

Cornell University Library
HX 653.H62

American communities.



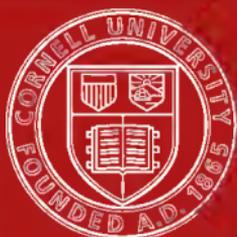
3 1924 002 674 665

dt

THE LIBRARY
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL
OF
INDUSTRIAL AND LABOR
RELATIONS



AT
CORNELL UNIVERSITY



Cornell University Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

REVISED EDITION

Enlarged to Include Additional Societies, New and
Old, Communistic, Semi-Communistic
and Co-operative

By WILLIAM ALFRED HINDS, Ph. B.



CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
1902

Copyright by
WILLIAM ALFRED HINDS,
Kenwood, N. Y., 1902.

All Rights Reserved.

CONTENTS

	Pages.
Introductory	7, 8
Communism in Early American Colonies: James- town, Plymouth and the Moravian Settlements....	9-11
The Ephrata Community: 169 years old; its Begin- ning, Growth and Decadence; its Buildings, like Solomon's Temple, made without use of Iron....	12-20
Jemima Wilkinson and her Jerusalem: her Astound- ing Claims; 500-mile March to a strange country and people; Eccentricities; Unknown Sepulchre..	21-25
The Shakers: 15 Societies and 35 Families; one of them 114 years old; Origin and Early History; their Founder and her "full Cross;" Shakerism as de- fined by the Shakers; Different Orders; Govern- ment; Progressive Changes; Celibacy; Returning Prodigals; Longevity; Literature; Shaker Worship	26-62
<u>The Harmonists:</u> their First Community founded in 1805; 1,000 members; Early Hardships and Suc- ceeding Prosperity; Removal to Indiana and Re- turn to Pennsylvania; Present Trustee and his Financial Work; Trials with Sceders; their Liber- ality; Characteristics of George Rapp and of his adopted son Frederick; Adoption of Celibacy; Dis- use of Tobacco; Destruction of the Property-Rec- ord; the Great Schism under the bogus Count....	63-90
The Separatists of Zoar: their Village founded in 1817; Why they adopted Communism; Questions frankly answered as to their History, Regulations, Practical Life, Future Expectations; Articles of Faith and Conduct; Zoar's Conditions Criticised; Dissolution; How the Property was divided; the most Democratic of Religious Communities.....	91-123
Robert Owen and his Communities: "Father of American Socialisms;" his Princely Liberality; Marvelous Changes under his Management at New Lanark; Radical Views on Education; Scheme of Socialistic Villages; Purchase of the Rappite Vil- lage and founding of the New Harmony Commu- nity of 900 members; Causes of its Failure; Yellow Springs and other Owenite Communities; Owen's Vast Plans and Noble Motives.....	124-143

CONTENTS

- The Perfectionists and their Communities: their Founder's Religious Zeal; New Doctrines; his Putney Community at first a Bible School; its Development; the Hegira from Putney and its Causes; Oneida Community; its Log-Hut Beginning and Early Privations; Questions of Visitors answered as to Membership, Employments, Religious and Social Principles, Race-Culture, Bearing of its Children, and Rules of Admission; the System of Mutual Criticism; Daily Evening Meetings; Branch Society; Clerical Crusade against the Community; Good-Will Utterances of the Press; Change of Social Platform; Change to Joint-Stock; Present Prosperity; Co-operative Privileges.....144-213
- Hopedale Community: its existence of 17 years; Principles, Objects and Achievements as explained by its Founder; his great work on Christian Communism; Dissolution and Reorganization.....214-220
- Fourieristic Associations and Phalanxes: the God-fathers of American Fourierism, and its Brilliant Apostles; their brave Words and brave Deeds; Horace Greeley's Consecration of his Entire Fortune; List of Experiments that lived and died between 1841 and 1858.....221-225
- Brook Farm: its Transcendental Origin; its noble Founders and their great Purposes; Beautiful Site; Communistic Features; Conversion to Fourierism; Causes of Failure; Founder's Noble Character....226-239
- North-American Phalanx: Longest-lived of the Fourier Experiments; Prosperity; Varied Industries; many Favorable Conditions; Financially Successful; Causes of its Dissolution.....240-249
- Fruitlands: the most Transcendental of Communities: founded by A. Bronson Alcott and others; Contrasted with Brook Farm; Principles and Daily Life; Alcott's Zeal for Social Reform .. 250-254
- Skaneateles Community: Radicalism of its Founder; Classes attracted to such Experiments; Internal Dissensions; Short Life; not a Financial Failure..255-262
- The Amana Community: the Largest and most Prosperous of Existing Communities; its History and Early Persecutions; First Settlement near Buffalo, N. Y.; Removal to Iowa; its Constitutional Principles and Regulations; Daily Life; "Inspired

CONTENTS

- Instruments;" Questions answered by its Secretary; Improvements Suggested; Articles of Faith and Conduct; the "Untersuchung".....263-286
- The Bethel-Aurora Communities: their Founder; Conditions Favorable and Unfavorable; Communism and Individualism blended; the Bible their Constitution; Letter of the Deputy-President.....287-299
- A Community of Swedes: its Founder and his Disciples; Persecuted by the Lutheran Church, he plans a Socialistic, Theocratic Community in the New World; Unparalleled Hardships in its First Years; Assassination of its Leader; Subsequent Prosperity of the Community; Wrecked by one of its Trustees300-320
- The Icarians: Typical Experiment in Democratic Communism; Careers of Cabet and of Owen compared; Propagandism; Hundreds of Thousands of Icarians; First Experiment in Texas Disastrous; Second at Nauvoo, Ill.; Cabet's Attempt to regain his relinquished Dictatorship rends the Community in twain; his Exile and Death; Cheltenham Community; Removal of the Nauvoo Community to Iowa; Icarian Conditions in 1876 Described; Division into Two Communities; their History traced; End of Icarian Communism.....321-354
- Second-Adventist Communities: Celesta, or Peter Armstrong's Zion; a Wilderness Mountain-Home for the Saints; a Warning-Signal to Socialistic Travelers; the Adonai-Shomo; another Warning Signal; Fanaticism of its Leaders; the End.....355-365
- Brotherhood of the New Life: its Founder, T. L. Harris; his Salem-on-Erie Community in New York and Fountain-Grove Community in California; Principles and Practical Life of the Brotherhood; its Dissensions; Battle Royal of Pantarchs; End of the Colonies, but not of the Brotherhood..366-377
- Shalam, or the Children's Land: Its Founder and his Oahspee Bible; How the Foundlings of Uz (the World) were to become a Superior Race; Dis-solution after the Expenditure of \$300,000378-381
- Woodcliff Community, Woodcliff, N. J.....382
- The Koreshans: their three Communities; Radical Principles; Scientific Religion; New Cosmogony; the Messiah of to-day; Orders of Koreshanity...383-387

CONTENTS

The Altruist Community, St. Louis, Mo.....	388
The Commonwealth of Israel, Adullam, Texas.....	389
The Co-operative Brotherhood, Burley, Wash.....	390-396
Equality Colony, Equality, Wash.....	397-399
Ruskin Commonwealth, Ruskin, Ga.....	400-402
Home-Employment Company, Long Lane, Mo.....	403-405
Colorado Co-operative Company, Pinon, Col.....	406-408
Fairhope Single-Tax Industrial Association, Ala. . .	409-411
Mutual Home Association, Home, Wash.....	412-414
Freedom Colony, Fulton, Bourbon County, Kan....	415-417
Freeland Association, Holmes' Harbor, Wash.....	418-419
Co-operative Association of America, Lewiston, Me.	420-423
Projected Colonies	423
American League of Co-operative Associations.....	424
Inductions	425-426
Advantages of Community Life, by C. Nordhoff....	427-428
A Century of Social Progress, by Alfred R. Wallace.	428-429
Will Social Colonies be Multiplied?	430-432
Communism the Ultimate Basis of Society.....	432-433

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Models of Dwellings and Factories of Oneida Community, Limited, facing title page.	
Sister House and Saal at Ephrata, Pa., facing page...	15
Shaker Village, Mount Lebanon, N. Y., facing page.....	28
Elder Frederick W. Evans, facing page.....	41
Shaker Meeting at Canterbury, N. H., facing page.....	56
Harmonists' Hall of the Annual Festivals, facing page.	74
Harvest Scene at Zoar, Ohio, facing page.....	91
One of the Earliest Zoar Houses, facing page.....	95
Father Bimeler's House at Zoar, facing page.....	119
Robert Owen, "Father of Socialism," facing page.....	124
John Humphrey Noyes, facing page.....	144
Dwelling of Oneida Community—an Old View, facing..	173
Brook Farm Phalanx, facing page.....	226
Dr. Wm. Keil, Founder of Bethel-Aurora, facing page..	287
Etienne Cabet, Icarian Leader and Founder, facing page	321
The Last Icarian Group, facing page.....	353
Thomas L. Harris, of the New Life, facing page	366

INTRODUCTORY.

Since the first edition of "American Communities" was published in 1878 new Communistic Societies have been established, some of the older ones have ceased to exist, others have been slowly sailing into their last harbor, while still others have undergone such changes that accounts of them written so long ago must be regarded as descriptive of their past rather than their present condition; hence the demand for its revision; and that it might better serve as a book of reference it has been enlarged to include accounts, not only of additional colonies, old and new, based on common property, of importance because of their numbers, principles or special peculiarities, but of many semi-communistic and co-operative societies. This enlargement appeared the more advisable because of the regrettable destruction, a few years ago, by the fire that reduced to ashes the publishing house of J. B. Lippincott & Co., of the entire stock of books and plates of Noyes' "History of American Socialisms," which contained a fuller account than any other work of the social colony experiments made in this country prior to its publication in 1870.

The first edition of "American Communities" was based largely upon personal observations, the author having visited all the described Societies save the two

INTRODUCTORY.

on the Pacific coast; and as preparatory to this revision he repeated his personal observations, and studied anew the history of American Communities, Associations and Co-operative Colonies. He has also been fortunate in obtaining first-hand information of many experiments; still he may have been led into inaccuracies of statement, and if so will be grateful to any one pointing them out, that they may be eliminated from future editions. He will also consider himself under special obligations to those calling his attention to social colony experiments not mentioned by him which they deem worthy of permanent record.

While the author's experiences and observations have given him an abiding faith in Communism as the ultimate basis of human society, they have also given him a lively appreciation of the losses and miseries resulting from ill-considered and ill-conducted social experiments; and he would cry "Halt!" to every one proposing to found or join a communistic, semi-communistic or co-operative colony without the fullest consideration.

KENWOOD, N. Y., Feb. 5, 1902.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES.

COMMUNISM IN AMERICAN COLONIES.

It has been claimed that the Jamestown colony of Virginia (1607), the Plymouth colony of Massachusetts (1620), the Moravian colony of Bethlehem, Pa. (1740), in their beginnings were all communistic settlements.

The charter authorizing the Jamestown settlement contained a provision that the members of the colony should for five years "trade together in a common stock;" but this proviso was clearly inserted for the benefit of "certain gentlemen of London," to whom the charter was granted, and who were the original promoters of the enterprise. That it was unpopular is shown by its abandonment before the expiration of the five years, and evidence is wanting that the colonists themselves had any purpose to found a settlement based on the common ownership of property.

The Pilgrims before emigrating to Massachusetts entered into a copartnership agreement, which stipulated that "all profits and benefits that were gotten by trade, traffic, trucking, working, or any other

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

means, of any other person or persons, were to remain in the common stock" for seven years, and, on the other hand, that all the colonists should be supplied with "meat, drink and apparel out of the common stock and goods of the colony." This of itself looks like a scheme for a seven years' experiment in Communism; but when it is considered that certain monied men, who had advanced the means for defraying the transportation of the colonists to America, were also parties to the agreement, that the profits of the enterprise were to be shared at the end of the seven years between all the copartners according to their respective interests, and that in determining the same the labor of each colonist was to be reckoned as equivalent to ten pounds' sterling, it is seen that there was no genuine Communism in the arrangement. Indeed, since "the London merchant, who risked one hundred pounds, was to receive for his money ten-fold more than the laborer for his seven years' services,"* it looks as though Capital had in this early compromise with Labor driven a very sharp bargain.

At the Bethlehem colony of Moravians partial Communism existed for twenty years; but the statement of the Moravians themselves that it was never intended to be a permanent condition, and was adopted from reasons of necessity, must be accepted as conclusive. Rev. Mr. Scheinitz, a Moravian authority, says in a letter to the author: "The Moravian colonists at Bethlehem at the beginning of the settlement in 1740 being poor, and the danger from Indians

*Bancroft's "History of the United States."

COMMUNISM IN AMERICAN COLONIES.

being great, they simply agreed to cultivate the land (which had been bought with borrowed money) in common, so that they might the better support and protect themselves; but each one in all other respects retained his own private property. In 1760 this system by common consent was given up. No Community in the sense in which you understand the word ever existed at Bethlehem." A similar statement is published with the approval of the Moravian Board. So that it can only be claimed that these worthy people found even partial Communism such a good thing that they continued it for twenty years.

THE EPHRATA COMMUNITY.

Taking the train at Reading, Penn., on the Columbia Division of the Philadelphia and Reading railway, after a ride of twenty miles through the banner county of the State for fertility (Lancaster), you reach the thrifty village of Ephrata—a place of nearly 3,000 inhabitants. A walk of half a mile in an easterly direction takes you over the bridge spanning the Co-calico Creek, and in full view of the buildings and inclosed grounds of the Ephrata Community, popularly, but erroneously, supposed to have been the first* American Community. It was founded in 1732† by Conrad Beissel (also called Beizel and Peysel), who came to this country expecting to join “The Woman in the Wilderness Community” established many years previously on the banks of the Wissahickon river in Pennsylvania; but upon his arrival, learning with surprise that it no longer existed, he joined the very religious people called Dunkers, in whose faith he was baptized in 1724. He had great religious earnestness,

*The Labadist Community of Protestant mystics, numbering one hundred members, and owning about 4,000 acres of land, located in the northern part of Maryland, was founded in 1680, and the Community of “The Woman in the Wilderness” in Pennsylvania in 1694.

†The earlier date of 1713 is incorrectly given in Noyes’ “American Socialisms,” on the authority of one Jacobi, who made a synopsis of the religious Communities in 1858.

THE EPHRATA COMMUNITY.

and lived some years the life of a recluse in a cave previously occupied by a solitary named Elimelech. Convinced by his scriptural studies that the seventh instead of the first day of the week should be observed as a day of worship, in 1728 he published a work on the subject that caused much opposition among his Dunker friends; but it also gave him a small following, and soon three men and two women, after much importunity, especially on the part of the women, were allowed to share his wilderness seclusion. Separate log-huts were erected for the men and the women; and thus was begun a Community that at one time numbered three hundred members,* and owned a large property including enormous dwellings, a paper-mill, flouring-mill, oil-mill, fulling-mill, bakery, printing-office, school-house, almonry, and other small buildings, and a large holding of land. Their prosperity is the more noteworthy because the accumulation of great wealth was not desired by the founder. When Governor Penn, who frequently visited the Beissel colony, offered them a tract of 5,000 acres surrounding them, the offer was declined "on the ground that it would be injurious to their spiritual life to accumulate much property."

The Ephrata Community is described as having been a republic, in which all stood upon perfect equality. They prospered without a written covenant, the

*Jacobi says there were at Ephrata "at times some thousands of members;" but while it is probable that thousands accepted Beissel's views and especially his doctrine regarding the observance of the seventh day as the Sabbath, I find no evidence that the membership of the Ephrata Community ever exceeded three hundred.

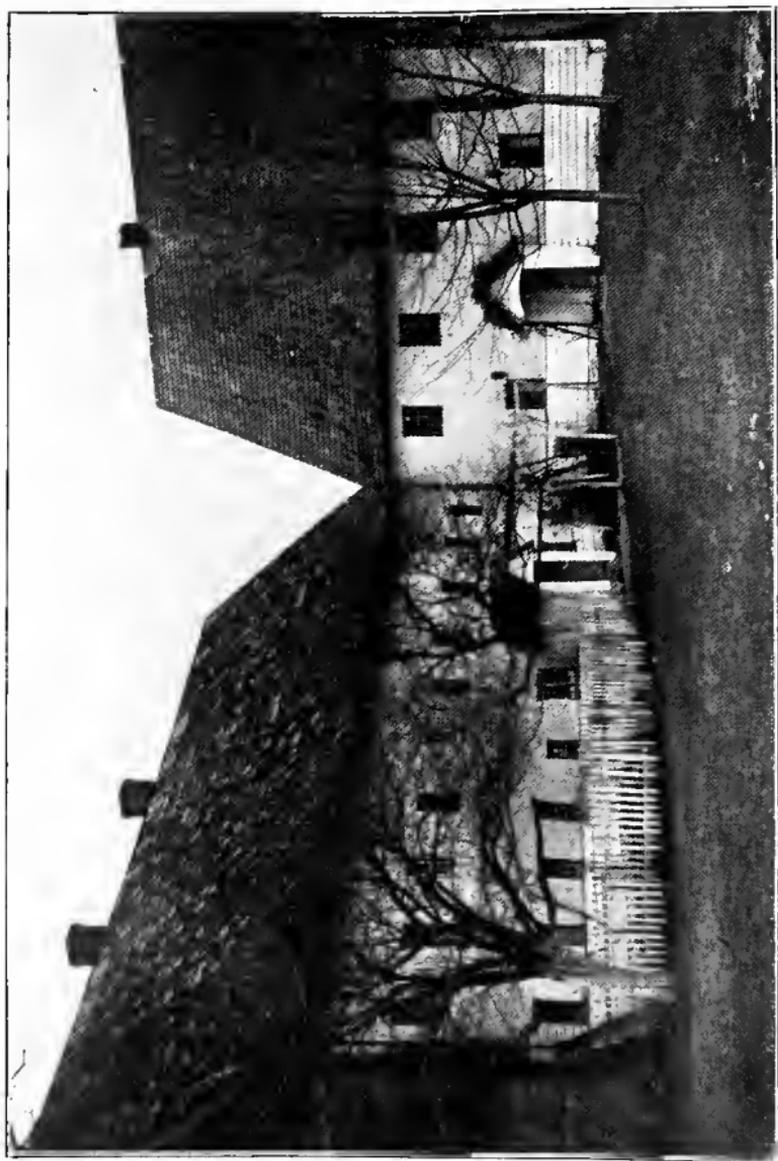
AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

New Testament being their confession of faith, their code of laws, their means of church discipline. The property which came to the Society by donation and by the labors of the brothers and sisters was common stock. No member was obliged to surrender any of his own individual possessions. The Society was supported by the income derived from its farming and manufacturing.

The Ephrata Society still exists, and had in 1900 seventeen members, mostly married; and applicants of good character, believing in its religious principles of repentance, baptism, salvation through Christ, and the observance of the seventh day of the week as the day of worship, I was assured, would now be admitted as members. No members have, however, been recently admitted.

Since 1812 Ephrata has been an incorporated Society. Three trustees are elected every four years by the members, and hitherto from among the members. J. J. R. Zerfass, its present Secretary and Manager, is under the direction of the Trustees, who are under bond, and responsible to the Court for the management of the Society.

Ephrata is usually spoken of as a celibate Community, but no celibate vows were required to be taken by the followers of Beissel, and marriage was allowed, though celibacy was unquestionably considered as most pleasing to God, and in the earlier years generally prevailed among the members, the greater number living celibate lives of consecration; the celibate brothers and sisters occupying buildings apart



SISTER HOUSE AND SAAL AT EPHRATA.

THE EPHRATA COMMUNITY.

from each other, and apart from the married members; and during its years of greatest prosperity there was at Ephrata an order of spiritual virgins whose hair was shaven, and a Zionitic tonsured brotherhood.* Indeed, in 1744 divorce papers were prepared and signed by husbands and wives, that they might improve their spiritual condition by living apart, but these papers were subsequently burned.

Though Ephrata is far removed from its former conditions of vitality, growth and prosperity, it is still the center of much interest, attracting annually thousands of visitors. Here are buildings erected more than a century and a-half ago that are entirely unique in appearance without and within—great three-story, steep-roofed houses with their outer walls sometimes shingled to the ground, and here and there dotted with windows so small that they remind you of the portholes of a steamer.

