

CLIFF DWELLINGS OF COLORADO.

More Marvelous Discoveries Than Those of Ancient Rome Are Taking Place.

Denver, Colo., Jan. 23.—Recent discoveries among the ruins of the ancient cliff-dwellers in the extreme southwestern portion of Colorado are just now attracting the absorbing attention of archaeologists and ethnologists the world over. United States Government experts have become interested and it is probable an official examination will soon be made of the remains of the ruins in this State, New Mexico and Arizona, with a view to inaugurating a system of thorough excavations.

Revival of interest at this time is due chiefly to a recent visit to the Colorado ruins by the Rev. Dr. Camden M. Cohen, pastor of Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church of this city, who has made a deep study of this subject, and is filled with the most interesting facts. His most recent discovery consists of the ruins of an ancient temple and many remarkable architectural details including pieces of pottery, beads, the skeleton, or imitation of the bones, as outlined by the prophet, Ezekiel, 500 years before Christ. In the Cohen collection is a skull which he took from a skeleton in the "cell" palace at the head of Manitowish, and it was near this point that the temple was found.

Just when these cliff dwellings were built and how long ago since the race became extinct is the only point on which the experts do not agree. The preponderance of authority is that they dwell there centuries before Columbus discovered America, and that they were probably white people who were far advanced in civilization, as the architecture shows conclusively. They were peaceable, cultivated the soil, living chiefly by agriculture, and had established towns, with towns well located, and wonderfully well built. But they were surrounded by savage neighbors, who made war with them, and forced them to build their homes in the great caverns of the cliffs and upon the tops of buttresses, thousands of feet in height, accessible only by narrow ledges, where a misstep was fatal. Here in their lofty homes a few brave men could hold a host of the enemy at bay. They descended in the morning, when unattacked, to their farms in the valley below, cultivating their fields as best they could. Their chief crops were maize and squash.

THEir HOMES.
Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this curious race is the manner in which their homes were erected. Many of the ruins are rectangular, often built of dressed stone, in many cases different from the surrounding rocks. They are generally isolated, and into some lava has run partly submerged, and there are filled with volcanic ash, some bear the appearance of an isosceles triangle, the base line being about 400 feet long, the side line 300 feet, another is a square, 100 feet by 100 feet. They are approached through an elliptical opening, and are surrounded by petrified trees which, lying upon the same horizon, indicate the possibility that they constituted a grove for the residence.

These buildings were erected in natural caverns in the cliffs sometimes thousands of feet above the mesa, where perhaps their enemies dwell in part. The stone used was well cut and laid and the buildings erected in a most skillful and substantial manner. Some of the ruins have a base line, at least one side, of 400 feet, and nearly all remain almost intact even to this day. Some have imposing brown or light-stone fronts, sometimes with balconies, sometimes with great round towers, always in close proximity to finely built stone meeting houses for religious purposes. These buildings are reached simply with a few steps, windows and there are marks to indicate that the solid stone floors were swung on hinges.

The ruins of the Montezuma and Mesa Verde, etc., in numerous places are filled with pieces of broken pottery and other articles, and nearly all remain almost intact even to this day. Some have imposing brown or light-stone fronts, sometimes with balconies, sometimes with great round towers, always in close proximity to finely built stone meeting houses for religious purposes. These buildings are reached simply with a few steps, windows and there are marks to indicate that the solid stone floors were swung on hinges.

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