

# PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

Vol. XX.

TORONTO, NOVEMBER 24, 1900.

No. 47.

## Some of These Days.

BY E. K. HEWITT.

I'll arrange the drawers in my chiffon-  
ier,  
My gloves shall go there, and my ribbons  
and  
I'll put all my books in the neatest  
array,  
Some of these days—but why not to-day?  
I'll write the letter that's waited so long;  
I'm sure it would please my friend, Annie  
Strong,  
To hear from the girls; she is so far  
away!  
Some of these days—but why not to-day?  
I'll finish the mending that ought to be  
done;  
The holes in my stocking—I'll darn every  
one!  
"A stitch in time," my mother would  
say;  
Some of these days—but why not to-day?  
I'll take the dear Lord as the guide of  
my youth,  
And ask for the help of the Spirit of  
Truth,  
To lead all my steps in the royal high-  
way,  
Some of these days—but why not to-day?

## THE CLIFF-DWELLERS.

BY THE EDITOR.

In the south-western portion of the United States Territories, beyond the Rio Grande River, is a vast plateau stretching to the base of the Sierra Nevada. Various large streams have cut long canyons through the nearly horizontal strata, in places to a depth of six or seven thousand feet. In the greater part of this region there is little moisture apart from those streams, and, as a consequence, vegetation is very sparse, and the general aspect of the country is that of a semi-desert. Yet there is abundant evidence that at one time it supported a numerous population. "There is scarcely a square mile of the 6,000 examined," writes Professor W. H. Holmes, "that does not furnish evidence of previous occupation by a race totally distinct from the nomadic savages who now hold it, and in many ways superior to them."

The ruins are almost exclusively stone structures. Brick or wood seldom occur, as follows: (1) Lowland or agricultural dwellings; (2) Cave-dwellings; and (3) Cliff-houses or fortresses.

Those of the first class are chiefly on the river-bottoms or the fertile lands near the water, without reference to defence. The second class are excavations in the faces of the low bluffs, and are chosen chiefly for concealment and security. Those of the third class are built high up in steep and inaccessible cliffs, and are evidently places of refuge and strongholds for defence. During seasons of war and invasion, families were probably sent to them for security. While the warriors went forth to battle, and one can readily imagine," says Professor Holmes, "that



FERTILISTIC RUINS, COLORADO.

when the hour of total defeat had come they served as a last resort for a disheartened and desperate people."

In some cases the ruins give evidence of the well-built and solid walls of a fortress, which must have possessed considerable strength.

The cave-dwellings are made by digging irregular cavities in the faces of bluffs and cliffs of friable rock, and then walling up the fronts, leaving only small doorways and an occasional small window.

### THE CLIFF HOUSES

are of firm, neat masonry, and the manner in which they are attached or connected to the cliffs is simply marvellous. They conform in shape to the floor or roof of the niche or shelf on which they are built, which has been worn away by the natural erosion of the elements.

Their construction has cost a great deal of labour, the stones and mortar having been brought for hundreds of feet up the most precipitous places. In many places the larger mortar seams have been chinked with bits of pottery and sandstone. The marks of the mason's pick are as fresh as if made within a few years, and the fine, hard mud mortar, which has been applied with the bare hands, still retains impressions of the minute markings of the skin of the fingers.

The group shown on fourth page is of a very remarkable character. "It was first observed," says Professor Holmes, "from the trail far below, and fully one-fourth of a mile away. From this point, by the aid of a field-glass, the sketch was made. So cleverly are the houses hidden away in the dark recesses, and so very like the surrounding cliffs in col-

our, that I had almost completed the sketch of the upper house before the lower one was detected. They are at least eight hundred feet above the river. The lower four hundred feet is of rough broken slope, the remainder of massive bedded sandstones, full of wind-worn niches, crevices, and caves."

Under a great ledge or overhanging roof, projecting thirty feet, is the "cliff-dwelling," its front wall built along the very edge of a sheer precipice. The lower house is sixty feet long and fifteen deep. The wall is fourteen feet high. The interior is divided into rooms, in which are the remains of beans and corn, and the traces of fire. On the face of the smooth and almost perpendicular cliff, a sort of stairway of small niches in the rock has been cut. On reaching the top one finds himself at the very doorway seen to the left of the cut, without standing-room outside the wall. An enemy would have but small chance of reaching and entering such a fortress if defended even by women and children. There is evidence that a trickling stream of water supplied the inhabitants with this vital necessity. Whether viewed from above or below, the effect is almost startling, and one feels that no ordinary circumstances could have driven a people to such a place of resort.

### A LARGE CAVE TOWN,

at Rio de Chilly, occurs in a great ledge or bench of an encircling line of cliffs. The total length of the solidly built portion is 846 feet, with a width of about 45. It contains about 75 distinct rooms, probably distinct dwellings.

On the Colorado Chiquito occurs the somewhat formidable looking fortress, shown on third page. It is about thirty-five feet high, in receding stories, and about fifty feet wide. The central lower is nearly six feet square. The floor was made of logs a foot thick, partly flattened by rude cutting instruments. There were loop-holes for firing arrows or other missiles, and the projecting rafters give evidence of some part removed. The lintels were of cedar, as found as when first placed in position. So difficult of access is this-looking more like a swallow's nest in a cliff hole than like the abode of a human being—that our author thinks it must have been reached by a rope ladder. A similar cliff-dwelling is shown in the cut on first page, commanding a broad outlook over valley and river below.

Among the debris of the cliff-houses are large quantities of pottery—some of very elegant shape, and ornamented with very handsome designs, some will hold as ten gallons. The makers evidently had a considerable imitative ability and sense of grotesque humour, as many of their wares were capital representations of fowls and the like, often with a very comic look. Specimens of woven fabric and little images, probably for idolatrous use, occur. Hieroglyphic or picture-writing is also found engraved in the rock, or painted with red and white pigments. A number of well-shaped skulls have also been found.

Who were the cliff-dwellers, and what was their fate? is a



CLIFF-DWELLING ON THE COLORADO.