Having in mind the scriptural passages which speak of Solomon's temple as having been built "so that there was neither hammer, nor ax, nor any tool of iron, heard in the house while it was building," the Ephratans in constructing their buildings used wooden pins in place of spikes and nails wherever it was possible. Even the split-oak laths, which hold the plaster in place, were fastened without the use of nails. Channels or grooves were made in the upright timbers, and

*Of the many attempts in the United States, chiefly Catholic, to combine communism of property and labor with lives of rigid asceticism and celibacy, that of the Trappists of Gethsemane, Ky., is specially noteworthy, with its Monastery of Silence, to which no woman is allowed to make a near approach, save the wives of the President of the United States and of the Governor of Kentucky.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

laths, cut to proper length, were slid down into the grooves. The furniture of the Saal (house of prayer) was put together entirely with wooden pins. The Ephratans went further, and excluded metal utensils from their love-feasts. Their plates or platters were of poplar wood, as were the candle-sticks used in their religious meetings. Their knives and forks were of the harder hickory. The vessels of the holy communion were made without the use of iron tools, and the altar-cloth was smoothed or ironed with square wooden blocks."*

Entering the "Brother" or "Sister House" you are led along a narrow passage (not over twenty inches in width) separating the small cell-like apartments once occupied by the members; and you will notice in each the 18 by 24-inch window, the plank underneath which, for the founder himself as for his disciples, answered in the earlier days for a bed, with a wooden billet for a pillow—the dimensions of the room not exceeding six by nine feet, and seven feet in height. Note in passing how rude and primitive is every thing—the rough stairways, the doors with wooden hinges, the board-bottomed chairs with straight legs two inches square, the enormous fire-places; and if you display genuine enthusiasm the guide will still further gratify your curiosity by showing you linen tablecloths woven by the early Ephrata sisters; spoons a

*"History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania," by J. J. Mombert, D. D., 1869; "The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania," by Julius Friedrich Sachse; "The Making of Pennsylvania," by Sydney George Fisher, B. A.; to which works I am indebted in the preparation of this sketch, as also to an article on Ephrata, prepared by S. G. Zerfass, son of its present trustee and manager,

THE EPHRATA COMMUNITY.

century old which might have been made by a blacksmith; rectangular wooden plates; wooden flat-irons; the brown earthen pitchers (made from clay dug on the grounds) which the sisters used in carrying water from the cool springs near-by to wounded revolutionary soldiers, who after the battle of Brandywine took possession of one of the Community's large dwellings for a hospital, where hundreds were nursed by the devoted sisters back to convalescence, while other hundreds were carried off by the deadly typhus, including many of the ministering sisters. You will be shown the site of the old hospital, and be told that it had to be destroyed after the departure of the soldiers as a health precaution for the living. Your attention may be called to the following letter in behalf of religious freedom written by General Washington Aug. 4, 1789, and worthy to be engraved in letters of gold:

“If I had had the least idea of any difficulty resulting from the Constitution adopted by the convention of which I had the honor to be President when it was formed, so as to endanger the rights of any religious denomination, then I never should have attached my name to that instrument. If I had any idea that the general Government was so administered that the liberty of conscience was endangered, I pray you be assured that no man would be more willing than myself to revise and alter that part of it, so as to avoid all religious persecution. You can, without any doubt, remember that I have often expressed as my opinion, that every man who conducts himself as a good citizen is accountable alone to God for his religious faith, and should be protected in worshipping God according to the dictates of his conscience.”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

You will also have the pleasure of entering the old chapel, where are the same long, backless, wooden seats that were used at its dedication in 1741, and are still used though only upon the seventh day. The walls are white and spotless; the floors have been scrubbed until they glisten. Your attention will be arrested by the ink-paintings which adorn the walls, many of which are texts of Scripture written in ornamental Gothic letters. In this chapel or Saal the followers of Beissel were wont to assemble for prayer and worship at midnight, the services lasting till one o'clock, when a second period of sleep till four was allowed. The time between 4 A. M. and 9 P. M. was occupied in labor and worship, save the time spent at the mid-day repast, their only meal.

The Ephratans lived chiefly on fruits and vegetables, eating from wooden plates, drinking from wooden goblets.

Their apparel, no longer worn, was similar to that of the White Friars—the brothers wearing a shirt, trousers, vest, a long white gown and cowl of wool in winter and linen in summer; that of the sisters was the same excepting that a coarse flannel petticoat was substituted for the trousers.

Ephrata had one of the earliest printing-presses in America, and is credited with the publication of about forty books which have been much admired for the excellence of their paper and printing and much valued by collectors.*

Ephrata in its first years gave such attention to

*Fisher's "Making of Pennsylvania."

THE EPHRATA COMMUNITY.

education that its schools attracted pupils from Philadelphia and Baltimore, and its Sunday-school, established in 1740, antedated any similar school in England.

Beissel was a skilled musician, and composed and set to music a volume of hymns and another of anthems, all suggestive of the plaintive and melodious chords of the aeolian harp. He is also described as "a born orator."

Beissel died in 1786, in his seventy-second year, and was succeeded by Peter Miller, who survived him twenty-eight years.

Though outwardly the Community continued to prosper for many years after the death of its founder, its vitality and harmony were weakened; jealousies and dissensions arose; its numbers decreased; its property diminished in value; the old regulations and ordinances were less rigidly maintained; and thus its downward course continued, until now it may be almost regarded as a posthumous organization.

While Ephrata may excite an interest because of its common property, common labor, equality of conditions for all its members, their sincerity, simplicity and godliness, and its unparalleled longevity, having existed for 169 years, there is in its life, history and achievements little worthy of the name of Communism. To make conditions for himself and his followers favorable to a life of seclusion from the world's temptations was the controlling purpose of the founder of Ephrata. In this he had a large measure of success, but at what sacrifices of those physical, in-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

tellectual and social elements that enter so largely into the development and happiness of mankind! In its immediate vicinity the home of the Ephratans is known as the Cloister or Kloster, and this name, rather than Community, is expressive of its real life and character.

A Community was long ago established at Snow-hill, Franklin Co., in same State, which was in many respects similar to Ephrata, and attracted as members the same kind of religious people. A quarter of a century ago it had forty members, but is now passing into oblivion with Ephrata.

JEMIMA WILKINSON AND HER JERUSALEM

The first Shaker Community was organized at Mount Lebanon, N. Y., in 1787; the year previous the followers of Jemima Wilkinson had resolved to emigrate from their eastern home and establish a Community in Yates County of the same State.

The members of this Community came from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and largely from Rhode Island, the home of their beautiful young Quakeress leader, who about 1780, when scarcely twenty years of age,* after she was pronounced dead by her attendant physicians, having lain unconscious for forty-eight hours, rose from her coffin at the moment when her friends had assembled to perform the last sad rites, and "declared that her former self had died, and passed into the land of spirit—that the body which they now saw was her resurrection and spiritual body—that, while absent from the body, she had received a commission from the Holy One, investing her with the power of Jesus Christ until his second coming to judge the world—that she had authority to raise up a holy and elect church on the earth, who should share with her in the first resurrection, and be present to witness her equal glory with Christ when he should descend in the clouds of heaven"—a church

*Some authorities say twenty-four.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

in which there should be "neither marrying nor giving in marriage," and "those who had wives should be as though they had none;" neither should any man say that aught of the things he possessed was his own, but all things should be held in common, as among the early Christians. These claims and principles were preached by Jemima in many places, and she soon found herself surrounded by a considerable number of persons who believed in her mission and her principles; and as they were mostly of the poorer classes they considered whether they should not emigrate to some place where they could more easily earn a livelihood, more perfectly enjoy one another's society, and more freely and fully execute the great work committed to their leader. Jemima thereupon consulted her spiritual guide, and was commanded to "go into a strange country, and to a people of strange language; but fear not, for lo! the angel of His presence shall go with thee; He shall lead thee, and the Shekinah shall be thy rearward." Accordingly Jemima led her followers five hundred miles, mostly through the forests, to the Genesee country of western New York, the land of the Seneca Indians, and the garden of the State. Here, after making friends of the Indians, she established a Community, and called it Jerusalem. In the process of time her poor followers became wealthy. They improved the country so as to make it valuable, and emigrants from the Eastern States increased their numbers, until there were forty families or more in Jerusalem.

JEMIMA WILKINSON AND HER JERUSALEM

Jemima acted as sole Trustee of the property (which included a township of six miles square) for all the members of the Community.

Her traveling carriage bore in conspicuous letters, "The Universal Friend."

When she wanted anything, she would apply to her disciples, saying, "The Lord hath need of it."

Her personal appearance was remarkable, more resembling that of a man than of a woman, and the style of her dress never changed. She wore no gown, and her lower limbs were covered with kilts. "Her tunic was like a bishop's under-dress; showing a skirt opening in front, coming down midway between the waist and the knee. The outer garment, covering the bust and arms, was not unlike a riding-habit with rolling collar and wide lapels, turning back upon the breasts. She wore a drab quaker-hat, with a rim not less than eight inches wide. She was considerably above the middle stature as to height and muscular development. Her eyes were coal-black, large, steady, firm: the *tout ensemble*, or entire person of Jemima Wilkinson, taken with her carriage, manners, and address, would impress the beholder with strong intellect, decision of character, deep sincerity, and passionate devotion."*

When I visited the place of her settlement many years ago the house was still standing in which she had lived, and stories of her eccentric appearance and conduct were then rife.

Her disciples believed she would never die; but

*Tait's Magazine.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

she herself recognized the approach of death, and charged them not to weep for her as those who had no hope; for "though she should sleep she should revive again;" and she earnestly besought them "to have no funeral at her departure, no hearse, no coach, no pomp, no parade; but the blessing of those who loved her on earth, and would follow her to the New Jerusalem above. These injunctions were strictly kept; her disciples hid her body in the valley where she died, 'and no man knoweth of her sepulchre unto this day.'" She died in 1820.

The founder of the Jerusalem Community is branded in all the biographies and cyclopedias as an impostor. Mistaken as to her mission she assuredly was, as facts have proved; but it is easier to believe she was herself duped by invisible powers than to believe she deliberately and intentionally at such an early age assumed the role of deceiver, and maintained it and the confidence of her followers for over forty years.

It is interesting to note that Ann Lee, the founder of Shakerism, and Jemima Wilkinson, the founder of the Jerusalem Community, made similar claims to divine guidance and a God-given mission; that both affirmed that they represented the power of Christ in his second coming, though Mother Ann went furthest, claiming that she was herself Christ in his second advent; that the preaching of both led to the founding, at nearly the same time, of Communities based on celibacy and common property; that both gathered about them disciples who were ready to fol-

JEMIMA WILKINSON AND HER JERUSALEM

low them whithersoever they should lead. But here the analogies cease; the followers of Jemima numbered only hundreds, those of Mother Ann thousands; the Jerusalem Community scarcely survived its founder, and is now almost forgotten, while Shaker Communities still exist, 117 years after the death of Ann Lee.

THE SHAKERS AND THEIR THIRTY-FIVE COMMUNITY FAMILIES

The Shakers have fifteen Societies,* and a total membership of about 1,000. Each Society is divided into two or more Families, which are in respect to property and other matters distinct from one another, so that there are really thirty-five different Shaker Communities.

The Shakers first landed in the United States on the sixth of August, 1774; their first settlement was made at Niskayuna (now Watervliet), N. Y., in 1776; their first completed Community was organized at Mt. Lebanon, N. Y., in 1787. Previous to 1792 two Societies had been formed in New York, four in Massachusetts, one in Connecticut, two in New Hampshire and two in Maine. Between 1805 and 1807 two Societies were formed in Ohio, one in Indiana, and two in Kentucky. Between 1822 and 1827 two Societies were formed in Ohio, and one in New York. The Indiana Society was given up on account of unhealthy climatic conditions, and the Tyringham Society of Massachusetts, North Union of Ohio and Groveland of New York, more recently and for other reasons. The Family of colored members formerly existing at Philadelphia has been absorbed by other Families.

*Not including one settlement recently begun at White Oak, Ga., and another at Narcoosie, Fla.

THE SHAKERS

These Shaker Communities had at one time a population of quintuple their present membership, reaching an aggregate exceeding five thousand souls. The largest Society is Mount Lebanon, N. Y., but Watervliet, N. Y., Union Village, O., Pleasant Hill and South Union, Ky., and East Canterbury, N. H., are also important Societies.

The Shaker Societies all have large home farms, and many of them own additional tracts of land in the Western and Southern States. A single Family of one of the New York Societies a few years ago bought thirty thousand acres in Kentucky. It is not easy to ascertain their aggregate landed estate, which may reach one hundred thousand acres. They give as reasons for not making public the acreage of the Societies, that they "own too much land," "more than they can profitably pay taxes on." They were long under the land-mania, and "bought all that joined them," and a great deal that did not join them, and now regret their past policy in this respect, finding themselves burdened with investments that yield small returns, and call themselves "land poor." It is impossible for them to cultivate their entire domains. They let land run to forest, selling the wood and timber, as in some of the Eastern States; make sheep-walks of large tracts; lease farms, or employ hirelings to carry them on; but only realize fair returns from the land when they raise garden crops, seeds, medicinal herbs, etc., and are able to market these products without encountering too fierce competition. Shakers have repeatedly stated to me that some sim-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ple branch of manufacturing, employing only a few hands, yields a more satisfactory income than large acreage carried on with hiring labor.

The Shakers are said to have been the first in this country to raise and vend garden seeds and medicinal herbs and roots, which branches of business have been engaged in by most of their Societies, and were formerly the principal sources of their income; but they have also conducted such mechanical industries as the making of brooms, measures, pails, tubs, chairs, mops, mats, sieves, washing-machines, chimney-caps, the preservation of fruits and vegetables, drying of sweet corn, &c.

Of the wealth of the Shaker Societies I cannot speak with definiteness. Nordhoff estimated the property of all the American Communities at twelve million dollars, but I have reason to believe this estimate far too high, and that the Shaker Societies are not nearly so rich as they are generally supposed to be, nor as rich as they formerly were, they having sustained considerable losses from fire and other causes, and their large land-holdings having greatly diminished in market value.

The Shaker villages are generally pleasantly located, and with few exceptions have a neat and thrifty look. Their houses and fences are kept in good repair, and every thing is in strictest order. Dixon's picture of Mt. Lebanon is a picture of nearly every Shaker settlement from Maine to Kentucky: "No Dutch town has a neater aspect, no Moravian hamlet a softer hush. The streets are quiet; for here you



SHAKER VILLAGE, MOUNT LEBANON, N. Y.



THE SHAKERS

have no grog-shop, no beer-house, no lock-up, no pound; of the dozen edifices rising about you—work-rooms, barns, tabernacles, stables, kitchens, schools, and dormitories—not one is either foul or noisy; and every building, whatever may be its use, has something of the air of a chapel. The paint is all fresh; the planks are all bright; the windows are all clean. A sheen is on every thing; a happy quiet reigns around.”

Of the

ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

of the Shakers a brief statement will suffice. In the early part of the eighteenth century arose the “French prophets,” the “Spiritualists” of that early day. They were subject to most remarkable manifestations, which in many respects were like those experienced by modern “mediums.” They had visions and revelations, were entranced, spoke with eloquent power under spiritual control, and were also subject to violent agitations of the body. The movement of which the “French prophets” were the center soon extended to other countries, and in England spread far and wide. In 1747 some members of the Society of Quakers, who had become subjects of this spiritualistic revival, formed themselves into a society of which Jane and James Wardley were the leaders. The members were often in their meetings seized with a mighty trembling; at other times they sang their songs of praise, shouting and leaping for joy; sometimes they would be compelled to shake their limbs, or run, or walk, “with a variety of other operations and signs, swiftly passing and repassing each other,

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

like clouds agitated with a mighty wind.”* These strange exercises gave them the appellation of Shakers, † which they have since borne. Of course, persecution followed, which only increased their numbers and unity. Ann Lee joined them with her parents, and although unable to read or write soon became a prominent member, and in 1770, while in prison, professed to have had a great revelation of Christ’s kingdom and glory, of man’s loss and the way of redemption, accompanied with a flow of the power of God into her soul which was like a fountain of living water. From that time she was acknowledged as Mother in Christ and called Mother Ann; and thenceforth she was “able to take up a full cross against all the doleful works of the flesh,” and especially against the great sin to which she ascribed the fall of Adam.

Four years later she claimed to have received a revelation directing her to come to America, where the true Christian Church would be established—a revelation accompanied by such “signs, visions, and extraordinary manifestations” as left no room for doubts. Two women and six men accompanied her, including her husband, who apostatized soon after their arrival in this country. The captain of the vessel on which they made the passage across the Atlantic forbade their peculiar demonstrations on board; but they, fearing God rather than man, went forth in the dance with songs and shoutings. The captain was enraged, threatened to put them overboard, and ac-

*“Shaker Compendium,” pp. 18-22.

†The name Alethians is now preferred by many Shakers as more expressive of their character as believers.

THE SHAKERS

tually proceeded to carry out his threat, when, a plank starting, the ship sprung a leak, and the water flowed in so rapidly that, in spite of the exertions of all hands at the pumps, "it gained upon them so fast that the whole ship's crew were greatly alarmed. The captain turned pale as a corpse, and said they must all perish before morning, for he saw no possible means to save the ship from sinking. But Mother Ann maintained her confidence in God, and said, 'Captain, be of good cheer; there shall not a hair of our heads perish. We shall all arrive safe at America. I just now saw two bright angels of God standing by the mast, through whom I received this promise.' She then encouraged the seamen, and she and her companions assisted at the pumps. Shortly after this a large wave struck the ship with great violence, and the loosened plank was closed to its place."* This wonderful circumstance (which was afterwards attested by the Captain and others) was viewed by all on board as a miraculous interposition of Providence. The Captain thereupon gave Mother Ann and her disciples full liberty to worship God in their own manner, and afterwards declared that had it not been for them all would have perished in the sea.

Arriving in New York, Mother Ann remained there for nearly two years, while most of her companions went up the river to Albany; all were dependent for support on the labor of their hands, and Mother Ann sought employment as a washer-woman.

In 1776 a settlement was made at Niskayuna, N. Y.,

*"Christ's First and Second Appearing," p. 622.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

seven miles from Albany. There they quietly remained, subduing the wilderness and the flesh, until, four years later, they were sought out by those who had been subjects of a great revival at New Lebanon, N. Y., and who were immediately convinced by Mother Ann's burning words against all evil and revelation of a pure, consecrated life in this world, that she and her followers were "in the very work for which they themselves had been so earnestly praying." Others visited this peculiar people from curiosity or higher motives, and their fame was spread abroad, so that multitudes came to hear the new and strange doctrines, and some believed them to be from God.

Persecutions followed, and many of the believers, including Mother Ann, were imprisoned; but these things were, as they believed, overruled for their good, as also the attempts to banish Mother Ann to the British Army, "all working effectually for the spreading of the new gospel."

After Mother Ann and her elders were released from prison (which was done by the order of Governor George Clinton) they again gathered at Niskayuna, where they were visited by great numbers from different parts of the States of New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Maine; and through the power and gifts of God (as it is recorded in the publications of the Shakers), which were abundantly manifested for the destruction of sin and the salvation of souls, many were filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*

*"Christ's First and Second Appearing," p. 627,

THE SHAKERS

It was at this remarkable period of Shaker history that Mother Ann, accompanied by five of her most earnest and devoted followers, made a journey to the New England States, which has been described as a "triumphal tour and a march to the cross." They were gone two years and four months, and during that time proclaimed the testimony to many thousands who thronged to hear them, suffering at the same time trials almost unspeakable, which repeatedly endangered their very lives.

They returned from this journey to Niskayuna in 1783, where in the year following Mother Ann died, in the forty-ninth year of her age. She was succeeded in the ministry by Elder James Whittaker, and he in 1787 by Elder Joseph Meacham and Lucy Wright, both of American birth. Elder Meacham was the great organizer of Shaker Communities.

SHAKERISM AS DEFINED BY SHAKERS.

The Shaker or Millennial Church rests upon a foundation of four "pillars, or basic principles: these are Virgin Purity, Christian Communism, Confession of Sin, and Separation from the World."

"Virgin Purity is of the utmost consequence in the Shaker Life. To secure this, Confession of Sin is essential, because all have sinned in a greater or less degree; and sin of any kind defiles the spirit. Hence, to live in purity we must first become pure, by removing all that defiles in thought, word and deed. In other words, whatever is contrary to the pure Christ spirit or virgin character must be brought to the light, and confession made thereof to God in the presence of a confidential witness.

"Christian Communism follows as a sequence. The

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

bond of union which unites all Shakers is spiritual and religious, hence unselfish. All are equal before God and one another; and, as in the institution of the primitive Christian Church, all share one interest in spiritual and temporal blessings, according to individual needs;—no rich, no poor.

“But Christian Communism cannot be maintained without a Separation from the World. Christian Communism, based upon Virginity, or Purity, with Confession of Sin as a safeguard, implies a total separation from, and antagonism to, all that is worldly or non-Christian. All worldly usages, manners, customs, loves and affections, which interpose between the individual citizen of the heavenly kingdom and his duties and privileges therein, must be abandoned.

“True Christian Communism can exist only through the principle of the Virgin Life. This excludes marriage from Shakerism;—that, being a selfish relation, cannot be incorporated with Communism, and does not belong to the Resurrection order, according to the words of Jesus Christ: ‘For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as angels of God in heaven.’ (Matt. 22: 30.)

“Jesus lived the virgin life,—left the earthly order to be fulfilled by those who remain on that plane. He is the Shaker exemplar; surely, to live as Jesus lived cannot be wrong.

“He taught that no man was worthy to be called his disciple until he would give up all to follow him,—to live as he lived. And that there might be no mistake about this, we are told that ‘all’ includes father, mother, wife, children, house and lands; yea, a man’s own life also. Thus a perfectly unselfish surrender was the qualification for Christian fellowship.

