slight evidence is seen which would lead us to believe that Indians of prehistoric time used other system than this in irrigating their fields. In the valley of the Gila, even where the ditches were miles in length and carried a considerable volume of water, it is probable that the actual application of water was made by carrying it in jars rather than by flooding. To look at the cultivated portion of the Rio Grande valley from a slight elevation, it is a field of grain and other crops divided into squares of slightly different shades of green, reminding one of a patchwork-quilt carried wholly in one color. Their principal crop is wheat. This they care for in the simplest way: when ripe, they harvest it with a hand sickle, and the gleaned crop is gathered at the threshing ground, which is simply a plot smoothed and enclosed with a rough fence. At the time of threshing, the

horses belonging to the family are turned into the enclosure and driven around in a circle until the grain is threshed from the straw. Then with forks they separate the straw and chaff from the grain, sift it in a large box-sieve with a perforated bottom made of rawhide, and then, for the final cleaning, take it to the small streams or canals and wash it. In this washing the grain is taken in large coarse baskets, carried down to the water and stirred about in the basket, the chaff and lighter matter floating away with the current. The clean grain is then spread out on cloths to dry. This drying must be finished the day of washing, and to hurry it the grain is taken in baskets, held high in the air and let sift slowly to the ground. This is repeated time after time until it is thoroughly dried. For daily use, such as is wanted they grind on the hand mealstone or metate.

Here, too, among these villages we see the church religion blended with the primitive one. Generation after generation of patient padres have worked and laid down their lives, many in their own red blood at the hands of those whose souls they thought to save. The Indian cannot yet see how or why his soul should be lost. To-day, when we talk to an old man of the village of religion he will tell us, with certainty, that he believes in the true God of the priests. "Yes, I know you believe in the true God, but the story of that God is all written in the big Book. I want to talk with you of your own God, Poseyamo, who lived once on earth and who went long ago to the South." His face lights as if he, himself, was already entering the eternal paradise of his fathers. "Do you know Poseyamo? Tell me about him, and tell me, will he soon come back to care for his children? The signal fire burns at the old shrine on the one night of each seven. It has burned thus many lifetimes to show him that we are faithful and that we wait. Tell him to come soon or I will not be here to see him." And so it is; that which their forefathers accepted for policy's sake they have grown, in a measure, to take for granted, but cling to the old with but slightly shaken faith. They plant their crops as of old, by the star which governs each special growth. The Navajo plants his corn by the Pleiads, but the Pueblo farmer



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At the old well of Acoma.



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Water-carriers, at the Village of Mishongnovi.

plants by the corn star, or the wheat, or the star of the melons, on the day when the cacique gives out the word that the stars say that planting should be done. Only the cacique and one other man knows the potent day of each star, and he, the reader of the stars, is kept secret from the tribe. One may not read their movements and tell the secrets in any but matters of great tribal importance.

Taos is, if anything, more conservative than the others, and is delightfully primitive, and the blood of its people exceptionally pure. Tribal laws stand firm against intermarriage with blood not their own, and the same tribal laws forbid all white man's garments. The youth can go to the village to our schools and learn the white man's ways and cunning in order to be better fitted to cope with encroaching neighbors, but when he returns to take up tribal life he must leave outside the village gates his dressy school uniform and wrap himself in a blanket of the tribe.

Taos is built where the mountain forests

come down to meet the plains. A beautiful, and to them sacred, stream flows down through the forest's cool shadows and passes through the heart of this village. At its forested bank, above the village, the women get the water for home use, and on its banks below are gathered groups of matrons and maidens washing the clothing of the family, for these are a cleanly people. The forest above the village is, in a measure, like the stream, a sacred one, and is jealously guarded by the men of the tribe, and in its great depths are held many of the old-time rites, rites never seen by any except members of the order or tribe.

Spring, Summer, Autumn, or white-robed Winter, this wonderful old forest is a master creation, and the like can be seen nowhere else. You, who say there is nothing old in our country, turn your eyes for one year from Europe and go to the land of an ancient yet primitive civilization. The trails are rarely travelled, and you will go again.



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When evening comes on.



MOONRISE IN A WOOD *By Theodora Taylor*

Twilight,—a darkling wood.
 The ancient trees, like hoary sentinels
 All silent stand. Down the dim aisles
 The distant, fading sky of dying gold
 Is veiled in purple mist. Above, the heavens
 Of darkest sapphire; one clear star
 Already looking forth expectantly.
 The winds are hushed, the very leaves are mute.
 The purling brook singeth in undertones,
 Her daylight song too loud, too unrestrained
 To match the universal hush.
 Lo! where she comes, threading the leafy ways,
 Cynthia, the Goddess, casting silvery rays!