

A PUEBLO VILLAGE.

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other trails, but they are for foot purposes only, and unless one has a clear head and is a good climber, he doesn't want to tackle either one of them, as the paths are cut in solid rock, and in some places are merely footholes in the side of the precipice.

"Long files of Indian girls are passing up and down these trails all day long, carrying water from the springs on the plain below. There is no water on the top of the mesa, except that which is collected in the vast communal basin scooped in the sandstone. In time of drought this basin is as dry as a bone, and all the water that is used by the Acomans is brought up from the plain below in the gayly decorated water jars that are balanced on the heads of the Acoma maidens.

"The town itself, when once you have reached the top of the mesa, is something never to be forgotten. It is built after the style of most pueblo villages, all the houses being of adobe. Some of them are three stories in height, the upper floors being reached by the ladders which are always leaning against the walls and which add such a picturesque effect to every pueblo. There are three long rows of buildings, with 10 large communal houses. The streets and alleys are narrow and when looking down them one always gets the wonderful effect of distance—for the vision leaps right off the edge of the mesa and out on the plain, no matter which way you look. Some of the houses are built right on the edge of the cliff, and as nearly all the Acomans sleep on the roof, especially during the summer months, it is a wonder that some of them do not roll off or step off when walking in their sleep and dash themselves to pieces 300 feet below. When the strang-

er wakes in the morning, after his nap on the roof of one of these dwellings and finds himself on the verge of such a tremendous descent, he is apt to plead for sleeping quarters that are less airy.

"If you are fortunate enough to be in the good graces of the 'gobernador,' whose lightest word is law, you will have no trouble about accommodations. You will be taken into an Acoma family and given a good meal of tortillas, meat and syrup, and then everybody will sit around and smoke cigarettes and discuss you in Spanish, which is the language used more than the native Queres tongue. The Acomans are inveterate cigarette smokers, and manufacture a peculiar kind of smoke from tobacco and corn husk available wherever you go, and these are used by the community. In fact, all the Pueblo Indians, so-called though they belong to varying tribes, are communists, and the work of the individual goes to the general fund.

"At night the herds of burros, goats and cows are driven in by the boys who act as herders, and the sight is something never to be forgotten. The brilliant colors of a New Mexico sunset light up the pastoral scene like a huge painting. In fact, morning, noon or night, Acoma will prove a delight to the painter, for there is a wonderful picture no matter which way you look. The burros and cows are brought to the summit of the mesa and turned into corrals, while the goats are corralled at the foot of the cliffs, where they will be safe from attack from any wild beasts. The rude carts, plows and other farm machinery are stored among the hollows in the rock at the bottom of the cliffs.

"There is an old church at Acoma that has seen strenuous times. It is situated on the southeast corner of the mesa, apart from the town, and is 40 feet high and 150 feet long, and the adobe walls that compose it are seven feet thick. There is an abandoned convent near it. This church was built by the Spaniards, who conquered Acoma in the days of the Conquistadores. Coronado stormed the mesa and captured the town in 1541.