“The Shakers claim that a life based upon these principles secures salvation from sin and sorrow, pro-

THE SHAKERS

duces happiness here, in the present existence, which increases with growth of soul in the life beyond; and that it is the highest type of Christianity as taught by Jesus Christ, and revived by Ann Lee.”*

These four principles—Virginal Purity, Christian Communism, Confession, Separation from the World—are put forth as the essential things; but the Shakers have, besides, a very comprehensive theology on such points as the Duality of the Godhead, Salvation from Sin, the Second Appearing of Christ, the Resurrection, the New Birth, the Millennium, the Judgment, etc., which are elaborated in large works.

RULES WHICH GOVERN THE ADMISSION OF MEMBERS.

“1. All persons uniting with the Shaker Society, in any degree, must do it freely and voluntarily, according to their own faith and unbiased judgment.

“2. In the testimony of the Society, both public and private, no flattery or any undue influence is used; but the most plain and explicit statements of its faith and principles are laid before the inquirer: so that the whole ground may be comprehended, as far as possible, by every candidate for admission.

“3. No considerations of property are ever made use of by this Society to induce any person to join it, nor to prevent any person from leaving it.

“4. No believing husband or wife is allowed, by the principles of this Society, to separate from an unbelieving partner, except by mutual agreement; unless the conduct of the unbeliever be such as to warrant a separation by the laws of God and man. Nor can any husband or wife who has otherwise abandoned his or her partner be received into communion with the Society.

*“Brief Account of Shakers and Shakerism.”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"5. Any person becoming a member must rectify all his wrongs, and as fast and as far as it is in his power discharge all just and legal claims, whether of creditors or filial heirs.

"6. It is an established principle in the Society, that children who are faithful and obedient to their parents until they become of age are justly entitled to their equal portion of the estate of their parents, whether they continue with the Society or not.

"7. If an unbelieving wife separate from a believing husband by agreement, the husband must give her a just and reasonable share of the property; and if they have children who have arrived at years of understanding sufficient to judge for themselves, and who choose to go with their mother, they are not to be disinherited on that account."*

THE DIFFERENT ORDERS.

"The first or Novitiate Order includes those who receive faith, and come into a degree of relation with the Society, but choose to live in their own families and manage their own temporal concerns.

"The second or Junior Order is composed of persons who, not having the charge of families, and being under no embarrassments to hinder them from uniting together in Community order, choose to enjoy the benefits of that situation. These (for mutual safety) enter into a contract to devote their services freely to support the interest of the Family of which they are members so long as they continue in that order, stipulating at the same time to claim no pecuniary compensation for their services.

"Members of this Order have the privilege, at their option, by contract, to give freely the improvement of any part or all of their property to be used for the mutual benefit of the Family to which they be-

*"Brief Exposition," pp. 7, 8.

THE SHAKERS

long. The property itself may be resumed at any time according to the contract; but no interest can be claimed for the use thereof; nor can any member of such Family be employed therein for wages of any kind. Members of this class may retain the lawful ownership of all their own property as long as they think it proper and choose so to do; but at any time, after having gained sufficient experience to be able to act deliberately and understandingly, they may, if they choose, dedicate and devote a part or the whole and consecrate it forever to the support of the institution. But this is a matter of free choice.

“The third or Senior Order is composed of such persons as have had sufficient time and opportunity practically to prove the faith and manner of life practiced in the Society, and are thus prepared to enter fully, freely and voluntarily into a united and consecrated interest. These covenant and agree to dedicate and devote themselves and services, with all that they possess, to the service of God and the support of the gospel forever, solemnly promising never to bring debt nor damage, claim nor demand, against the Society, nor against any member thereof, for any property or service which they have thus devoted to the uses and purposes of the Community. This Order is also called the Church Order.

“To enter fully into this Order is considered by the Society to be a matter of the utmost importance to the parties concerned, and therefore requires the most mature and deliberate consideration; for, after having made such a dedication, according to the laws of justice and equity, there can be no ground for retraction. Nor can they by those laws recover any thing whatever which has been thus dedicated. Of this all are fully apprised before entering into the contract. Yet should any afterwards withdraw, the Trustees have discretionary power to bestow upon

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

them whatever may be thought reasonable, not on the ground of any just or legal claim, but merely as an act of charity. No person, however, who withdraws peaceably is sent away empty."*

SHAKER GOVERNMENT.

First, there are several Ministries, each consisting when fully organized of two brethren and two sisters, and each having special supervision of two or more Societies; the Ministry of Mount Lebanon is called the Head of Influence, and is recognized as the Central Executive of all the Shaker Societies. The first in the Mount Lebanon Ministry is pre-eminent or Head of the Millennial Church, and may appoint his or her own successor, and with the approval of his or her associate Ministers make any regulation or appointment deemed essential to the welfare of the Church.

Subordinate to the Ministries there are in every fully organized Community or Family in each Society two Elders and two Eldresses, having special charge of its spiritual affairs, and two Deacons and two Deaconesses having charge of temporal matters—these latter being subordinate to the Elders and Eldresses, as they in turn are to the Ministry. The Deacons may be specially appointed as acting Trustees to hold titles to the property of the Family to which they belong and manage its businesses. Throughout the whole Society the inferiors report to the superiors. Authority is transmitted from the head down, and one rank obeys another.

*"Brief Exposition," pp. 11-17.

THE SHAKERS

It will be noted above that in the Ministerial or highest office in the Millennial Church both sexes are represented, as they are in all the offices and functions of the Shaker Government. The Shakers "believe in the equality of the sexes in all honors, duties, rights and privileges." A woman founded the organization; a woman (Lucy Wright) held its first office for twenty-five years during its greatest period of prosperity; women are as free as men in all exercises of their meetings; women manage their own departments of industry; and it is natural that they should joyously proclaim that they are fully emancipated from masculine bondage. My observation confirms their claim: in this matter the Shakers appear to stand at the head of the Communistic column!

DAILY ROUTINE.

The members are expected to rise simultaneously at the ringing of the bell, which in the summer is at half-past four, and in the winter at five; breakfast being an hour and a-half later; dinner at twelve; supper at six, except on Sunday, when the Shakers rise and breakfast half an hour later, dine lightly at twelve, and sup at four.

A large bell rings a few moments before meal-time. The brothers and sisters eat apart from each other. Entering the dining-room at separate doors they "quietly arrange themselves near their respective places at the table; then all simultaneously kneel in silent thanks for a few moments, then rise and seat themselves noiselessly at table. No talking, laughing or whispering is allowed while thus partaking of

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

God's blessings. After eating, all rise together at the signal of the first elder, kneel as before, and leave the room as quietly as they entered."

All who are able must labor a certain number of hours daily, and must subordinate their own wishes respecting choice of industries to the general interest of the Society as expressed through its officers.

No one can absent himself from meeting without permission of his superiors.

The amusements, the reading and the correspondence of the members, are under the supervision and control of the Elders and Eldresses.

PROGRESSIVE CHANGES.

But many regulations which were once rigidly enforced have either been modified or dropped altogether. There is less restriction than formerly regarding the use of books published outside of the Societies; more freedom in conversation and fraternal intercourse; the beard may be worn, once strictly forbidden; instrumental music is now heard in nearly every Shaker Community; flowers are in some families cultivated for their beauty and fragrance; even the dress of the Shakers has undergone important changes. No one would now mistake a Shaker or Shakeress in costume for a Gentile; but the close observer would detect many departures from the old regulation-standard, as described by Elkins;* and these departures are always in the direction of simplicity. You may be sure a Shaker will never

*"Fifteen Years in the Senior Order of Shakers," by Harvey Elkins.



ELDER FREDERICK W EVANS.

THE SHAKERS

change his dress for the sake of conforming to fashion; if he changes at all it will be because he has fully satisfied himself that the change will be an improvement.

Once, "no image or portrait of any thing upon the earth or under the earth" was suffered to exist in any Society. Now photographs are occasionally taken of the members, but this kind of picture-making is not encouraged by the Elders. "We prohibit pictures of individual members," wrote Elder Giles B. Avery to the author, "because, 1st, of their tendency to idolatry; 2d, the liability of causing personal vanity; 3d, the consequent disunity which might result from preferences given to individuals thus noticed."

In matters of diet great modifications have taken place, especially in the Eastern Societies, for which the deceased Elder Evans of Mount Lebanon deserves especial credit. He labored zealously to leaven the entire order with hygienic wisdom on the subject of food, ventilation, drainage, etc.; and enforced his exhortations with the irresistible logic of facts. After he began to give attention to sanitary conditions in his Family at Mount Lebanon the drug-store disappeared and sickness became an unusual thing. Pork is not eaten by any of the Shakers; and at Mount Lebanon and in some other Societies a hygienic table is set for those who prefer that their bread and mush be made of unbolted flour, their food lightly seasoned, and that no meat shall be set before them.

Abstinence from alcoholic and fermented liquors is universally practiced.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Tobacco is used by a few aged members, but it is hoped will soon disappear from every Shaker settlement.

Some of the Societies are well furnished with bathing facilities, and that great luxury and health-agent, the Turkish Bath, was introduced some years ago into one Family.

Important changes have also taken place in the internal character of Shakerism; its leaders are more liberal and tolerant than they were half a century ago; more ready to see good in other systems, and less prompt to condemn what does not accord with their own. It is also obvious that there is a growing party of progressives among the Shakers—men and women who, while firmly adhering to all the essentials of Shakerism, demand that non-essentials shall not stand in the way of genuine progress and culture. One of their Elders (G. Albert Lomas) wrote to the author some years ago: "The stringency of our rules can be attributed to Elder Joseph Meacham—in many of which he fairly copied the blue laws of Connecticut." Still it is natural that the more conservative should question the policy of the progressives. "I do not think," says one of their ablest thinkers and writers, in a recent letter, "we have gained anything by relaxing discipline, or letting down from the cross. The liberty of the animal man is bondage to the spiritual. Civilization imposes self-restraint on the natural impulses and passions. The complete liberation of man's moral and spiritual nature involves the complete sacrifice and subjection of his individual liberty to grat-

THE SHAKERS

ify the carnal nature. 'Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,' or choose it."

DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER.

It is a common charge against the Shaker system that it is unfavorable to individual development; but considering that, aside from the recruits brought them by revivals, the Shakers have had to depend for their new members largely upon the unfortunates who flock to them for homes when they find the struggle for existence too hard for them, and upon orphans and the children of poor people, glad to put their little ones where they will have enough to eat and wear, and be reared in habits of strict morality, the wonder is that so many capable men and women have developed in the Shaker Societies; for they have had many persons who as thinkers, writers, speakers, and men of marked business capacity, would deservedly command respect for their ability in any circumstances; and they are credited with a long list of useful inventions, including a mower and reaper, the circular saw, a printing-press, a planing-machine, tongue-and-groove machine, revolving harrow, pea-sheller, cut nails, metallic pen, etc. Still the question remains whether the Shaker system does not tend to produce too great distinctions between the governing and governed classes—whether even in a theocratic form of government, like that of the Shakers, it is not wisest to so conduct affairs that every one shall feel, not only that he is personally interested in the general prosperity, but that he contributes to it according to the measure of

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

his ability. Among the Shakers, questions relating to business, for instance, are not as a rule discussed in general assembly, but among the leaders only, others being consulted at their option. The easiest way to manage a Community is to perfect the machinery of government, and let a few smart persons run it; but it cannot be the best way to develop the individual members and draw out their enthusiasm: nor does it always prove the safest, as the Bishop Hill Community of Swedes in Henry County, Illinois, learned to their great sorrow, as will hereafter appear. The Shakers, too, could tell of unfortunate investments made even in recent years by their Trustees, involving losses reaching far into the thousands of dollars, and can hardly need other illustrations of the truth of the old adage, that "in a multitude of counsellors there is safety." Because of such unwise investments, and the resultant losses, it is urged by some of the Shakers that their Covenant should be so modified as to limit the power of the Trustees in the disposal and management of the property of the Society.

But whatever criticism may be merited by the governing class in the Shaker Societies—those who carry the temporal and spiritual keys—the rules of the Society do not exempt them from labor, and forbid them to play the nabob in matters of dress and luxury. "No one who is able to labor can be permitted to live idly upon the labors of others. All, including Ministers, Elders and Deacons, are required to be employed in some manual occupation, according to their several abilities, when not engaged in

THE SHAKERS

other necessary duties." The highest officials work with their hands, as well as the members last received into the fold.

PERSECUTIONS.

Of persecution, for the first half century of their existence at least, the Shakers had their full share. It is recorded that while making their missionary journey to the New England States, in 1781, as previously mentioned, "they were whipped, beaten with clubs, stoned, kicked, dragged about by their legs and arms, and sometimes by the hair of their heads;" and that at Enfield, Conn., while Mother Ann and her disciples were assembled for worship in an upper chamber of a house that was still standing when I last visited the place, a mob of two hundred men suddenly appeared before the house demanding that Mother Ann and her Elders should depart within one hour on peril of being forcibly carried away; and it is written that they appeared before the mob with song and gospel trumpet, and that such was the effect upon the multitude that some were converted by what they saw and heard, receiving a faith that ever after abode with them.

At Lebanon, Ohio, in 1810, their houses were beset at night; their windows broken; their persons assaulted with clubs and stones; their fences thrown down; cattle were turned into their grain-fields; their fruit-trees cut and mangled; their horses cropped and otherwise disfigured; their barns and stables, containing their stores of hay and grain, burned, as also their place of worship. "Legal prosecutions were instituted

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

against them upon frivolous pretenses; petitions drawn up, subscribed and laid before the legislature; and finally, to insure success to their measures, subscription papers, accompanied by malicious reports, and enforced by inflammatory speeches, were industriously circulated by their enemies with a view to raise offenses sufficient to expel the believers from the country." And in fact a body of five hundred armed men, accompanied by a miscellaneous crowd estimated at fifteen hundred, appeared before the principal dwelling of the Shakers, and demanded that the Society should relinquish their principles and practices, mode of worship and manner of living, or quit the country. But the "calm, peaceable, harmless deportment" of the Shakers, together with the fact that a searching examination of their premises by a committee of the mob's own choosing disclosed no just cause of complaint, had such a quieting effect upon their visitors that they one and all left without any violence. In the words of a Shaker poet:

"The troops were dismissed, the scrutiny was done,
And the retreat commenced before the setting sun;
In peace and consolation we saw the matter close,
Took supper, had worship, and went to our repose."

In all these experiences they resisted not evil, but rather gave place unto wrath; and so it has been through their long history—they have never departed from the ways of peace, refusing to participate in war even so much as to accept the pensions awarded to such members as had served as United States soldiers before they became soldiers of the cross. When during the civil war their men were drafted they clearly

THE SHAKERS

set forth their abhorrence of war, and the President ordered the brethren to be released from camp. They remember with lively gratitude this deliverance, for which they credit both Lincoln and Stanton, and mention with great pleasure the days subsequently passed in their abode of peace by the great War Secretary.

REVIVALS.

The Shaker Societies, beginning with the first, have been the fruits of revivals, and upon them the Shakers still place their chief reliance for an increase of membership, which shall fill their large homes with new life and give new prosperity to all their enterprises. They refer with special interest to the great Kentucky revival of nearly a century ago. Shortly before her death Mother Ann had said, "The next opening of the gospel will be in the southwest; it will be at a great distance, and there will be a great work of God." Remembering these words her followers were expectant, and when reports came to them of the revival in progress in the far-off States of Kentucky and Ohio the Society at Mount Lebanon sent three messengers to open the testimony of salvation and of the second coming of Christ. They set out on the first day of January, 1805, and made a foot journey of more than a thousand miles, in obedience to what seemed to them a divine call. Guided, as they believed by Providence, they came to the house of Malcham Worley, in the town of Lebanon, Ohio—a man of wealth and education, who had been a leader in the great revival. Worley received the messengers almost as angels of God. From this spot the work

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

spread into the neighboring States of Kentucky and Indiana, and resulted in the formation of several Societies.

SPIRITUALISM.

The Shakers are Spiritualists, and had the modern "rapping manifestations" many years prior to the Rochester "knockings." Elder Evans wrote to the *Atlantic Monthly* that from 1837 to 1844 there was an influx from the spirit world which extended "throughout all the Shaker Societies, making media by the dozen, whose various exercises, not to be suppressed even in their public meetings, rendered it imperatively necessary to close them all to the world during a period of seven years, in consequence of the then unprepared state of the world, to which the whole of the manifestations, and the meetings, too, would have been as unadulterated foolishness, or as inexplicable mysteries." The communications of the spirits appear to have been received with much credulity, some believing that the messages came from the Lord Jehovah; and faithful records were made of them and published in two large volumes entitled, "A Holy, Sacred, and Divine Roll and Book from the Lord God of Heaven to the Inhabitants of Earth," published in 1843, and "The Divine Book of Holy and Eternal Wisdom, Revealing the Word of God," published in 1849. Although these works were published by the Shakers, and then approved by them as "revealing the Word of God," and coming "from the Lord God of heaven," they are not included in their advertised list of publications, and I know are not now favorably

THE SHAKERS

regarded by many of the Shakers, and there are certainly numerous passages in these works answering to the language used by Elder Evans in the above quotation.

CELIBACY AND RACE CULTURE.

The Shakers themselves are persuaded that the celibate condition is superior to any other, and raises them above the worldly or generative plane. That every human passion may be exercised in the spirit of purity they have not yet learned; and we must respect their earnest efforts to separate themselves from every fleshly temptation that they may lead sinless lives. They do not wholly condemn marriage, as many suppose, but, on the contrary, admit that it is a natural and proper relation for those who have not been called to the higher or resurrection order. Their position respecting both marriage and celibacy was well described by H. L. Eades, the former able Minister of the South Union Society of Kentucky, as follows:

“We Shakers are up-stairs, above the rudimental state of man, which is the generative. The other Communities are down-stairs—still in the rudimental. We are not of that group. Our work is chiefly for the soul and in the soul-world, all externals being merely incidental, whether there are many or few at any given point in space. Theirs is mainly for the body combined with the intellect; they labor for their special improvement, comfort, gratification and pleasure—all well enough on the lower (not the lowest) floor, but whereon no one can be a Christian, because Christ was not there; while these things with us

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

are ignored or held in abeyance to the spirit-dictation, in obedience to the teaching and example of Christ."

The Shakers, according to Elder Eades, recognize three conditions or three stories—the second floor, first floor, and basement or "lowest floor;" and that it is all right for those who occupy the first floor to multiply their kind, but not right for those living in the basement, because they are too degraded in body and mind; and not right for those living up-stairs or on the second floor, because they have been called to flee from the flesh with all its affections and lusts. Now it is conceivable that the house should have more than two stories and a basement; that there should be at least a third story, in which love and parentage are exercised without sensuality or idolatry, and in the spirit of true science for the good of humanity. If the Shakers could recognize the truth that the exercise of any function in the spirit of purity is not only better than its exercise in sensuality, but better than its disuse, they might find themselves going up-stairs again!

The revered Elder James S. Prescott (now deceased) addressed a letter to the *American Socialist* in which he took a step in advance of Elder Eades, and welcomed Scientific Propagation in its application to the human race as the hope of the world in a physical sense. He said:

"What is the reason man does not know how to improve his own race, as well as he knows how to improve the ox, the sheep, the horse, and the feathered tribes? He does know how,—it is by observing the same law, walking by the same rule, and minding the

THE SHAKERS

same things. At our State and county fairs we see that the lower order of animals has been carried to a high degree of perfection by stirpiculture or scientific propagation; and it is by the same means that the human race can be improved physically, i. e., by scientific selection and combination in obedience to certain given laws of reproduction. As things are, multitudes of persons of both sexes are no more suitable to reproduce human beings in the image of God than the roach-backed, crooked-legged, spindle-shanked, slab-sided, Indian ponies are suitable for generating the best types of the noble horse!"

This is pretty strong language for a Shaker, but it must be remembered that these good people have had unusual opportunities to observe unfavorable specimens of the genus homo. Of the many thousands of children placed in their Societies for one cause and another very few have remained after reaching years of maturity or developed other than ignoble traits of character. "Since I came here forty-nine years ago," said an elder of one of the Families of the Society then presided over by Elder Prescott, "we have taken in young people enough to make a continuous line half a mile long; and I alone remain." "Out of eighty boys that went to school, in the course of five winters, with myself," said a seceder from the Hancock Society, "not one besides myself remained till he was twenty years old." The Shakers themselves are as well aware of their present lack of prosperity as their outside friends and critics, but they are seemingly unmoved by such things, standing firm to their principles and calling, and leaving the future to the God they serve. "If

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

there are but five souls among you," said the beloved Elder Whittaker a century ago, "that abide faithful this testimony will overcome all nations."

RETURNING PRODIGALS.

