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BOOK REVIEWS

The Chaco Canyon and Its Monuments. By Edgar L. Hewett. (University Press, Albuquerque, N. M., 1936. 236 pp. ills. \$2.50.)

This is the first of a series of ten handbooks on the archaeological history of the Southwest. These handbooks propose to visualize the human life that pervaded the ancient places, the remains of which are so numerous from the Pecos to the Colorado and from Mexico up into Colorado and Nevada, constituting a rather homogeneous ethnic province in which the Pueblo Indian predominated. Says the announcement of the series setting forth the philosophy and treatment of the subject by Dr. Hewett:

Ruins are the forsaken abodes in which the human spirit dwelt and actualized itself. But a certain kind of archaeology dehumanizes this material. Man's conduct is hardly a subject for microscopic study. These ancient ruins reveal how groups of human beings have waxed and waned; mark the roads that men have traveled on the way through their world. In them are embedded the imperishable achievements of their hands and brains. What we want in the study of the Sciences of Man is facts that will aid in the interpretation of human life.

Secondly, in the matter of interpretation: remember that while imagination is essential in scientific study it has to be rigidly controlled and that the surest guidance to the understanding of relics of the past is to be found in living communities of the same breed as those whose débris we are excavating. In other words, the surviving Pueblo Indian, not the ethnologist, is the most reliable source of information about Indian culture in the Southwest, ancient or modern. When it comes to a decision between an unsophisticated Indian's idea in such matters and that of the much educated white man who feels that his scientific training is discredited unless he explains most everything, the Indian has it.

Lastly, do not expect the archaeologist, or the National Monuments custodian, to be able to explain everything about these ancient ruins. Only a few reliable conclusions have been reached, the most reliable one being that we know very little about them. Happily, the desire to know and the determination have survived the discovery of the errors and illusions of the past, and the fascinating quest goes on, the quest that is summed up in the magic word *archaeology*.

This first volume is admirable in its conception and arrangement. Its perusal not only gives a vivid account of the monumental ruins of the Chaco Canyon but also surveys for the reader the archaeology and ethnology of the Pueblo world. The excavations of the School of American Research and the University of New Mexico are taken as a type project which has revealed what is known of the customs, arts, handicrafts, religion, philosophy and manner of life of the people of that section of the Southwest from approximately 900 to 1200 A. D. However, the author minimizes the importance of chronology and the minute details of ceramics. He leans much more insistently upon the surviving members of the Pueblo tribes as a source of information in relation to the remains uncovered by the archaeological student. He does it in such a convincing and lucid manner that there is not much to be said to controvert his argument. It is this which makes the volume such a readable guide either for the student or for the general reader. Dr. Hewett not only sums up his own forty years of research in the Pueblo region but also cites liberally from the work of others who have covered different phases of the subject.

P. A. F. W.