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CLIFF DWELLERS' SKELETONS.

A strange story of the suffocation of an entire village of cliff dwellers about four thousand years ago is told by Sergt. George E. Price of the local recruiting station.

In picturesque Arizona, among the White Mountains, not far from Fort Apache, the peculiar race of little climbers once reigned supreme. Among the almost inaccessible cliffs of red sandstone they lived like fugitives, in natural fortresses. The caverns they once inhabited are today as they were centuries ago, and in many cases have apparently never been trodden by human foot since the death of their ancient inhabitants. The petrified remains of 400 prehistoric little people were found by Sergeant Price in a vast cave. The Apache Indians, who now inhabit that district, regard the cavern with superstitious dread, and cannot be induced to enter its gloomy portals. No white man had ever set foot there before Sergeant Price, and he found its contents undisturbed.

During the spring of 1899, when he was with Troop G, Seventh cavalry, and stationed at Fort Apache, in his researches about the country, the young soldier discovered the great cave village, with its strange legend. A few miles east of the fort, on the White River, rise some immense cliffs of red sandstone. From the glistening stream the cliffs rise almost perpendicularly to a sheer height of 300 feet. Crevices and little edges of rock form the only footholds for daring climbers. While fishing for trout one day, Sergeant Price noticed high up on the cliff a black hole.

Believing it to be a cave, he at once determined to scale the cliff, and several soldiers volunteered to accompany him. The ascent was exceedingly hazardous, and difficult, but after a long climb they reached the hole. Jutting out from the face of the cliff was a natural shelf, about eight feet wide and twice as long.

Just back of the ledge was the entrance to the ancient cave. Under the sergeant's leadership the party entered the cave with torches and lanterns. They explored over four and a half miles of passages and corridors. Many people had once inhabited the winding passages of the cave village. The soldiers penetrated into the furthest recesses and

found a big council chamber far back in the interior of the cliff. As the flickering light of the torches pierced the gloom of the large room the grewsome scene was revealed.

Huddled together on the cold, damp floor of stone, as if for mutual sympathy and protection, lay the ghastly skeletons of over 400 little cliff dwellers, petrified by their exposure during ages past. A short distance apart from the others lay the frame of the chieftain, leaning against the wall opposite the entrance to the room. His skull was resting upon his breastbone, just as he had died. It seemed to the discoverers that he, perhaps, had died last of them all, and before his spirit fled had taken a final look at his people. Then his chin sank upon his breast, and the people of White River Cliff were no more. Scientific observations have shown that these people lived about 4 000 years ago.

Sergeant Price began a systematic questioning of old Indians, and at length adroitly secured the legend of the cavern. Many, many hundred years ago, he was told by the red-skinned sages—and to express their idea of the number they tossed up handfuls of sand into the air—the small men lived in the cliffs. They were at war with other small men who lived at some distance. Battles were frequent, and the tribe which occupied the White River cliffs was worsted.

Many of their best warriors were slain by the clubs and arrows of the enemy.

Retreat finally became necessary, and the defeated men hastily scaled the beetling cliff to their home near the summit. Once within the great cave they felt themselves secure from further attacks. They carried with them such scanty supplies as they could quickly gather, and they hoped that in case of siege their corn would last until the siege was raised.

Swarming up over the ledge to the entrance to the cave came their enemies. Several they killed, but were soon driven back from the entrance. Wonderingly, they crouched within its portals. The assailants brought up quantities of wood and piled it high up about the hole in the cliff. Then they kindled a huge fire and never suffered it to abate in fury.

Days passed and the flames still gleamed brightly on the side of the vast

rock. For a fortnight the vigilance never slackened. At length the revengeful army retired, leaving a great pile of ashes on the ledge. No one dared to enter the cavern, and, having accomplished their grim mission, they departed from the section. What agonies the cliff dwellers must have suffered as the pangs of starvation grew keener and keener, and always at the only exit they saw the blazing pile!—*Denver Evening Post.*

SHIP SUBSIDIES.

Governor Mount of Indiana is opposed to the ship subsidy bill and in a recent interview said:

"I am opposed to the bill. This is an inopportune time to take money from all the people to subsidize or foster a special interest. When monopolistic greed is so aggressive as to crush small industries and private interests, it is unwise to vote millions to a shipping syndicate under the guise of helping the agricultural and manufacturing interests of the country.

"The provisions of the bill grossly discriminate against the vessels that carry agricultural and manufactured products, in favor of the fast steamers that carry wealthy passengers and fine merchandise. If the true purpose of the bill were to be encourage ship building and augment the number of American vessels, then why deny subsidy to vessels built after five years, but continue the paying of such subsidy for twenty years to the ships built and registered in the five year limit? Five years will be time for the favored few to get ready to profit by the millions to be paid, after which American ship-building will be discouraged, not only by competition with foreign vessels, but with the favored class of American ships built and registered within the five-year provision. Instead of continued growth to our merchant marine, we will likely experience a paralysis of this interest after its promoters are enriched. Why should all the industries pay tribute to a shipping syndicate?

"The bill is vicious in principle. It is an unjust discrimination, and merits defeat. It is not founded upon justice or equity. The people will not be deceived by its misleading preamble."