If, however, Shaker homes are not sufficiently attractive to hold their young people at the age when the world and the flesh offer the strongest inducements, they are yet warm enough with love and friendship and the presence of the Good Spirit to induce many wanderers from their circle to return, to find the contentment and rest they have sought elsewhere in vain. The story of many an humble Shaker would be full of instruction could it be written. I recall one that seemed to me of thrilling interest as I listened to its recital. Taken among the Shakers by his parents when a small boy, our hero had run away after some years—gone on to the lakes—gone into the far west and south—attached himself to a United States surveying and exploring party—married—lived among the Chipewas and other Indian tribes for years, until he learned their language and ways of life—until a life of roving and hunting, with its perils and excitements, its songs and camp-fires, was far more attractive to him than civilized life with all its artificial accessories—returning after twenty years to the home of self-denial and peace he had fled from in his youth, satisfied that it is the best place on earth for those who prefer the joys of the spirit to the vexations of the flesh. Singularly enough, his father, whose grave he pointed out among the evergreens, had had a similar experience—running away when a young man and the flesh was strong, and

THE SHAKERS

returning to mature in spirit for the hereafter. There is indeed, said my Shaker friend,

“A divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.”

Whether the Shakers would have had better success in retaining their younger members had they been more favorable to amusements may be questioned; but a family or Community without amusements for all ages is deprived of much innocent pleasure and happiness, and children without such means of recreation and sport are robbed of joys that are rightfully theirs.

LONGEVITY.

Celibacy is thought by many to be less favorable to health than marriage. If this be true it only proves that the hygienic conditions of Shaker Societies are greatly superior to those of common society, for their members are long-lived even for Communists. The eightieth year is often reached, and many live far past the ninetieth. A Shaker friend recently handed me the following remarkable mortuary statistics of the Mt. Lebanon and Hancock Societies:

12 members died at	90 years.
8 members died at	91 years.
12 members died at	92 years.
5 members died at	93 years.
3 members died at	94 years.
2 members died at	95 years.
2 members died at	96 years.
3 members died at	97 years.
1 member died at	98 years.
1 member died at	99 years.
1 member died at	100 years.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

- 1 member died at 102 years.
- 1 member died at 108 years.
- 1 member died at 120 years.

SHAKER LITERATURE.

The Shakers have published numerous works in explanation and defense of their principles and life—all free from “the follies and fripperies of modern style.” I have a list of forty-four of their books and pamphlets, which is by no means complete. The following are regarded as the most important to be read by those who would fully acquaint themselves with the principles and practical life of the Shakers:

“Christ’s First and Second Appearing and Millennial Church;”

“Dunlavy’s Manifesto;”

“Summary View of the Millennial Church,” by H. C. Green and S. Y. Wells;

“Shaker Theology,” by H. L. Eades;

“Precepts of Mother Ann and the First Elders;”

“Shakers’ Compendium,” by F. W. Evans;

“Auto-Biography of a Shaker,” by F. W. Evans;

“Concise History of the Shakers,” by H. C. Blinn;

“The Kentucky Revival,” by Richard McNeamar;

“Pearly Gate,” by A. G. Hollister and Calvin Green;

“Concise History of the Shakers,” by Chas. Edson Robinson.

From Jan., 1871, till Dec., 1899, the Shakers published monthly *The Shaker Manifesto*.

COVENANT CONFIRMED BY LEGAL TESTS.

The Shakers have had thousands of secessions and countless difficulties with seceding malcontents. These have many times been carried into the courts, which

THE SHAKERS

have sustained the provisions of their covenant with members, and thus their legal contests, together with those of the Harmonists, the Zoar Separatists and other Communistic Societies, have fully established the following points, as epitomized by Judge J. W. Towner, of Santa Ana, Cal. :

“That Community contracts are not against public policy, nor contrary to any principle of law or morals ;

“That they are not in derogation of the inalienable right of liberty of conscience, but are really an exercise of that right ;

“That they are supported by a good and sufficient consideration, viz., one’s support, etc., from the common fund while a member ;

“That they are maintainable and should be supported on the principles of the law of trusts and charitable uses as administered by courts of chancery ;

“That if such contract were illegal and void a party to it could have no recovery against others, on the principle that they are *in pari delicto*, and the law leaves them where it finds them.”

In Ohio the Society at Union Village had a great lawsuit long ago which settled the question whether persons can bequeath their property to a Community. Malcham Worley left his property to that Society. His relatives set up the plea of insanity. The celebrated Tom Corwin appeared as counsel for the Shakers. “George Fox,” he said, “wore leather breeches and did many eccentric things ; Martin Luther threw his inkstand at the devil ; but the Quakers will not admit that George Fox was crazy, and Protestants will not admit that Martin Luther was crazy ; neither can it be allowed that Malcham Worley was

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

crazy, because by a deed drawn by himself he chose to give his property to this peculiar people !”

The worship of the Shakers has deservedly attracted much attention. I have attended their meetings at different places, and have been deeply impressed by the sincerity and fervor manifest in their devotional exercises. The following letter descriptive of a meeting at the Canterbury Society in New Hampshire originally appeared in the *American Socialist* :

SHAKER WORSHIP.

How Conducted—Speeches—Songs and Marches—
The Religious Element in Communities.

Dear Socialist :

The Shakers have gatherings of some sort nearly every evening of the week, but only the Sunday meetings, which bring together all the Families of a Society, are open to the public ; and that part of the public living near this Society fully appreciates its privileges in this respect. I counted thirty-seven carriages yesterday around the meeting-house, which had brought people from towns near and distant, and many persons came on foot ; the total number of strangers and visitors present at the meeting being estimated at two hundred or more. I am informed that during the summer months this number is sometimes doubled, compelling most of the Shaker brothers and sisters to absent themselves ; and that those who are present are often crowded into such close quarters that their “goings forth in the dance” are necessarily omitted.

Yesterday there were present about thirty Shaker brothers and fifty sisters. The exercises were begun by the reading of an original anthem by one of the



SHAKER MEETING AT CANTERBURY, N. H.

THE SHAKERS

sisters, in a voice so clear and distinct that every syllable was easily heard by the whole assembly :

I looked, and lo! a multitude
Stood on Mount Zion.

In the singing of this anthem and of the many hymns which followed, I noticed that most of the worshipers took part, including nearly every one of the sisters.

The anthem ended, a brother stepped into the space separating the brothers and sisters—who in their worship are always formed in ranks on opposite sides of the room, headed respectively by the first Elder and Eldress—and in a few appropriate words, addressed to both the believers and unbelievers present, indicated the object of the meeting and the spirit in which it should be conducted, and expressed his confidence that they should receive strength from on high. Then about a dozen of the singers, brothers and sisters, stood in the center of the room, and sang

O, tell me not of earthly wealth or favor,

while all the others marched around them, singing and keeping time with hands and feet—their hands making a motion as if gathering something.

Then followed,

Trust in me; trust in me,

and

The bright morning of the new creation;

the singing growing more and more lively, and the marching approaching nearer and nearer to a dance, which it never quite reached.

The marching ceased. A brother, without leaving his position in the ranks, said :

“We have been singing, brothers and sisters, about a new relation. It occurs to me that I appreciate any thing new when it is better than the old ; and the gospel

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

relation is certainly better than the old relations of a selfish character. I rejoice that I can claim that relation with every one that is really at work for God's kingdom as his chief aim and object. I love to be in such good company; and I give you my pledge, brothers and sisters, that I will from this day strive to overcome all sin and wickedness and make my heart pure."

Such simple, earnest utterances as this were certain to draw forth short responses of approval or indorsement.

Then they sang, while all knelt down—

Sweet angels, come nearer;
O, nearer and nearer.
Do list to our pleadings
For strength from on high;
This world's seeming pleasures,
Its riches, its honors,
The immortal spirit
Can never supply.

Then arising, a sister said she felt it was good to be there; that good angels would come nearer; that we have the promise if we draw near to God he will draw near to us; that divine power would be given us if we take up our cross against the sins of the world. She thanked God that she was not a slave in any sense of the word; that she possessed all her faculties, and could devote them to God and the virgin life. She was not ashamed of her calling; she rejoiced that she was called to separate herself from the world. Christians were to be the salt of the earth—she did not want to be without its savor.

Another was thankful that the Shakers had been called out of the generative order into a new and more excellent way of living—a virgin life; that their lives and conduct might be conformed to the angelic state.

Then marching was resumed, and became more and more exhilarating, while the inspiring hymn was sung:

I've enlisted once forever,
In the cause of truth to stand;

THE SHAKERS

Beyond all doubts and fears
I give my heart and hand.

My feet have found the way,
My soul has heard the call;
O heaven, give me strength
To triumph over all.

I fear no threat'ning storms
That may my sky o'ercast;
The power of God alone
Will shield me from the blast.

What though my sun be hidden,
My faith I'll keep in view,
The way of life I've chosen
With purpose firm and true.

This was followed by a slow march to the song,

Come ye out! come ye out!

which reminded one how necessary it is to keep step, to follow the lead, and as we march on toward heaven and life eternal each should make his life an example that others may safely follow.

Then came the most effective discourse of the day by a sister*—of whom Frederica Bremer wrote many years ago: "She is of singular beauty, and a more fascinating, inspired glance than hers I never beheld." Hers is an inspirational nature; through her are given many of the songs which enter so largely into the worship and daily life of the Shakers. Here is one:

Ever changing, ever alming
Toward a higher, better life;
Ever learning, ever yearning,
Is the good believer's strife.

Life unfolding, spirit molding,
Is the law of endless growth;
Feeding thought and word and action
From the wells of boundless truth.

The burden of her utterance was genuineness in one's religious character. This was to her essential and above every other consideration. Form and ceremony are as the passing wind. To rely upon them

*Eldress Dorothy Durgin, since deceased.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

would be only an irritation to her spirit. She consecrated her life anew. Her past life of self-denial had been glorious, and sufficient to lead her to continued consecration. She loved to recognize that the distance between her soul and its Maker was being spanned. Words had not power to express the love of God in her soul. She loved the virgin life; she loved her Savior, who bore the cross, and who is our example. Her work was individual—she must experience the work of God in her own soul. That is worth more than the whole world. But that work must be genuine. "The world loveth its own; it can never take us in. It is bound to maintain the generative life. We have the work of regeneration to maintain, as did our Savior. I love our cross. I will keep the purity of my heart toward all mankind. I will keep the solemn vow I make this morning."

Her discourse finished, there were more songs, more marching, more simple heart-utterances from the faithful brothers and sisters. Of the songs,

Number me with the pilgrim band
Who are traveling to the promised land,
Giving to God both heart and hand,
United for the truth to stand—

'Tis an uphill work we're called unto,
An uphill march till we've traveled through;
Then falter not, beloved few,
For your reward is just and true—

was sung with much spirit, all marching the while with joyous step, and their countenances aglow with the fervor which can only come from a faith within.

There was great freedom—no hesitation—no awkward pauses—no useless formalities—no waiting for one another—the young and old alike were free.

My sketch of Shaker worship is extended; but I am certain that it is impossible to understand the Shakers without comprehending their religious ordinances, and especially their meetings. People inquire, "What holds

THE SHAKERS

the Shakers together?" I believe their meetings should have the principal credit. They are not all equally interesting—some that I have attended have been dull; but they all have this peculiarity, that every member who is present takes some part in the exercises—if not in speaking, then in singing or marching; and all must feel in some degree their harmonizing, unifying power. Mere doctrines, however good, will not hold people together in Communities for a century; it requires an afflatus; and this is largely dependent for its effects upon the assembling of the members together. Community builders may some day find a way to produce the requisite harmony and unity without appealing so strongly and persistently to the religious element; but facts thus far in the history of the world say nay.

W. A. H.

With this letter I close my account of the Shakers. Those interested may procure their publications; others will conclude they have had quite enough of the history, principles and practical life of this peculiar people; and still others will criticise the author for having given too favorable an account of them; and possibly it is, for although not a believer in their fundamental principles, I have freely expressed my sincere respect and admiration for this God-fearing people, who can truly boast that "for more than a hundred years they have lived prosperous, contented, happy lives, making their land bloom like the fairest garden; and during all these years have never spent among themselves a penny for police, for lawyers, for judges, for poor-houses, for penal institutions, or any like 'improvements' of the outside world." Should they cease to exist as organized bodies their example would live

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

and proclaim through all the ages to come the practicability of Communal Society based on Christian Brotherhood and dominated by a strong religious control.

EXISTING SHAKER SOCIETIES.

Alfred, Alfred, York Co., Me.
Canterbury, . . . Shaker Village, Merrimack Co., N. H.
Enfield, Enfield, Grafton Co., N. H.
Enfield, Shaker Station, Hartford, Co., Conn.
Gloucester, . . . Sabbath Day Lake, Cumberland Co.,
Maine.
Hancock, . . . West Pittsfield, Berkshire Co., Mass.
Harvard, . . . Ayer, Middlesex Co., Mass.
Mt. Lebanon, . . Mt. Lebanon, Columbia Co., N. Y.
Pleasant Hill, . . Pleasant Hill, Mercer Co., Ky.
South Union, . . South Union, Logan Co., Ky.
Shirley, Shirley Village, Middlesex Co., Mass.
Union Village, . . Lebanon, Warren Co., Ohio.
Watervliet, . . . Shakers, Albany Co., N. Y.
Watervliet, . . . Preston, Hamilton Co., Ohio.
Whitewater, . . Dayton, Montgomery Co., Ohio.

THE HARMONISTS.

When the Duke of Saxe-Weimar visited Economy, three-quarters of a century ago, it was at its point of greatest prosperity. It had a thousand inhabitants. Every house was occupied, every factory fully manned. There was a fine museum; costly paintings (one of which, "Christ Healing the Sick," by Benjamin West, may still be seen) ornamented the house built for the founder, and evidences of prosperity every-where gladdened the eye. Sixty or seventy girls, the Duke says, collected in one of the factory rooms, and, with their venerated founder seated in their midst, sang their spiritual and other songs in a delightful manner. "With real emotion did I witness this interesting scene. Their factories and work-shops," he goes on to say, "were warmed during the winter by means of pipes connected with the steam-engine; and all the workmen had very healthy complexions, and moved me deeply by the warm-hearted friendliness with which they saluted the elder Rapp. I was also much gratified to see vessels containing fresh, sweet-scented flowers standing on all the machines. The neatness which universally reigned was in every respect worthy of praise."

Huge three and four-story structures, then or soon thereafter used as woolen-mill, cotton-mill, silk-mill, or for other manufacturing purposes, still stand as

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

monuments of past enterprise; but all are now idle; neither cotton, woolen nor silk goods are made; the voices of the singing factory-girls no longer delight the visitor as they delighted the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. No longer the night-watch cries, "A day is past, and a step made nearer our end—our time runs away, and the joys of heaven are our reward." The thousand members are reduced to nine, and of these two sisters and a brother in his dotage are all that remain of the oldest members. When I was at Economy in 1876 there were one hundred, and they were to me the greatest objects of interest there. Most of the men were old and short and stout, wearing for week-day dress blue "round-about," like boys' spencers, and pants of the same color, and broad-brimmed hats; and as you met them here and there they impressed you as full of quiet dignity and genuine politeness. The women were dressed quite as oddly as the men, with their short loose gowns, kerchiefs across the shoulders, and caps that run up to the top of a high back-comb.

But however much you might be surprised at their strange and unfashionable attire, the briefest acquaintance made you conscious of their sterling virtues. Economy, industry, business integrity, hospitality, benevolence: these they possessed and more. They had a repose of character, a resignation to God's providences, and an unwavering faith in his overruling care, in comparison with which their wealth was as dross. I can never forget the impression made upon me by their leader, Jacob Henrici, as he told me the

THE HARMONISTS

story of his connection with the Society—how he first heard of it in Germany when a young man with a good position and fine prospects—how he prayed to God to know whether he should come to America that he might connect himself with it—how he obtained what seemed to him a clear answer in the affirmative—how, after he had made his preparations for the journey, his friends persuaded him to reconsider his purpose—how he again betook himself to prayer and the counsel of the godly—how he was clearly convinced for the second time of his duty to set out—how, after his arrival in America, he first established his aged parents in a good home before visiting the Society which had attracted him across the ocean—how deeply he was impressed by its life and spirit when he made the first visit—how he pledged himself to Father Rapp to join the Community, and then returned and labored for years to place his parents above the possibility of want, before executing his long-cherished purpose. He concluded his story by saying he had never since doubted that it is possible to get a definite answer to prayer. Mr. Henrici was educated as a teacher—was a lover of music, and exhibited in many ways the unmistakable evidences of culture and genuine nobility of character.

George Rapp, the founder of the Harmony Society, was born Oct. 28, 1757, in the town of Iptingen, Würtemberg, and was the son of a farmer and vineyardist; and he himself worked at the same occupations in his youth and early manhood, and also at hand-weaving during the winter months.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Religiously inclined, young Rapp became a devoted student of the Bible, especially of Christ's teachings, and was thereby convinced, as other earnest souls have been, that the established church of Wurttemberg (the Lutheran) was not the embodiment of Christ's doctrines and life; and when he was about thirty years old he began to give Sunday talks in his own house to his friends and neighbors on the subject of religion. He soon found himself the center of increasing interest, many of his hearers coming from distant places. Clerical persecution followed, and went so far that the King was petitioned to banish Rapp and his disciples from the kingdom. "Are they good citizens? Do they pay their taxes?" inquired the King; and being informed that they were good and orderly citizens, and that they promptly paid their dues to both church and state, he tore up the petition, saying, "Let them believe as they please." But this the Lutheran clergy had no thought of doing, notwithstanding the King's order, and they continued their persecution of Rapp and his disciples, causing them to be fined and imprisoned, and otherwise malignly treated; and hence they inevitably became more and more alienated from the church, more and more outspoken in their denunciation of its vices and corruptions, and more and more inclined, after being refused permission to form a settlement by themselves in their own country, to seek a country in which they could worship God in their own way without molestation.

When this purpose took form among them there

THE HARMONISTS

were about three hundred families who recognized Rapp as their religious teacher and leader; and at their request in 1803, with a few friends, including his son John, he set sail for America in search of a suitable location for his flock, whom he left behind in charge of his adopted son Frederick. Rapp and his pioneer associates selected a tract of 5,000 acres of unimproved land in Butler County, Pennsylvania, in the valley of the Connoquenessing; and in the following spring and summer of 1804 Rapp's Wurtemberg disciples arrived in this country in three ships, but it was not till February, 1805, that houses were prepared for their shelter; and then the Community organization was completed by placing their property in a common fund, and entering into a mutual covenant to labor for the good of the Community, and submit to its laws and regulations, and in case of subsequent withdrawal never to demand remuneration for their own labor or that of their children.

The years immediately following their Community organization were years of severe toil, hardship and trial. In the beginning there was not on their domain a fruit-tree nor a vine, not even a furrow had been turned. Nearly a shipload of their Wurtemberg friends were induced to make a settlement in another part of Pennsylvania; others chose not to connect themselves with the Society after arriving in America, and still others, including some of the most wealthy families, dissatisfied with the communistic views of the majority, withdrew themselves and their property; and there were of course among so many hundreds

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

some disaffected and complaining members, who only increased the burdens of the contented ones. In addition to these things the credit of the Society was greatly injured by the reports that it was about to break in pieces because of internal dissensions. But with the brave souls who had said to themselves before leaving their Wurtemberg homes, that they were ready to subsist on roots, if need be, if only they might worship God in their own chosen way, there could be no such thing as failure.

The progress of the Community in the first five years and its causes were thus described by a visitor :

“We were struck with surprise and admiration at the astonishing progress in improvements and the establishment of manufactories which this little republic has made in the period of five years. They have indeed made the ‘wilderness to blossom as the rose.’ They have done more essential good for this country in the short period of five years than the same number of families scattered about the country have done in fifty. And this arises from their unity and brotherly love, added to their uniform and persevering industry. They know no mercenary view, no self-interest, except that which adds to the interest and happiness of the whole Community. All are equally industrious, for an idler has no companion. If any should fall into bad practices of idleness or intoxication he is kindly admonished by the head of the Family, backed by the countenance and wishes of all the rest; but if he is found incorrigible he is excluded from the Society; so that there is no opening for the practice of vice and immorality. All attend the place of worship twice on each Sabbath, and give serious audience to the words of their venerable father and preacher, George Rapp, who, from his manner, ap-

THE HARMONISTS

pears devoted both to the temporal and spiritual interests of his flock. They have also a sermon twice every week. The children are kept at school from six to fourteen, and then are put to such trades as they may choose. Sometimes nearly the whole force of the Society, male and female, is directed to one object, such as pulling flax, reaping, hoeing corn, etc., so that the labor of a hundred-acre field is accomplished in a day or two. All in fact seems to go on like clock-work, and all seem contented and happy."

