

Drama of Hard Times Read in Ruins

Archaeology

An unwritten drama of American prehistory has been pieced together from exploration of a fortress-like ruin known as Mesa House, by M. R. Harrington, who has returned from directing an archaeological expedition to Nevada for the Southwest Museum.

This pueblo was built for defense on the top of an inaccessible tableland near Overton, Nevada. The Pueblos who lived in southern Nevada in the early centuries of the Christian era had enjoyed peace and prosperity in the "Lost City," their metropolis, and in other scattered communities in the lowlands of the Moapa Valley. But then these scattered homes were abandoned for the safer retreat of Mesa House, a crudely built high fort, and here followed a period of distress, poverty, and final disaster, the expedition has discovered.

Poverty is shown at Mesa House by the scarcity of beads and ornaments, which were so abundant at the Lost City, Mr. Harrington explained. Only bare necessities of life are found in the ruins.

"The rooms of Mesa House were of solid adobe and stone construction, built around a court to which only three narrow gateways gave access," he stated. "Outside of the stronghold were a number of scattered, one-room dugouts, which seem to have been the homes of the people, who doubtless abandoned them to take refuge in the main structure at the first alarm of danger.

"An unusual number of arrowheads found tell the story of preparation for an attack. But whether this came and the inhabitants were massacred or whether they quietly withdrew to the larger Pueblo settlements in Arizona without a battle cannot now be determined fully; although the finding of a large earthen cooking pot artfully hidden against its owner's return would suggest the latter."

Mr. Harrington considers it likely that the enemy so dreaded and prepared against were ancestors of the present Southern Paiutes, still living in the upper end of the Moapa Valley.

The excavations reveal a picture of the last days of the Pueblos in Ne-

vada, and pottery found at the site tells the time at which these Indians made their last stand. Crude and primitive as Mesa House was, it was occupied in the days when Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Arizona were building the largest and finest homes ever erected by Indians north of Mexico. This great period of Pueblo civilization occurred during approximately the same medieval centuries as the Crusaders in Europe. Among the pottery fragments from the Mesa House are some of a kind that were made in Arizona during this great period, and Mr. Harrington pointed out that the Arizona pottery was evidently brought out to the western frontiers of the Pueblo area by traders.

Besides excavating the Mesa House ruin, the expedition surveyed the lower Moapa Valley. In a district only 16 miles long and not more than two miles wide have been found a total of 77 distinct ruins and camp sites representing five different peoples or stages of culture.

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DO YOU KNOW THAT—

All but nine states have enacted regulatory air legislation, and the majority have accepted Federal standards.

In Canada jack pine is now used more than any other wood for ties, because of its adaptability to creosote treatment and its natural strength.

A sufficiency of playgrounds would cut in half the number of cases of child delinquency, declares the president of the Playground Association.

There is a possibility that the ancient city of Gedi which has lain in ruins for centuries in the African jungle may be excavated.

Archaeologists from the Oriental Institute exploring in Asia Minor have discovered 200 sites where the ancient Hittites tarried.

Tests made in order to determine the best language for international telephone use indicate that Italian is the language most easily understood.

Electrosurgery Great Aid for Cancer

Surgery

That novel adjunct to the surgeon's knife, electrosurgery, finds its greatest usefulness in the treatment of cancer, Dr. Howard A. Kelly, emeritus professor of gynecology and obstetrics in the Johns Hopkins University, told members of the Southern Surgical Association.

"The most important field for this novel agent lies in the realm of malignant growths and the various tumors," Dr. Kelly said.

This new method is not to be mistaken for merely a more convenient form of cautery, but is a specialty which must be learned with painstaking care, Dr. Kelly emphasized. He urged that the new procedure be given more attention in the big hospitals of the country, and that the younger generation of surgeons be given opportunities to test it out.

One very important advantage of electrosurgery is that it controls hemorrhage easily without the need of tying off each vein and artery, which must be done at each step of other surgical operations.

"In deep operations by older methods the surgeon often loses precious minutes in his efforts to check a severe hemorrhage and feels as well stopped from going further in that

direction," explained Dr. Kelly. With electrosurgery the lymphatics and smaller blood vessels are sealed with the progress of the operation.

"It sterilizes the parts attacked, destroying all bacteria and septic tissues as well as the malignant cells to which the growth owes its specific character and continuance," said Dr. Kelly in outlining the advantages of the method. "There is further no handling and squeezing of the tissues, a great boon in any aggressive treatment of malignancy, avoiding the further distribution of the cells.

"One might also well call it a knife-and-fork operation, as the handling of the parts is limited to the slight sterilizing touch of the simple instruments used, avoiding even the gloved fingers of the surgeon.

"An immense advantage lies in the greatly enhanced facility in operating in areas awkward or difficult of access, as in the nose and throat."

Dr. Kelly described the method in some detail and added that it is even valuable, in some types of cases, when radium cannot be used any longer.

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