While thus prospering in this first home of their choice the Harmonists resolved on removal, because of the unsuitableness of the soil and climate to their favorite employment, the culture of the grape, because they were twelve miles from navigation, and because their acreage was inadequate to their number; and so at the word of their leader they sold in 1814 their nearly 6,000 acres of land, their factories, mills, shops, and village property of all kinds, for the low price of \$100,000, and with it purchased 30,000 acres, mostly of unimproved government land, in the valley of the Wabash river in Indiana. Here they secured the richest bottom-land and most fertile upland; soil suitable for meadow and grain-field, pasture and vineyard; valuable timber, a freestone quarry, and a water-power. Here they built a new town which they christened Harmony, after the name of their previous home in Pennsylvania; and here all their operations were conducted on a much larger scale than before. Their commerce extended to New Orleans, and their manufactures included large quantities of woolen and cotton goods; they had branch stores in different

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

places; their numbers increased, 130 immigrants from Wurtemberg joining them in 1817, their whole number reaching one thousand souls; in short, they prospered financially as never before. Their village in a few years contained over one hundred and fifty houses—about one-half framed or of brick, the rest of logs; they covered the hills with vineyards; they brought under cultivation 3,000 acres of the rich alluvial soil of the valley. "Their village," says Robert Dale Owen, "seen from the brow of the hill-range, as one approached it from Mount Vernon, was picturesque enough, literally embowered in trees, rows of black locusts marking the street lines. Several large buildings stood out above the foliage; of which a spacious cruciform brick hall—the transept a hundred and thirty feet across—was the chief. There was also a church, a steam-mill, a woolen factory and several large boarding-houses. The private dwellings were small, each in a separate garden-spot. Adjoining the village on the south were extensive apple and peach-orchards."

But in this new home many of their number were afflicted with malaria; collisions occurred with their unfriendly and ignorant neighbors; some longed to return to Pennsylvania; and at the end of ten years the resolution was taken to do so if they could sell their Indiana possessions, which they succeeded in doing, though at a great sacrifice. Robert Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, of world-wide fame as a Socialist, was the purchaser of the entire village and the 30,000 acres of land for the sum of \$150,000.

THE HARMONISTS

Then began, in 1825, the building of the third and final home of the Harmonists in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. They called the new town Economy. It is located on the east side of the Ohio river, about twenty miles northerly from Pittsburgh, and in the midst of an extended plateau elevated from 50 to 90 feet above the river.

Here again houses, shops, mills, factories, a church, and school-house, had to be erected anew, the fields to be plowed, seed sown, orchards and vineyards planted, flocks and herds purchased, old industries revived, and new ones started, and all the improvements suggested by their previous twenty years' experience realized if possible; and realized they were. They prospered greatly; peace and plenty abounded; and every thing, as described by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar in the paragraphs copied from his report on a previous page, was running most harmoniously; but, alas! five years later (1831) occurred the great secession led by the bogus Count de Leon, hereinafter described.

In Economy every house has its garden, and there is also a Community garden or pleasure-ground, in the rear of the old Rapp house. Here are beautiful flowers, winding paths, a fountain, arbors and fruit-trees; and near the center the Grotto, which, like that at their previous home on the Wabash, is purposely made rough and unattractive in its exterior, while its interior is a beautiful miniature temple—thus symbolizing the fact that men's hearts should be better than their external appearance. A little out of the village stood the Round House, which was formerly

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

the center of the Labyrinth—so called because the house was so carefully concealed by hedges and vines, and there were so many paths crossing and recrossing one another, that the visitor might lose his way many times and waste hours even, before finding its entrance. Both the Labyrinth and Rapp's garden were great objects of pleasure and interest in the days of Economy's greatness; the latter is still kept up, and is as full of attractions now as when I first visited it a quarter of a century ago. The Labyrinth no longer receives attention.

The Harmonists in their early years were very religious, making the salvation of their souls the one supreme object of their lives. They were thorough believers in the Bible, and regarded the second coming of Christ as near at hand. Rapp expected himself to live to witness that great event, saying on his death-bed, "If I did not so fully believe that the Lord has designed me to place our Society before his presence in the land of Canaan I would consider this my last." This was the record of one who watched with him the last night of his life; and he added the following: "In 1844 and 1845 there was a very lively revival in the Society, which Father Rapp considered a sure sign of the nearness of the long-hoped-for event. For a number of years he kept every thing in readiness which the Society would have needed for the journey to the land of Israel;" and Aaron Williams, D. D., in his History of the Society, published in 1866 with the approval of the trustees,* says that many of his people

*An old monograph of much value, of which the author has freely availed himself in this account of the Harmonists.

THE HARMONISTS

could not be brought to believe that Father Rapp would die before the Lord's coming; . . . some of them still look for him to return, and be their leader when the Lord shall appear." Their views of the subject of Christ's second appearing never changed. "We believe that God has called us and given us the truth, and we will wait on him till the end," was their testimony; and they have waited patiently till nearly every one has been taken.

The Harmonists did not claim to be a distinct religious sect, and had no ecclesiastic organization separate from their Community. They acknowledged no written creed save the Bible. They believed firmly in the possibility of an entire regeneration of heart through the grace and mercy of Christ. They regarded community of goods as an essential part of Christianity. They believed Adam to have been created in the exact image of God, a dual being. They were millennialists, believing in the final restoration of this earth to its pristine and paradisaic condition, and that, according to Rev. 20: 4, 5, Christ and his saints are to live and reign on the earth a thousand years. They believed in future rewards and punishments, but not in everlasting punishment. They believed the end of the world was near, so near that many of them would live to see it. They believed that carnal intercourse between men and women, even in marriage, is wrong, and that those who refrain from it will enjoy the most perfect happiness in the world to come. Their views resembled in many respects those of Bohm, Bengel and Stilling.

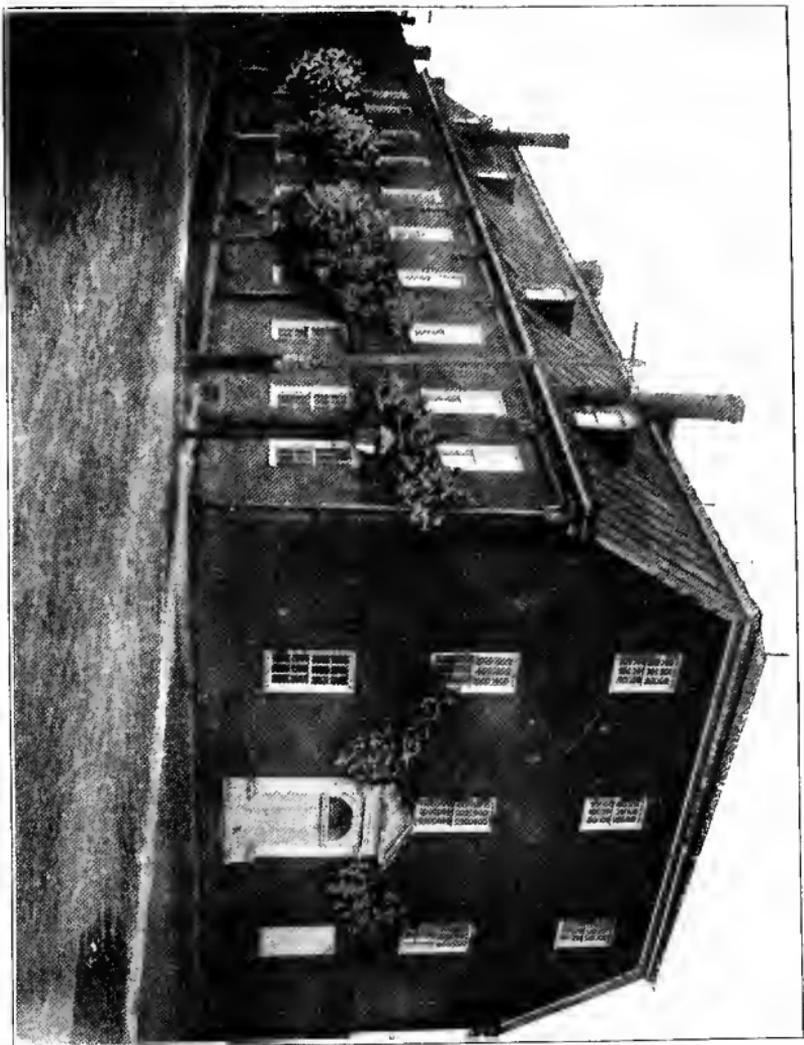
AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

A great hall is pointed out not far from the church, wherein were held their three annual festivals—the Anniversary, the Harvest Home, and the Lord's Supper. On these occasions there were singing and speaking and feasting; and entire reconciliation of all the members of the Community to one another was an indispensable condition precedent to the last observance. These yearly festivals were still maintained when I visited Economy in 1900. The Harmonists also observed with special interest Christmas, Easter and Good Friday.

In receiving members the Harmonists required, like the Shakers and Perfectionists, a thorough opening and confession of the past life of the applicants.

Since the adoption of celibacy there have been few young people in the Harmony Society; but in former days they were allowed, on reaching maturity, their choice between becoming full members of the Society (providing of course they were of suitable character), or going outside, or remaining and working for wages; and more preferred the latter alternative than the first, though required in such case to conform to the customs of the Society even in respect to celibacy; but the greater number took the second alternative, choosing a life of complete independence with all its drawbacks to the restraints of Communism.

Father Rapp personally managed all the affairs of the Harmony Society except such as he delegated to his adopted son Frederick and other agents; but upon his death in 1847 the powers he had exercised de-



HARMONISTS' HALL OF THE ANNUAL FESTIVALS.

THE HARMONISTS

volved upon nine elders unanimously elected, two of whom, Romelius L. Baker and Jacob Henrici, were appointed trustees, and thereafter jointly managed the temporal and spiritual affairs of the Society until the death of the former, when Mr. Henrici succeeded to the place of the Senior Trustee, Jonathan Lenz becoming his assistant Trustee. Upon the death of Henrici in 1891 John S. Duss became Senior Trustee of the Society.

During the later years of Mr. Henrici's administration the financial affairs of the Community became much involved, in consequence of unfortunate investments, poor management and inefficient book-keeping. Mr. Duss, the new managing Trustee, had been for several years closely associated with Mr. Henrici, and was therefore cognizant of the unfavorable financial conditions of the Society; and after his appointment in Mr. Henrici's place he set himself resolutely to disentangle its affairs, and free it from embarrassing obligations, and so place it again upon a solid foundation. His first step was to employ an expert accountant from Pittsburgh, who began his work of investigation April 1, 1892, and filed his report March 30, 1893. I have before me that report, from which it appears that the Society on the first-mentioned date was indebted directly and through its banks to the amount of \$1,475,000, of which \$358,350 was due prior to August 1, 1892, and must then be paid or additional security given, while its immediately available assets were very small. Indeed, Trustee Duss, in a recent letter to me, says the Society for years had been

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

“enabled to exist solely through its enormous credit and money-borrowing capacity.”

For the great work since done to improve the financial condition of the Society Trustee Duss deserves the meed of praise. Through his special efforts a loan of \$400,000 was first effected, and its pressing obligations paid; \$608,000 was realized from the sale of stocks and bonds, and used in paying other obligations; outlying properties were disposed of, and more obligations canceled; so that the expert accountant was able to state in his certified report of March 30th, 1893, that on March 1st preceding \$1,284,000 of the old indebtedness of the Society had been paid off, while the new loans made aggregated \$419,958.89, and that its total indebtedness on the last-mentioned date was only \$609,958.89, showing an absolute reduction of the Society's obligations of \$865,041.11; and to pay the remaining indebtedness it had, in the opinion of the said expert, property worth at a low valuation \$1,500,000. Since the expert's report was filed the good work of debt-paying has continued, until the Society is now nearly free from debt; new methods of account-keeping have been introduced into its business offices, rendering it impossible, unless these are discarded, for the Society's affairs to become again so involved without the full knowledge of its officials; and new enterprises have been started in and near Economy which promise much prosperity to the place. When I was there in June, 1900, every habitable building was occupied, and several of the

THE HARMONISTS

oldest houses were being put in suitable condition for renting.

A plan is said to be under consideration for making a new town of Economy. One account which has come to my notice says: "The plans and specifications are drawn for a new Economy. The new town will be built upon modern ideas of what a new town or city should be. A new style of architecture will replace the old quaint Dutch houses. The old town is not to be torn down. Old members can reside in the houses their ancestors built if they prefer." That some plan of the kind has the approval of Senior Trustee Duss is evident from the fact that, in response to my application for information respecting the present condition and prospects of the Society, he forwarded to me with his approval a printed article containing the following paragraph:

"The latest information in relation to Economy is such as will touch a responsive chord in every person who has ever visited the place; it is to the effect that the trustees have concluded to transform that portion of the farm overlooking the Ohio river into the most convenient and beautiful suburban town in the State. That the Economy farm is the finest town-site in this country is a fact universally conceded. It consists of some 300 acres of bottom land, on a level with the railroad, suitable for manufacturing purposes; of an adjoining plateau, 90 feet above the river—a most magnificent tract of 1,200 acres, having a gentle slope from the hills to the river, just enough to afford almost natural drainage; of a range of hills affording ideal building sites for villas; and in the rear of still higher ground making a beautiful back-ground of superb scenery."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Probably every Communistic Society that has lived long enough to accumulate any considerable property has had serious troubles with persons claiming that they were rightfully part owners thereof. Those who left a Community for its good, or were expelled from it because they sought to change or destroy its very life, are the ones "to be first in at the death." The rumor that a Community in which they once lived is in a moribund condition is sufficient to arouse in them a determination to share in its estate. They may have contributed nothing to the common property, may have been while members an expense to the Society, may have been given when they left it more than they were entitled to receive under the covenant they signed, still the fact that they were once members is sufficient reason in their minds for strenuously insisting on a recognition of their claims in the final division. The Zoar and Harmony Societies are the ones most recently pounced upon by these sinister birds of prey. In a letter dated Feb. 14, 1900, Trustee Duss gives the following account of Economy's late troubles in this line:

"In June, 1894, a certain Christian Schwarz, a citizen of West Virginia, together with others from Ohio and Dakota, claiming to be heirs to certain deceased members of our Society, filed a bill in the United States Circuit Court at Pittsburgh. In this bill scandalous charges were made against various members of the Society, including myself. It was also charged that the Society was dissolved. The appointment of a receiver was prayed for, as well as a distribution of the Society's assets amongst those entitled to distribu-

THE HARMONISTS

tion, chief among whom were the said Schwarz, *et al.* After taking testimony two days a week for two years, the Master in the case decided against the plaintiffs in every particular. The case was argued later before Judge Marcus Acheson, who sustained the Master's previous findings, handing down his decision Feb. 13th, 1899. The plaintiff again appealed to the Circuit Court of Appeals, and the case will be soon argued again. We await with confidence the result, as there is nothing of merit in the charges and claims of the plaintiffs; but this long-drawn-out litigation has been a sore trial, coming as it did at a time when we were still writhing under a large indebtedness, and in a time of serious financial depression, clouding the title to our property, and tying our hands as it were, to say nothing of making us a laughing-stock and stench before the public, by charging us guilty of all manner of improper and immoral conduct; but thanks to an allwise Providence we have been sustained in our personal trials, and enabled also to continue in business, so that we have passed through the worst, and are hopeful of paying our debts in full and caring for the aged members, two things that seem to have fallen upon me as a duty to perform."

In defending the rights of Communities as against seceders the Harmonists long years ago did great service for the general cause of Communism. As early as 1821 action was brought against the Society by one Eugene Muller, who had been a member, to recover wages for labor and services rendered. The suit was rightfully decided against the complainant, on the ground that in signing the articles of association he had formally renounced all claim of wages. In the Jacob Shriber case, carried to the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, it was decided, 1st, "that an association

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

by which each surrendered his property into one common stock, for the mutual benefit of all, during their joint lives, with the right of survivorship, reserving to each the privilege to secede at any time during his life, is not prohibited by law, and that right of secession is not transmissible to the personal representative of a party to such agreement, so as to enable him to recover the property of his intestate, so put into the common stock ; 2d, that a member of a religious society cannot void a contract with it on the basis of its peculiar faith, by setting up the supposed extravagance of its doctrines as a proof that he was entrapped."

The *Nachtrieb* case was still more important in its results, it having been carried to the highest tribunal in the land. This case was brought before the "Circuit Court of the United States for the Western District of Pennsylvania, at the November term of 1849; and it was charged that the complainant, having been a member of the Society, was unjustly excluded and deprived of any participation in the property and benefits of the association; and he prayed for an accounting of the property and effects at the time of his exclusion, and that his share be awarded him by decree of the court." This case lasted seven years. The most eminent counsel was engaged on both sides, the Hon. Edwin M. Stanton, Abraham Lincoln's Secretary of War, acting for the complainant. In the first trial *Nachtrieb's* claim was sustained; but an appeal being taken by the Society to the Supreme Court of the United States, a reversal of the decree of the lower court was obtained, and the plaintiff's claim set aside.

THE HARMONISTS

The Harmonists were liberal with their wealth in the days of their prosperity. They who asked for bread were never given a stone nor turned hungry from their doors. Their generous gifts aided many benevolent and educational enterprises. —It is remembered to their credit that during the war of the rebellion they contributed liberally “for the equipment of volunteers, for special bounties, for the support of the families of absent soldiers, and for the Christian, Sanitary and Subsistence Commissions, for the fortification of Pittsburgh, for the relief of the freedmen, for the support of soldiers’ widows, and the education of their orphan children.”

Half a century after the Harmonists left their home on the Wabash, they expended several thousand dollars there, partly at least for the benefit of the citizens of New Harmony. Purchasing the enormous cruciform structure, used as a hall and assembly-room in the old days when their Community flourished there, they demolished the principal part of it, and with the brick inclosed their old burial-ground, twenty rods square, with a wall four and a half feet high and one foot thick, adding a projecting coping and iron gates dependent on solid stone abutments seven feet in height. One wing of the cross was allowed to stand, and constitutes nearly half of the present Institute building (125 by 45 feet), containing a large public library, Masonic Hall, and five large, well-furnished school-rooms. The village made some contribution, but for the present really fine building, of which its citizens are justly proud, they must mainly thank the Rappites. The lat-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ter intended it as a memorial building, and from its facade stand out the words: "In memory of the Harmony Society, founded by George Rapp, 1805." I was told when at New Harmony* that one condition of the donation insisted upon by the Rappites through their agent, Mr. Lenz, was that the old stone door which was designed and executed by Frederick Rapp, the adopted son of George Rapp, should take its place unaltered in the remodeled building.

In this connection I may appropriately introduce the following story to the credit of Father Rapp. It is recorded that upon one occasion in the early days, when the necessities of his Community were great and their means were small, he went to Pittsburgh for supplies, and was refused credit at the houses which had before trusted him. His heart was weighed down with sorrow; he wandered off to the river's bank, and sat down to weep and pray. A merchant of the city found him there thus engaged, and inquired into his necessities. Being informed, he offered Father Rapp two four-horse wagon-loads of provisions, telling him also to borrow no trouble about the payment. The thrifty Communists were blessed immediately with bountiful crops, and soon paid the debt. But the story does not end here. Years rolled by. The Harmonists prospered in all their enterprises; and when a great financial hurricane swept over the land they stood erect while many houses toppled over. In the midst of the storm they learned by some means that the merchant who had so generously befriended them in their day

*So named by Robert Owen in 1825, and since so called.

THE HARMONISTS

of trouble was now himself unable to meet his obligations, and was threatened with financial ruin. Father Rapp welcomed the opportunity it offered. Filling his saddle-bags with solid coin, he rode to Pittsburgh, found his old benefactor, poured out his money before him, and told him he could have as much more if it were needed ; and so the merchant was saved !

Several things stand out conspicuously in the history of the Harmony Society :

First, *the special qualifications of its founder for Community leadership*. He must have possessed, not only great natural ability, but that peculiar power which enables some men to attract and hold hearts. Otherwise he could not have maintained his position as leader of the Community in both spiritual and temporal matters, the dictator of all its regulations, its arbiter on all questions, until his death at four-score and ten. This position of supreme authority, in which his word was law on every subject, was one unfavorable to the development of the beatitudes in his character ; and it is admitted that he became impatient of contradiction, severe in his treatment of malcontents, and hurled his spiritual thunders at those whom he regarded as offenders against the authority of God ; but, on the other hand, it is affirmed that he was fatherly, kind, sympathetic, and sought at all times the happiness of his people. He was of commanding appearance, being six feet high, and well proportioned ; very industrious, spending his leisure hours in study of the natural sciences ; simple in his habits ; easy of approach ; witty

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

in conversation; eloquent in his sermons; deeply religious—"a man before whom no evil could stand."

Second, *the harmonic, co-operative relation between George Rapp, the founder, and his adopted son Frederick*, his most efficient helper until the latter's death in 1834. In this duality the elder Rapp was the dynamic; the younger the more conspicuous and expressive. The one was predominantly religious; the other a great lover of art in all its forms. The one was founder of a new social order; the other gave to that new order its appropriate external expression. Frederick Rapp was, in short, not only the business manager of the new kingdom, but its architect and beautifier. He laid out their villages in symmetrical order, and designed their houses, and gave to them whatever ornamental features they possessed; he was their poet and writer of hymns, and fostered their taste for music and art; he was chiefly instrumental in securing the costly paintings still adorning the Rapp House at Economy; and chiefly responsible for the expenditure of several thousand dollars in collecting a museum of curiosities (long since sold), including Indian antiquities, rare animals, birds, insects, shells, etc.; he, I have no doubt, was the chief designer of the intricacies of the Labyrinth, both at Economy and at Harmony on the Wabash. Without the elder Rapp there would have been no Harmony Community, but without the younger Rapp it would have lacked many of its most attractive features. A similar dual relation existed between the founder of the Oneida Community and his younger brother, George W. Noyes.

THE HARMONISTS

Third, *their adoption of celibacy*. In 1807 a powerful revival of earnestness pervaded the Community; and they were led to make a fuller consecration of themselves to the Lord's service than they had done before. The younger members took the lead in renouncing marriage, being told by their leader and by the apostle Paul, that "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things of the world, how he may please his wife." From that date celibacy was the rule among the Harmonists; and such earnestness and unanimity were there on the subject that it was not found necessary to separate the sexes, nor separate the parents from their children; all living together in the same house, relying upon their religious restraints alone to keep them from falling into "temptation and a snare."

Fourth, *their disuse of tobacco*. At the same time that they adopted celibacy they agreed to entirely dispense with the use of tobacco. The "vile weed" was thrown out of the Zoar and Oneida Communities by a similar agreement of the members. In overcoming such habits as the using of tobacco a Community unquestionably possesses great advantages. It is easier in such an organization than in common society to create an enthusiasm for some specific reform which shall become general and carry all before it.

Fifth, *the voluntary destruction of their property record*. Under their original constitution it was agreed that in case any member should withdraw from the Community there should be refunded to him whatever

Missing Page

Missing Page

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

est disciples, who favored simplicity of dress and living, the crucifixion of fleshly appetites, and separation from the spirit of the world. Leon favored "better clothing, better food, more personal comforts, less work, and above all the privilege of marriage." The Leonites would have been immediately given their walking-papers only that the kind-hearted Rappites could not turn them away at the beginning of the winter, and so they were permitted to remain till the following spring. The wily Count used the intervening time industriously in winning adherents to his more liberal and worldly principles. Every one who was disaffected with the old *regime* for any cause joined him, and ere spring-time came it was difficult to determine who adhered to Rapp and the old order of things, and who were in favor of Leon and his new measures. The heads were finally counted, and five hundred were found to be for Father Rapp, and two hundred and fifty for the new claimant. "The tail of the serpent drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth!" said Rapp when the result was reported to him.

For a time there was confusion, dissension, anarchy in the Society, and utter dissolution threatened it. Finally, a compromise was effected, by the terms of which Leon and the party he brought with him were to leave in six weeks, and the rest of his adherents in three months, and to receive \$105,000 in three installments. Leon and his followers purchased 800 acres of land ten miles below Economy, at Phillipsburg, where they started a Community, but it was short-lived.

THE HARMONISTS

During the first year they exhausted the money received from the Harmony Society, and in the following April, under the Count's instigation, organized a mob of eighty persons who entered Economy for the avowed purpose of forcing an additional sum from the Society; but failing in this, and being driven away by the neighbors and friends of the Harmonists with drum and fife to the tune of the Rogue's March, and his adherents having vainly called upon the Count to redeem his promise to extract gold from stones at his laboratory erected for the purpose, their indignation turned against him, and he was glad to escape with a few of his followers. He eventually reached Louisiana, where he died of the cholera in the autumn of the same year.

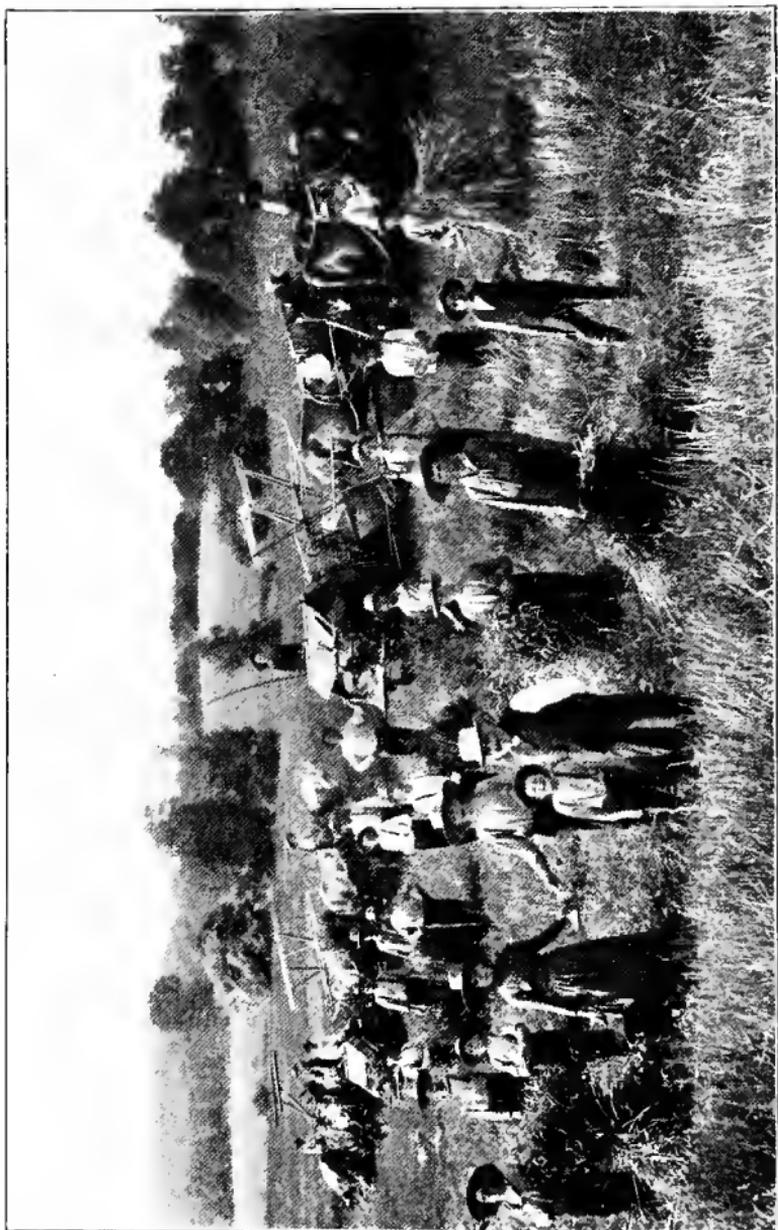
Although this secession so greatly depleted the treasury of the Harmony Society, and so largely reduced its membership, it in the end proved a great blessing to it, inasmuch as it removed the discordant elements, and so prepared the Society for an era of greater peace and happiness than it had previously enjoyed.

It would be very gratifying, in closing this sketch, to forecast the future of Economy, and be able to authoritatively state that a Communistic Society, as worthy as its predecessor, will occupy the old grounds and dwellings, fill the old mills and factories, and possess the old Community property, after the present members of the Harmony Society no longer require them; but I must content myself with the assurance that every dollar of Economy's indebtedness will be

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

paid and that every one of its old members will be well-cared for to the last.

There are those who charge that the present Senior Trustee is seeking to get possession of the remaining Harmony property for his own personal use. I cannot join these accusers without knowing that their charges are well-founded. Both Mr. Duss and his very intelligent wife were former members of the Harmony Society; and Mr. Duss was treated almost as a son by Father Henrici, who took much interest in his education, and seems to have early regarded him as his probable successor. After an absence of several years, during which he completed his education, and served for a time as manager of the Topeka State Reform School, Father Henrici induced him by liberal and repeated offers to return to Economy, and take charge of its school, and help him carry the burden of business then weighing heavily upon him. He was given increasing responsibilities until upon the death of Henrici he was elected Senior Trustee. Mr. Duss is an accomplished musician, the leader of the Economy band and of one in a neighboring city. He preaches every Sunday, attends carefully to the wants of the infirm and sick, and is said to faithfully discharge all the duties devolving upon him as Senior Trustee, for which and for extricating the Society from its quagmire of debt, let him have full credit, while awaiting the development of his ulterior purposes.



HARVEST SCENE AT ZOAR.

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR.

The Zoar Communists, like the Harmonists, whom they in many respects resemble, came to this country from old Wurtemberg, which kingdom was for more than a century a veritable hot-bed of religious radicalisms.

Both the followers of George Rapp (the founder of the Harmony Community) and of Joseph Baumeler (the founder of the Zoar Community) were called Separatists, but the latter were Separatists in a double sense, renouncing allegiance to the church and refusing to aid the state by military service. They were, of course, persecuted and driven from place to place. One of their leaders, Johannes Goesele, was imprisoned for nine years; but his spirit remained unbroken. It is related that when, upon one occasion, he was brought before the Emperor Napoleon by the Duke of Wurtemberg, at the former's request, he boldly warned the great soldier of "the dread account he would have to render at the judgment-day for the multitude of souls he was hurrying into eternity by his bloody wars. Napoleon was offended, and desired that Goesele should be punished for his insolence; but as soon as Napoleon had departed the Duke summoned his prisoner before him, and instead of punishing him said: 'Goesele, if you had not talked to the Emperor just as you talked to me I would have taken

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

off your head; but now, since you treat us both alike, you may go home;' and he was accordingly set at liberty."*

These Separatists derived their religion and theology mainly from the Pietists of the 16th and 17th centuries, and refer with a special sense of obligation to Jacob Bohm and his disciple, Frederick Christoph Oetinger.

In 1803 George Rapp and his disciples resolved to emigrate to the New World, and two years later they founded their Community in the forests of Butler County, Pennsylvania. The followers of Baumeler (or Bimeler, by which name he was called and called himself in later years) endured the trials and horrors of persecution fourteen years longer ere they followed the example of their brother Separatists, and founded a settlement in the neighboring wilds of Ohio, on the very ground visited by Rapp when seeking a location for his Community. But the Separatists who founded Zoar had at first no idea of establishing a Community. Like the English Separatists who settled at Plymouth, they left their native land that they might enjoy religious liberty for themselves and rear their children in right ways. They landed in Philadelphia in the month of August, 1817, and in December following Bimeler and a few others, who had been sent out to take possession of the tract previously purchased in Tuscarawas County, Ohio, near old Fort Lawrens, built the first log-hut where now stands Zoar village. Until within a few years, I was told, could be seen the

*Rev. Aaron Williams, D. D., in his "History of the Harmony Society."

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

stump of the tree under which Bimeler and his pioneer friends sheltered themselves from the winter blasts while erecting their first dwelling. The work progressed all winter, and in the spring of 1818 the larger part of the colony was established at Zoar, though some were so poor that they had to hire out as laborers to support their families, and so were unable to join the colony at once, and others delayed doing so that they might meantime learn some trade that would make them more useful members.

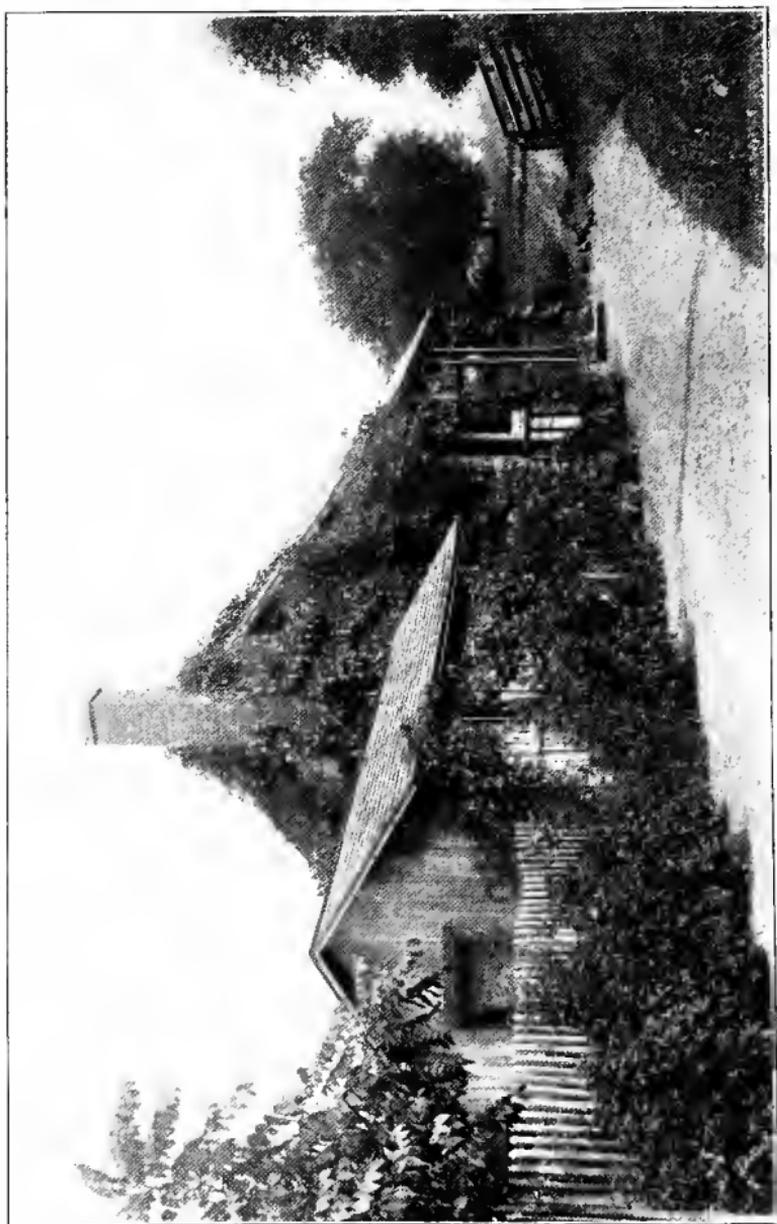
Though the rich had shared their means with the poor in paying the expenses of the ocean journey, it was expected that after they had reached their final home each family would have its separate property; but some were unable to pay for their share of the land; others unable, from age or sickness, even to support themselves; and the consequent failure of their enterprise would result, the leaders foresaw, unless they adopted communism of property. This step was accordingly taken in 1819; and from that time they prospered, until, with their thousands of acres of land, their saw-mill, two large flouring-mills, machine-shops and foundry, woolen-factory, store, tavern, Iowa farm, etc., they were accounted rich—worth in popular estimation a million dollars—worth, according to their own more careful valuation, \$731,000.

Immense fields of corn, wheat, oats, and other crops were grown on their home farm. They owned a thousand sheep. When I first visited the Community in 1876 the herdsman took me over a two-hundred acre pasture to look at their eighty-five cows.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

I counted forty-seven calves in an adjoining lot; another contained thirty. A cattle-barn 210 feet long, 50 feet wide, with 104 stalls, and costing \$7,000, was built in 1874. The lower floor is arranged for stabling and feeding. An asphaltum walk seven feet wide extends the entire length of the stables, and the fifteen feet separating the two rows of mangers is also covered with asphaltum. The cows, as they were driven up at night, made their way intelligently to their several stalls, where a lunch and the milkmaids awaited them.

Zoar, one has said, "is a little city hidden in an apple-orchard," and fruit-trees are certainly a conspicuous and pleasing feature of this communistic settlement, as they are of nearly every other one I have visited; and so are the gardens. Here at Zoar, in addition to the small gardens of each family, there was long ago established a public or Community garden of two and a-half acres, much frequented by members and visitors, and which is described by a more facile pen than mine as "a veritable Dutch garden, aglow with old-fashioned flowers, brought by cultivation to a degree of perfection that is marvelous: the most beautiful zinnias, that run the gamut of the rainbow for color; rare roses with unpronounceable names, pomegranate and lemon trees (in boxes, to be sure), full of fruit; glowing masses of salvia, purple beds of fragrant heliotrope, borders of sweet mignonette, stately lilies, great splashes of ragged pansies, gaily-nodding pinks and gorgeous dahlias; while cypress, morning-glories and honeysuckles run riot and bind the mass into one paradise of color and fragrance.



ONE OF THE EARLIEST ZOAR HOUSES.

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

This is a concession to beauty, while the practical portion is given to beds of vegetables, strawberries, and herbs that go to season their stews and heal their ailments; rows of blackberries and currants; the whole garden laid systematically out in wheel-shape. The hub, a circular hedge of arbor-vitae, with a spreading Norway Spruce in the center, they call 'the New Jerusalem,' and the spokes are the many paths leading thereunto."*

Aside from this common pleasure-ground and garden, and the flowers cultivated in the individual gardens, one finds few evidences of a love of the beautiful in Zoar. Though the buildings possess great interest because of their quaint picturesqueness, with their oft red-tiled roofs, their projecting dormers, their latticed porches and balconies and cross-barred side-walls, green with the foliage of carefully-trained grape-vines; yet they are nearly all of wood, mostly old and unpainted, including many of the log-huts of the first colonists, and rarely boast of front yards. The house built for their leader, Joseph Bimeler, should, however, be noted as an exception. It is large, made of brick, has piazzas, balcony and cupola, and looks aristocratic among its plebeian neighbors. The school-house is also a substantial and commodious brick building. The new hotel, for such a small village, is imposing in its dimensions, and impresses you as modern and out of place—a veritable interloper that should remove itself as speedily as possible. One fears that other like structures will replace the quaint and pic-

*Mrs. Wilson G. Smith, in *The Peterson Magazine* of August, 1897.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

turesque old buildings, in order to meet the requirements of the increasing swarms of summer visitors, and thus destroy the special and peculiar charm and interest that now are Zoar's and Zoar's alone.

The Separatists at first had a distinctive garb, but in later years dressed like their neighbors around them.

In the civil war they took no part as a Society except to pay their share of the taxes and a large sum to secure volunteers, that their own young men might remain at home; but fourteen of them were swept away with the current, to be killed or die in hospitals, to absent themselves forever from the communal home, or to return begging for re-admission.

The people of Zoar are exceedingly frank in answering all questions pertaining to their Community life and history; and I cannot perhaps do better than to report here a conversation that occurred on the occasion of my first visit to Zoar between myself and Simon Beiter, who was for twenty-six years their school teacher, and to whom I was referred for information by Trustee Ackermann:

"When did your Community reach its highest membership?"

"In 1832, when many persons came to us from Germany, including some who refused to emigrate in 1817."

"What was the number of members at that time?"

"Nearly five hundred."

"What is the present number?"

"Two hundred and fifty-four,"

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

“How divided in respect to age, sex and membership?”

“There are fifty-five adult males, seventy-one adult females, and one hundred and twenty-eight children and youth under twenty-one. Of the one hundred and twenty-six adults, seventy-two belong to the Second Class, and fifty-four to the First Class.”

“How are these two classes distinguished from each other?”

“The First Class includes the probationary members and the children, and all who have not signed the covenant. After the children become of age they cannot be received into the Second Class except on special application, and then only after a year’s delay.”

“What are the special privileges of the Second or higher Class?”

“The two classes fare alike in all respects, excepting that only the members of the Second Class can vote and hold office.”

“How does it happen that so many adults still remain in the First Class?”

“Some are perfectly satisfied with their present position, and don’t care to enter the higher class. This may in a few cases be owing to the fact, that so long as a person remains in the First Class he can withdraw any money he put into the common fund on joining the Community, and use it as he likes; but on joining the Second Class there is an entire surrender of all property rights.”

“In case a member of the Second Class secedes, is any part of the money he put in refunded?”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"No, his having brought into the Community much or little property would not be regarded ; but if he made application for something, it would be considered how he had conducted and how valuable his services had been, and a gift made accordingly."

"What is the position of women in your Community? Can they vote and hold office?"

"Our women, married and single, on joining the Second Class become full members, and have the right to vote as well as the male members. Our constitution says nothing against their holding office, and in my opinion they could, should they be elected to an official position. They generally exercise their right to vote."

"What industries do they pursue other than household?"

"Besides milking, they spade, plant and work in the gardens, which you observe are connected with the houses, raising the vegetables required for family use and gratifying their taste for flowers. Those who do not work in the gardens, and are sufficiently healthy and strong, help in hay-making, and in harvest-time rake up sheaves for the binders. In the fall they help prepare the flax which they spin in the winter-time. Some, who do not spin, knit stockings, socks, mittens and gloves, of which we sell large quantities in our store."

"How much hired help have you?"

"Including the families of those who work for us there are in all one hundred and seventy-one persons who subsist upon the wages paid by the Community."

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

“What is the effect upon the Community itself of employing so many hirelings?”

“Very injurious. They tempt our young people into bad habits. We began hiring about 1834, after the cholera had swept off nearly one-third of our old members.”

“How many hours do the men work?”

“The able-bodied generally labor from sunrise to sunset.”

“What regulations have you respecting the distribution of groceries, provisions, etc.?”

“Bread is distributed without limit. Meat (only beef), coffee, sugar, butter, etc., are distributed equally—i. e., to each family according to its number of persons; but we are not very strict in this. If a family is visited by outside friends it generally gets what it asks for. We have never eaten pork. Each family raises as much poultry as it chooses. If a family has more eggs than it wants it takes them to the storehouse, where they are distributed to those who have none or not enough.”

“Did Ackermann, your present leader, directly succeed Bimeler, your first leader?”

“No. Bimeler died Aug. 27, 1853. As his successor we unanimously appointed Jacob Sylvan—a good writer, but no speaker. Christian Weebel read his discourses for him. After Sylvan’s death, Oct. 13, 1862, Weebel took the spiritual lead; but the majority of the members were not fully satisfied, and in 1871 Ackermann was appointed, he being the oldest trustee; and having labored hard for the Society we desired to honor him.”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

“What is the government of the Community?”

“There are three trustees who regulate the work and all the business affairs of the Community—appointing such subordinates as they deem best; but they are responsible to a Standing Committee of Five, whom they are to consult on all important matters, and to whom they make monthly reports. This Standing Committee is the central power of the Community. To it any one can appeal from the decisions of the trustees.”

“You referred to your Constitution: What are its principal provisions?”

“It provides that all officers shall be voted for by all the full members; that there shall be an annual election of one trustee and one member of the Standing Committee; that a cashier shall be chosen every four years; and that the time of each election shall be published twenty days before it takes place.”

“What are your rules of admission?”

“We generally pay wages for a year or more to applicants that there may be time and opportunity for mutual acquaintance. If the acquaintance proves satisfactory to both parties, and the applicants still desire admission to the Community, they are received as probationary members and sign the Articles for the First Class. If during the next year they commend themselves they may make application for admission to the Second Class, and if there is no good ground of rejection they will be admitted, and then must give up their property forever. Rich people seldom apply for membership, and we are glad of it. We would

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

rather take poor people, half naked though they be, provided they have the right character."

"Have you any very aged people?"

"Our oldest member is ninety-five years and four months old. He is a native of New Hampshire. He lived with the Shakers from 1830 to 1841, since then with us. Our oldest woman is now ninety-three. Both of these persons still work a little voluntarily, and both are unmarried. Another unmarried woman here is eighty-seven. A male member died last year aged ninety years and two months. Many of our members have reached from seventy-five to eighty years. Our factory foreman is past eighty-six."

"What peculiar ceremonies have you?"

"None at all."

"How do you regard the Bible?"

"We believe in both the Old and New Testaments, and in Christ as the Savior of the world."

"What great objects have you as a Community?"

"Our object is to get into heaven, and help others to get there."

"Do you expect your system will some time be generally accepted?"

"I formerly believed it would spread all over the world. I thought every body would come into communistic relations. I believe so still, but I don't know how far our particular system will prevail. In heaven there is only Communism; and why should it not be our aim to prepare ourselves in this world for the society we are sure to enter there? If we can get rid of our wilfulness and selfishness here there is so much done for heaven."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"That is a good point certainly; but haven't you confidence in the perpetuity of your Community?"

"I will not undertake to decide the question of its perpetuity. If God wishes to have it continued he will see that it is done."

"Joseph Bimeler must have been a remarkable man."

"Yes; when he was our leader we knew every thing would come out right. He was our business manager and physician and also our preacher, caring for the spiritual interests of the Community. He was, indeed, a remarkable man."

"What rules of discipline have you?"

"We appeal to the conscience. What else can we do? We can't punish any body. Formerly, if a member disobeyed the regulations of the Society he was not allowed to attend the meetings, and that was punishment enough."

"I have read that for several years the members did not marry."

"That is true, but it never was intended that celibacy should be a permanent principle of the Community. The change from celibacy to marriage was made more than forty years ago, and a principal argument in favor of the change was that we might raise our own members. We supposed that children born in the Society would become natural Communists."

For fifteen years after the Zoarites began to marry it was a rule that their children should be taken care of by the Society from the time they were three years

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

old, and they were for this purpose placed under superintendents appointed by the Community. "It was better so," said Ackermann, and so said others. The abrogation of this rule was evidently a backward step in the direction of familism.

In such a settlement of Germans it goes without saying that music was cultivated, and that they had musical organizations, including a brass-band. But aside from music there was little to enliven their daily toil. They had neither social nor literary entertainments, nor lectures nor concerts, and dancing was prohibited. A dull life indeed must it have been for the young people. Some will wonder that so many of them remained.

A school was maintained at Zoar during the greater part of the year, in which the common studies were taught, but there were no higher institutions of learning there, and evidence is wanting that efforts were ever made to introduce them, or to raise the intellectual standard of the place. There is no public library, and few books in Zoar save those of a purely religious character, and none of their own making save a compilation by Bimeler of sacred songs, Terstegen's Hymns, and three large octavo volumes of Bimeler's Discourses* aggregating 2,574 pages; and even these Discourses would have been lost to the world had not

*These Discourses or "Meeting Speeches" of Bimeier (his disciples are careful not to speak of them as sermons) were regarded by his followers as inspired. In explaining their delivery Bimeier was in the habit of saying, "I generally come here empty, not knowing whereof I am going to speak. I first get an inspiration what and of what I am going to speak, but as soon as I commence to speak an infinite field of ideas opens up before me, so I can choose where and what I like, and what seems to me the most necessary."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

a young man taken notes of them at the request of his deaf father, who desired to read them and profit thereby. After Bimeler's death the Communists sought edification in their Sunday meetings by reading from such religious books as they possessed; but this did not satisfy them. They longed for the old words of Bimeler, and remembering the young man's short-hand notes of his Discourses they resolved to print them, and immediately purchased a hand-press for this purpose. It was only used in printing the Discourses and a collection of Hymns by Terstegen, and then sold.

Bimeler is generally regarded as the first leader of the Zoar Separatists; but Barbara Grubermann, I was told, preceded him in the leadership. She was a native of Switzerland, and was driven into Germany by a terrible persecution. There, in the province of old Wurtemberg, she was received by a few people as one divinely commissioned; but died before her disciples emigrated to America; and Joseph Bimeler was then chosen as their principal leader. Barbara, had she lived in our day, might have been called a "trance medium." She occasionally passed from the realms of consciousness, and upon her return reported what she had seen and heard. These utterances were not written down, as were those of the "Inspired Instruments" of the Amana Society or "True Inspiration Congregations." Some of her hymns were, however, fortunately preserved, and it was my pleasure to hear one of them sung in the church at Zoar.

The religious, social and political principles of the Zoarites are comprised in the following articles:

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

"I. We believe and confess the Trinity of God; Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"II. The fall of Adam and of all mankind, with the loss thereby of the likeness of God in them.

"III. The return through Christ to God, our proper Father.

"IV. The Holy Scriptures as the measure and guide of our lives, and the touchstone of truth and falsehood. All our other principles arise out of these, and rule our conduct in the religious, spiritual, and natural life.

"V. All ceremonies are banished from among us, and we declare them useless and injurious, and this is the chief cause of our Separation.

"VI. We render to no mortal honors due to God, as to uncover the head, or to bend the knee. Also we address every one as 'thou'—*du*.

"VII. We separate ourselves from all ecclesiastical connections and constitutions, because true Christian life requires no sectarianism, while set forms and ceremonies cause sectarian divisions.

"VIII. Our marriages are contracted by mutual consent, and before witnesses. They are then notified to the political authority; and we reject all intervention of priests or preachers.

"IX. All intercourse of the sexes, except what is necessary to the perpetuation of the species, we hold to be sinful and contrary to the order and command of God. Complete virginity or entire cessation of sexual commerce is more commendable than marriage.

"X. We cannot send our children into the schools of Babylon (meaning the clerical schools of Germany), where other principles contrary to these are taught.

"XI. We cannot serve the state as soldiers, because a Christian cannot murder his enemy, much less his friend.

"XII. We regard the political government as ab-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

solutely necessary to maintain order, and to protect the good and honest and punish the wrong-doers; and no one can prove us to be untrue to the constituted authorities."

I have spoken of the Zoarites as in some respects resembling the Harmonists; in other respects they resemble the Quakers, by whom they were aided to emigrate to the United States and to purchase on favorable terms their present domain.* There is at Zoar the same aversion to ceremony that one finds among the Quakers; the same horror of war; the same freedom from sectarianism; the same simplicity of address towards friends and strangers, calling each other by the first name, and saying "thou" to all; the same freedom to keep the head covered in the presence of dignitaries and in church; and the same democratic treatment of all classes. If Goesele uttered his judgment-warning to Napoleon without deference, so many years later, when the representative of the Emperor of Austria called at the Zoar hotel, and after making himself and his mission known demanded a room, he was answered, "There is no room." "But there must be; I am from the Emperor of Austria." "There is no room," was again the quiet answer; and the imperial representative, as runs the story, "departed in anger." Had there been a vacant room he would have been accommodated

*The Society of Friends or Quakers in England, not only aided the Separatists to reach the United States, but raised and forwarded over \$5,000 to be distributed among them after their arrival here; and the Quakers of Philadelphia provided a large building for their use as a home for several months, or until the pioneers had erected huts for them at their Ohio home; and they are also credited with loaning to the Separatists \$1,500 with which to make the first payment on their land-purchase of 5,500 acres.

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

as quickly and graciously as any rustic, but not more quickly nor more graciously.

Jacob Ackermann, who served as trustee for over half a century, had nothing in his appearance betokening special intellectual ability; and yet he exercised a controlling influence in the Society. Although seventy-four years of age when I saw him he still had the chief superintendence of both the lower and higher interests of the Community, and performed more labor with his hands besides than many a younger man. In conversation with him you were impressed with his great simplicity and sincerity, and said to yourself, Here is a sympathetic, large-hearted man who will gladly share his brother's burdens, and to whom all the right-doing are brothers.

This man was so sincere that he frankly admitted that he was discouraged about the future of Zoar—discouraged because the younger generation had not the same earnestness that controlled the original members. They had fallen into the fashions and ways of the world, and would not brook the restraints that religious Communism requires. Evidently it is not enough that a Community had a religious afflatus and intelligent, earnest men at its beginning. It must find means to keep that afflatus alive and strong, and to replace its founders, as occasion requires, with men of equal intelligence and earnestness; and to this end ordinances become of great value. The Shakers have almost daily meetings, and an elaborate system of ordinances that tend, we must suppose, not only to the maintenance of good order, but of the spirit which animated the

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

founders of Shakerism. The Perfectionists considered their daily evening meetings and mutual criticism essential to their unity and progress. The ordinances of the Zoar Community were few and weak. They had nothing answering to mutual criticism, and no meetings except on Sunday, and these were not generally attended, and were not of a kind to elicit special interest or enthusiasm. I was present at one of them. Not more than one-third of the members were there. The women sat on one side, the men on the other, both facing the desk, from which Jacob Ackermann read one of Bimeler's discourses. The reading was preceded and followed by the singing of a hymn, with the accompaniment of a small organ. No one except Ackermann said a word; and he confined himself entirely to reading. And the Community, I was informed, had no meetings in which all took part—where all hearts flowed together in unity and devotion. Is it any wonder that the young people absented themselves from the meetings and lost their attraction for Community life?

A Community should be an enlarged home, differing from the small home only in its increased attractions and its greater facilities for improving character.

Zoar, at least in its later years, was not a complete Community. Like Bethel and Aurora, it was a combination of familism and Communism. The property was held in common; their agricultural and commercial businesses were carried on in common; they had a common church and school-house, and common customs and principles; but each family had its separate

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

household arrangements; there was no large unitary kitchen nor dining-room nor laundry; and in other respects the place resembled more an ordinary country village than a well-organized Community. Their hotel was thronged after work hours with hirelings and Communists; and as the former drank and smoked and used rough language, it would have been strange indeed if some of the Communists did not fall into the like bad habits. Experience shows that a Community thrives best when some check is placed upon the intercourse of its members with ordinary society.

The Zoar Communists had almost as much trouble with seceders as the Harmonists, and like them will be gratefully remembered in the far future for their efforts in settling by resort to the highest tribunals, regardless of expense, some important principles. Their covenant reads:

“We, the subscribers, members of the Society of Separatists of the Second Class, declare hereby that we give all our property, of every kind, not only what we possess, but what we may hereafter come into possession of by inheritance, gift, or otherwise, real or personal, and all rights, titles, and expectations whatever, both for ourselves and our heirs, to the said Society forever, to be and remain, not only during our lives, but after our deaths, the exclusive property of the Society. Also we promise and bind ourselves to obey all the commands and orders of the Trustees and their subordinates, with the utmost zeal and diligence, without opposition or grumbling; and to devote all our strength, good-will, diligence and skill during our whole lives to the common service of the Society and for the satisfaction of its Trustees. Also we consign

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

in a similar manner our children, so long as they are minors, to the charge of the trustees, giving these the same rights and powers over them as though they had been formally indentured to them under the laws of the State."

This covenant has been the basis of two important legal decisions which Communists should generally understand. One of them was rendered by the Supreme Court of the United States, and settled definitely and fully, that a member on seceding from a Community bound together by such a covenant cannot enforce a division and distribution of its property; and also that a member of a Community with such a covenant has no interest in the common property which on his death descends to his heirs-at-law. The other decision, made in a case that was not carried beyond the State courts, settled another point of vital interest to Communities. It was held that neither a member who subscribed to the above covenant nor his heir-at-law is entitled, in requital for services rendered, to a divisible share in the property acquired by the Community while he was a member, because "as between the seceder and remaining members he had already received all that his contract entitled him to demand."

In reviewing my observations at Zoar after my first visit I was forced to admit that I saw there few signs of superior culture, and that many a village of the same size in our Northern States surpassed it in enterprise and in facilities for educational development; yet when I asked the members, "What advantages do you enjoy over common society by reason of your Communism?" I got an answer that made me think their life might be

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

richer and nobler than appeared from any consideration of externals: "The advantages are many and great," they said. "All distinctions of rich and poor are abolished. The members have no care except for their own spiritual culture. Communism provides for the sick, the weak, the unfortunate, all alike, which makes their life comparatively easy and pleasant. In case of great loss by fire or flood or other cause, the burden which would be ruinous to one is easily borne by the many. Charity and genuine love one to another, which are the foundations of true Christianity, can be more readily cultivated and practiced in Communism than in common, isolated society. Finally, a Community is the best place in which to get rid of selfishness, wilfulness, and bad habits and vices generally; for we are subject to the constant surveillance and reproof of others, which, rightly taken, will go far toward preparing us for the large Community above."

In 1900 I again visited Zoar, to find it no longer a Community. Its property had been divided; all communistic regulations had been set aside; no meetings were held; individualism was rampant. I sought my old friend, Simon Beiter, and again interrogated him:

"Why did you go back to individualism?"

"The members had become dissatisfied with the community system.

"Do you mean most of them?"

"At first only a minority desired the change; but the dissatisfaction increased until a majority demand-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ed that Communism should be given up, and of course the minority had to yield. What else could they do?"

"But why did the majority desire a change?"

"Because they wished to own property separate from others and manage it for themselves."

"How was the property divided?"

"Three disinterested outside persons were appointed as commissioners, whose duties were to appraise all the property, and assign an equal share to every member."

"I suppose the younger people had much influence in bringing about the change."

"Yes; they first began to agitate the matter. They had not the same faith, nor the same purposes, as the older members."

"Have the members mostly remained here since the division?"

"Yes; but some have sold their shares and moved away, and others have gone away without disposing of their interests here."

"The entire character of the village will soon be changed."

"Yes; every one can do as he pleases, like all the world."

"Who succeeded Jacob Ackermann as trustee and leader?"

"I read the sermons in his place and acted as trustee, but resigned before the division."

"Are the old religious observances still kept up?"

"No; the church stands unused. Some want to hire a preacher. I do not need one, but I have noth-

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

ing to say against others getting one. We older members have a different faith from the common churches.”*

“You do not appreciate modern forms of worship?”

“No. Forms and ceremonies are of no value, and will never take a man to heaven. True Christianity exists first in the heart.”

“Do not some of the old members feel as though their life had been a failure on account of the failure of the Community?”

“To some extent, yes. Communism is the real life, because in heaven all is communistic; and Communities in this world are schools of preparation for the next world.”

A guest at the hotel reported that two of the aged members so deeply deplored the abandonment of Communism that they died of a broken heart, but my investigations failed to confirm this report. That many regretted the change is confessed, but nearly all recognized that it was a necessity, and all signed the agreement to accept the allotment of the commissioners, and also signed the distributive deed to the several members. And indeed there was no other alternative. As the aged Beiter said to me, “the young had not the same faith nor the same purposes as the older members;” and he might have added, “and the older members themselves have lost

*Mr. Beiter in this reply expresses the sentiment of very many who have lived in a Community dominated by a religious leader to whom they gave their full confidence. They can never give the same confidence to another, nor so implicitly believe what others may teach.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

much of their pristine earnestness and power, and there is no one left of our number of sufficient administrative ability and religious zeal to walk in the shoes of Joseph Bimeler." The first generation had failed to communicate to the second the afflatus that pervaded their own hearts in the early years of the Community; and the second generation totally failed to make Communists of the third generation. The form of Communism remained; the spirit that erstwhile animated it, and made it a living, growing organism, had departed, or if still present, was too weak to energize it. Moreover, the business prosperity of the Community had been declining for years, and its affairs were now in an unfavorable condition, and growing worse. Expenses exceeded the income, debts were accumulating, financial disaster might overwhelm them in the not far-distant future; and was it not wise to anticipate the inevitable, and voluntarily disband and divide their property before it was further diminished or hopelessly encumbered?

Such were the considerations that influenced the leaders to call a meeting of all the members of the Society in January, 1898, for the full discussion of the question of dissolution, which resulted in the conclusion that it was unwise to continue longer the Community; and on March 10th, 1898, the members signed a written compact whereby they selected and appointed Samuel Foltz, Henry S. Fisher and William Becker commissioners to make said partition and division, and to designate in their report and statement by numbers and on a plat to be prepared by

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

George E. Hayward, the surveyor selected by the members, the parts and portions of said real estate which they were severally to receive as their respective shares and allotments. All the preliminary arrangements having been made the commissioners set about their difficult task early in May.

The Zoar Community then had 222 people, including eleven members of the First Class, 125 of the Second Class, and the children and youth. Only full or covenant members could legally share in the division; but as the eleven members of the First Class were eligible to become members of the Second Class, it was agreed, in the interests of peace, that they should be admitted as full members, and receive half-shares in the common property. It was also agreed to pay a small sum of money to several young people who had lived in the Community and worked for it without becoming members in any sense—the amounts which these should severally receive to be proportioned according to their years of service after becoming of age.

The Community at the time of its division had 7,300 acres of land, assessed at \$340,820, and personal property assessed at \$16,250. In the division it was mutually agreed that the church, school and town-hall buildings and sites, as also the cemetery grounds, should be reserved and held for the use and benefit of the village. The sale of timber lands (made prior to the division) for \$15,000 and of all the personal property gave the Community ready cash suffi-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

cient to meet the expenses of the division and advance \$200 to each full member.

The work of the commissioners will be appreciated when it is considered that they had to so divide and apportion the real estate that the allotments to those entitled to full shares would be of equal value, and that eleven others were to receive allotments of half value, and that the land to be divided covered more than eleven square miles, and was of varying fertility and value, some parcels being in and near the village, some remote from it, some accessible by existing roads, others not; some well-watered, others without water; some fenced, others open, and so on; and that the houses and other buildings varied in value as much as the different parts of the land. But their work was finally completed, and every member received an allotment of farm land and a home or property in the village. The hotel, for instance, represented several shares, and was assigned to the landlord and the members of his family entitled to a share each. The allotments were made by the commissioners. The members of the Society had no choice. They were bound to accept what was apportioned to them. The natural plan was followed as far as practicable, of assigning to each the property, or a portion of it, which he had occupied or employed in his vocation; the mill to the miller; his shop to the blacksmith; the garden to the florist, and so on.

“On September 29, 1898, the deed, by the Society of Separatists of Zoar (incorporated), in whose title the lands stood, to the various individual distributees,

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

was signed and acknowledged at Zoar, and on October 13, 1898, it was recorded in the Recorder's office, New Philadelphia, Tuscarawas county, Ohio.

"The exact value of the property which each full member obtained cannot be given. Several members informed me it would be in the vicinity of \$2,500."*

The division appears to have been conducted in a very orderly manner, and the results to have been accepted by all. Of course, it would have been impossible to divide and apportion so large a property with exact justice, but I heard no complaints on this score, † which speaks well for the impartiality of the commissioners and for the character of the members, and especially of the older members, who in the interests of peace first consented to the dissolution of the Community, and then accepted an equal portion with those who had served the Community for a tithe of the time they had themselves given to it. This injustice was so apparent that it was freely acknowledged, and only justified on the ground that it had to be to avoid litigation. In short, the younger members forced upon the older members, not only the division, but its conditions.

Fortunately, in the case of the Zoar Community, the aggregate property was sufficient to place every member, even under the plan of division which was

* "History of the Zoar Society." By E. O. Randall. Published by F. J. Heer, Columbus, O., 1900., and giving a full account of the Society's dissolution.

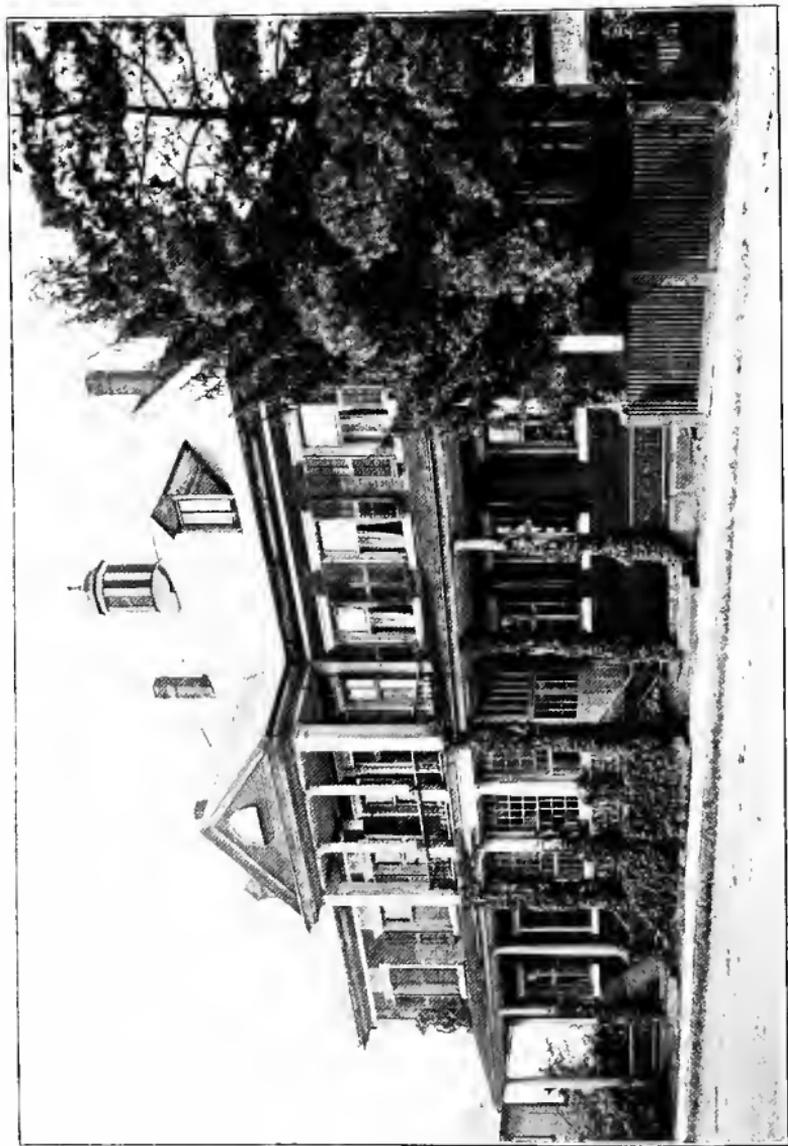
†Except by persons who brought suits to enforce claims to a share of the property in which they had forfeited all rightful interest; and it is with much satisfaction that I am able to record, on the authority of the Society's last Secretary and Treasurer, that these suits all terminated unfavorably for the claimants.—Letter of Louis Zimmerman, Dec. 29, 1900.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

followed, in circumstances of comparative comfort, and no instances of want are anticipated.

Let new Communities incorporate in their constitutions an equitable plan of dividing the property among the members in case of dissolution. Such Societies in organizing have generally assumed that they were to be perpetual, and some have gone so far as to declare that the property of the Community is forever consecrated to the cause of Communism, and can never be diverted again to individual uses; but experience demonstrates that any Community may in the course of successive generations find itself in such conditions that dissolution or reorganization is an imperative necessity; and if this possibility has been foreseen and wisely provided for in the constitution of the Society, the change will be more easily effected, and contention and possible litigation avoided.

Zoar was the most democratic of the so-called religious Communities. Its constitution was subject to amendment by a two-thirds' vote. Its elections were conducted in accordance with the laws of the State. All its officials were elective. It never had a President by name. Joseph Bimeler, the founder, was elected General Agent of the Community only "as long as he had the confidence of the Society," and he was accountable to the Standing Committee of Five, as were also the Three Trustees. All elections were by a majority vote. The Society reserved the right to displace by the same vote at any time during the year any Trustee, any Committee-man, or the General



FATHER BIMELE'S HOUSE AT ZOAR,

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

Agent. No one, from Bimeler down, could hold office longer than he commanded the confidence of the Society. There was no religious hierarchy, and every form of aristocracy was carefully guarded against. One of its Articles of Agreement stated that as peace and unity "can only be maintained by a general equality among the members, it is therefore severally understood and declared that no extra demands shall be made or allowed in respect to meat, drink, clothing, dwellings, etc.;" and the preamble to their "renovated Constitution" of 1833, affirmed: "All inequalities and distinctions of rank and fortune shall be abolished from amongst us, that we may live as brethren and sisters of one common family." Icarians and Altruists, with their extreme democracy, have not gone farther than this. Bimeler was derisively called "king," and malcontents and seceders pointed to his fine house, and accused him of traveling about in "a gay and brilliant equipage that flashed and spun;" but as it was proved in court that his carriage was an inexpensive one, and that his "span of speeders" did not cost over sixty dollars, and as it is moreover a question whether he personally desired to have so fine a house built for his own use, there seems no sufficient ground for the charge against him of ostentatious display. Randall concluded, after careful investigation, that whatever may have been the departures made by Bimeler from the simple style of living which was otherwise characteristic of the Society, they were most "willingly and cheerfully allowed by his contemporary people. Undisputed tradition and the univer-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

sal testimony of the aged members still living who remember Bimeler deprecate any aspersion upon the character, morality, honesty or sincerity of precept or practice of their founder and acknowledged superior."

In general, the Zoar life in its best estate was one of marked simplicity, equality and genuineness. There was an entire absence of pretense, of show and sham in their words and actions. He whom they served had said, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Hence there was to be equality among the living, and no distinctions in their funerals, their burials and their graves. In accordance with his special request no monument or stone designates the burial-place of Bimeler, nor of any member who died in the early years of the Community;* but more recent graves are marked by a board or stone slab, upon which is written the name and years of the deceased, and oft some words born of affection, or some holy text that breathes an immortal hope.

It was their dislike of pretense that caused Bimeler and his followers to denounce the official hired preachers of the Lutheran Church, calling them "the pensioners of the State," who "did not get their knowledge from God, but had learned it like a trade in the schools," and "who entered the pulpit only for the wages and for the comfort of life it affords, and who promoted hypocritical worship and ceremonies." For a similar reason Bimeler denounced long prayers as an abomination, and prayer-books as worse than useless, because they "promote babbling with the

*The same is true of the early burial practice at Harmony.

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

mouth." The reader may be shocked by such rude treatment of things he has learned to reverence, but let him consider that these are the words of one who was thoroughly devout, and believed that he was himself at times in personal communication with the Holy Spirit. "Christianity must be a thing of the heart," was the burden of all his preaching.

The long survival of the Zoar Community after the death of its founder in 1853 is the more noteworthy because his successors were not men of exceptional ability. So long as Bimeler lived he was their thinker, their preacher, their business manager. His business responsibilities could be discharged by the trustees, his printed discourses could be read and re-read at their Sunday meetings, but a living, growing Community requires a living thinker or truth-discoverer at its center; and this Zoar had not after Bimeler's death; and the wonder is, not that the Community died so soon and achieved no more, but that it lived so long and left so worthy a record.

The founder of the Oneida Community, in his "Bible Argument on the Social Relations," maintains that if the ordinary principles of marriage are preserved in Associations or Communities they will be worse schools of temptation to unlawful love than ordinary society, which if true only enhances the credit due to the Zoar Community for maintaining, after ten years of celibacy, their combined Communism and marriage for three-score years and ten without a single application for divorce. It is indeed a marvelous record, that can

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

scarcely be paralleled by even any celibate Community.

Zoar was a little world by itself. It had small use for outside society, and limited communication with it. For many years its people wove their own linen and woolen cloths from flax and wool of their own growing, and made their own simple garments; they tanned the hides of their own cattle, and made their own shoes; they made their own castings and pottery; ground their own flour and feed; repaired their own tools and agricultural implements; had their own church and their own preacher; their own school and their own teacher; their own physician, Bimeler caring for the bodies of his flock as well as their souls, so long as he lived; they had no lock-up, and needed none, for no member of Zoar, they proudly boast, was ever charged with crime; they had no use for courts and lawyers, having no disputes they could not settle without their aid; no divorces, no social scandals, no controversy over property matters. It was indeed a haven of peace and rest, such as the world has too rarely seen.

Zoar maintained its Community organization from April 15, 1819, till September 20, 1898, or nearly four-score years—only the Ephratans, Shakers and Harmonists have excelled this record. No prophetic vision is needed to foretell many of the changes that may occur at Zoar in the next four-score years: increased population, enterprise and wealth; the erection of costly public buildings and private residences, with large libraries and schools; the utili-

THE SEPARATISTS OF ZOAR

zation of her splendid water-powers; the paving and lighting of her streets; the rearing of many tall-spired churches for her sectarian worshipers; improved railroad, telegraphic and telephonic communication with the outside world; and that with these changes will come (unless the dreams of Bellamy and other prophets of good have meantime begun to be realized) the social distinctions and vices elsewhere the concomitants of population and wealth: the extremes of riches and poverty, of education and ignorance; the gilded saloon for one class, the drunkard's hell for the other, and staggering intemperance with its attendant train of horrid miseries for both; open and concealed crime multiplied a hundred-fold; divorces and social scandals in high life and low life; the unscrupulous devisers of trusts and "corners" in life's necessities lauded, while those unsuccessful in pelf's grab-game, otherwise however worthy, are thrust without the pale of so-called "good society." Who can view such changes, even in imagination, and not regret that Zoar could not have continued the quiet pure life of its early Communism a thousand years?

ROBERT OWEN AND HIS COMMUNITIES.

The character and career of Robert Owen were alike remarkable. Few men commanded more general interest during the first part of the nineteenth century. Mr. Noyes, in his "History of American Socialisms," while expressing little appreciation of his theories, credits him with effectually "seeding this country with an unquenchable desire and hope for Communism," and calls him the "Father of American Socialisms;" but he was more than this. His schemes were world-wide; and his actual achievements were limited to no one country or nation. He was the first advocate of shortening the hours of English factory operatives; his the first factory in all England, possibly in the world, wherein ten hours constituted a day's work, and he himself suggested that eight hours would ultimately be the rule of labor.* He first instituted legislation in behalf of women and children similar in intent to that now embodied in the factory laws of several of our States, and which made it impossible thereafter to employ children at the early age of six years in English factories. He was the founder of the first infant schools in England, in 1816, and thus early exemplified on a considerable scale the advan-

*Robert Dale Owen improves upon his father's suggestion, saying, "I think that social arrangements can be devised under which all reasonable necessities and comforts could be secured to a nation by three hours' daily work of its able-bodied population."



ROBERT OWEN.

ROBERT OWEN AND HIS COMMUNITIES

tages of the now universally popular kindergarten system. Model lodging-houses, public bath-houses, so-called "Ragged Schools," "Elder Schools," and other worthy projects for the benefit of the people, are indebted to Owen's noble heart and generous purse for their origin and first successful experimentation. He, too, if not the "Father of Co-operation," as some have called him, was certainly for many years of his life its greatest promoter.

In liberality toward these and like objects he was a veritable prince. When his attention was called to the educational schemes of Lancaster and Dr. Bell he subscribed one thousand pounds to one and five hundred to the other, although his property did not then exceed three thousand pounds. When it was proposed in 1822 by "the British and Foreign Philanthropic Society, for the permanent relief of the working classes," to carry into effect Owen's scheme of projected villages, he headed the list with its largest subscription of ten thousand pounds. When his "Equitable Bank of Exchange" scheme of 1832 failed—(a scheme which had for its ultimate object "to employ beneficially and educate usefully all who were unemployed and uneducated in the British empire"),—it having been represented to him that his name had chiefly induced persons of moderate means to take part in the project, and that many of them would be ruined if they now had to stand their share of the loss of twenty-five hundred pounds, "he himself paid the whole amount, and only regretted the draft upon him as limiting his means of promoting the good cause and of helping

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

many applicants for assistance."* When his new Harmony Community failed he paid all its debts, and left three thousand dollars as a contribution toward the education of its children. When, earlier, the cotton mills at New Lanark, Scotland, of which he was manager, had to stop four months because of the United States' embargo on the exportation of cotton, he insisted on paying the operatives full wages for the entire time, amounting to seven thousand pounds; and when he became part owner of the same mills it was by his suggestion that, after deducting five per cent. as interest on capital, the remaining profits (which averaged ten thousands pounds a year) were applied wholly to educational and philanthropic schemes.

Owen became manager of the New Lanark mills when only twenty-eight years of age. Here marvels were wrought in the conditions of the operatives and in the operatives themselves. Pauper child-labor, previously the principal reliance of the mills (as many as 500 pauper children from the large cities being employed at a time) was abolished; pilfering and similar crimes, which had previously prevailed to an alarming extent, were exterminated; drunkenness, elsewhere the rule in factory villages, became the exception at New Lanark; the quality of the food and clothing of the operatives was greatly improved, while their cost was reduced one-quarter; the hours of labor were diminished and wages increased; schools for the different ages were instituted; wholesome amusements, including music, dancing and military exercises, intro-

*"Robert Owen," by Wm. Lucas Sargant.

ROBERT OWEN AND HIS COMMUNITIES

duced; a large lecture- and concert-room furnished for their free use—in short, the visitors at New Lanark (of whom it is estimated that there were two thousand a year, for ten years) found “instead of dirt, drunkenness, squalor, and stunted children—comfort, plenty, ruddy cheeks, moral conduct, and happy faces—an arcadia in place of a pandemonium; and all justifying the claim of Owen himself, that “the comfort, the morals, and the happiness of the people at New Lanark, far, very far, indeed, exceeded those of any other cotton manufacturing establishment in the kingdom—I might with safety say in the world.”

Owen's unquestioned achievements at New Lanark gave him reputation and credit, not only with England's foremost men, but with those of other countries. Lords and dukes were his staunch supporters; national representatives and ambassadors his interested friends.* Czar Nicholas when a Grand Duke stopped two days at Owen's house in New Lanark, attended by his suite, and was so impressed by his observations that before leaving he tried to induce Owen to go to Russia, and is represented, says the biographer of Owen, “as proposing a scheme (to be carried out in Russia under Owen's supervision)

*Owen's biographer, Wm. Lucas Sargant, records that among the vice-presidents at a meeting called in 1822 to carry into effect his village scheme for the permanent relief of the laboring classes, were “Prince Lieven, the Russian ambassador; Chateaubriand and Don Luis de Onis, the ambassadors of France and of Spain; the ministers of Prussia, the United States, Portugal, Sweden, Sicily, Sardinia and Baden. Besides these, there were the Earls of Lonsdale and Blessington, the Viscounts Torrington and Exmouth, Lords Archibald Hamilton and Nugent, Baron de Stael and Mr. Randolph of Virginia. On the committee were Sir James Graham, a dozen or two of baronets, members of Parliament and persons of less distinction.”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

that would have required at least twenty millions sterling." The King of Prussia, after reading Owen's educational essays, wrote with his own hand a letter of thanks to him, adding that he had given instructions to his Minister of the Interior "to carry out the system of education recommended so far as circumstances would permit;" and thus was begun, the friends of Owen claim, "the celebrated system of Prussian national education" which is still in force.

Owen's educational views were based upon a conception which he deemed original with himself and of the utmost importance to mankind, viz., that "man's character is formed for him by the circumstances that surround him, that he is not a fit subject of praise or blame, and that any general character, good or bad, may be given to the world by applying means which are to a great extent, under the control of human governments;"* and the results following the improved conditions of his New Lanark operatives confirmed him in this idea, and convinced him that the manifold crimes and miseries of the world might be removed if its governments would unite in improving the conditions of their subjects. He affirmed that "human nature is radically good, and is capable of being trained, educated and placed from birth in such a manner that all ultimately must become united, good, wise, healthy and happy."

This doctrine, as first enunciated by Owen, gave little offense, and men high in the English government and church were glad to co-operate with him in

*Robert Dale Owen, in *Atlantic Monthly*, 1873.

ROBERT OWEN AND HIS COMMUNITIES

its experimentation for the benefit of the working-classes; but Owen, believing that it would ultimately revolutionize the social, moral, religious, and political conditions of the world, and impatient for its application, threw caution and prudence to the winds, and boldly denounced "every religion that has hitherto been taught to man;" and that at the very moment when he believed himself (using his own words) to be the "most popular individual in the civilized world, and to possess the most influence with a majority of the British cabinet and government." This denunciation destroyed his popularity with religious people. Thenceforth Owen was the apostle of a new social order based on materialism.

In 1820 Owen published a work on the results achieved under his management at New Lanark, and his scheme for the rational reconstruction of society. That scheme "proposed to cut the world up into villages of 300 to 2,000 souls, with a preference of 800 to 1,200; that every person should have allotted an area of land varying from half an acre to three times that quantity, according as the particular society was more or less agricultural; that the dwellings for the 200 or 300 families should be placed together in the form of a parallelogram, with common kitchens, eating apartments, schools, and places of worship in the center; that individualism should be disallowed in these villages; that each one was to work for the benefit of all; that all the members should eat at a table and of viands provided by the Community."* Owen was

* "Robert Owen," by Sargent.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

urged by many people in England to begin an experimental village. For its success he demanded at first £750,000, but finally consented to make a trial with £50,000, which was subscribed, and a favorable site for a Community village was offered at Motherwell by one of Owen's enthusiastic disciples, but I do not find that the experiment was ever fully carried out, partly because Owen's attention was soon thereafter absorbed in the welfare of Ireland (where he excited great interest, and where it was also resolved to found a colony or village in accordance with his scheme, which however did not go further), and partly doubtless because he was allured to America by the opportunity offered him to purchase the village and property of the Rappite Community at Harmony,* Indiana, which would afford him facilities for gratifying what his son, Robert Dale Owen, declared to be "his one ruling desire—a vast theatre on which to try his plans of social reform."

When it is considered that a man of Owen's character and record had come to the United States to establish a large Community; that he purchased early in 1825 for the purpose "30,000 acres of fertile land, nearly 3,000 of which was under cultivation; fine orchards; eighteen acres of full-bearing vines; a regularly laid-out town of 160 houses with streets running at right angles to each other, and a public square, around which were large brick edifices, built by the Rappites for churches, schools, and other public and

*Rechristened New Harmony by Robert Owen.

NEW HARMONY COMMUNITY

private purposes;”* that his avowed object in founding the Community was not to increase his own wealth, but “to secure happiness to all its members, . . . by the adoption of a system of union and co-operation, founded in a spirit of universal charity;” that “the industrious and well-disposed of all nations” were invited to participate in the enterprise; and that the project was announced in lectures delivered by Owen in the Hall of Representatives at Washington “in the presence of the President of the United States, the President-Elect, the Heads of Departments and Members of Congress,” we are not surprised to learn “that in the short space of six weeks from the commencement of the experiment a population of eight hundred persons was drawn together, and that, in October, 1825, the number had increased to nine hundred.” Nor are we surprised to learn that during the same and the succeeding year communistic societies, tracing their origin directly or indirectly to Robert Owen, were formed at Allegheny, Penn., Blue Springs and Forestville, Ind., Cocksackie, Haverstraw, and Franklin, N. Y., Nashoba, Tenn., Kendal and Yellow Springs, Ohio, and at various other places. Of these experiments the

NEW HARMONY COMMUNITY

far exceeded the others in importance. It had the greatest number of members (900), the greatest domain (30,000 acres), the greatest capital (over \$150,000); and it had for part of the time of its existence (what the others wholly lacked) the personal presence

*Macdonald's Ms. collection.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

and supervision of Owen. There were also several other eminent men at New Harmony. Wm. Maclure, one of the members, and sometimes called "The Father of American geology," was made President of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, in 1817, and re-elected annually to the same distinguished office till his death in 1840. Several other noted scientists accompanied Maclure to New Harmony, including Thomas Say, one of the founders of the Academy of Natural Sciences already mentioned, and of high standing as a conchologist and entomologist; Dr. Troost, whose collections illustrating geology and mineralogy are said to have been the finest ever possessed by a single individual, and who was sent in 1810 on a tour of scientific observation to Java by Louis Bonaparte, then King of Holland; Charles Leseur, a French naturalist and designer, who accompanied Peron in his explorations of the coast of Australia; Professor Joseph Neef, who had studied under Pestalozzi in Switzerland, and served under Napoleon; Fauntleroy, the Sistares, Madam Cretageot, and others who have since distinguished themselves in one way and another. The Owens, too, proved themselves worthy of recognition as one of our royal families. At least three of the second generation—Robert Dale, David Dale, and Richard—attained a national if not world-wide reputation; and one of the third generation—a son of David Dale—was for a time chief of the Pacific Coast Survey.

On the 27th of April, 1825, a provisional constitution was given to the New Harmony Society, such as

NEW HARMONY COMMUNITY

was deemed suitable by Owen for the necessary probationary training preparatory to full Communism. This was to continue for three years, and the government was meantime to be in the hands of a Preliminary Committee. The first organization being thus effected, Owen returned to Scotland to look after his interests there.

Coming again to New Harmony early in 1826 he had, says his biographer, "the high gratification of finding the Society in a condition worthy of its name, . . . and every thing was going prosperously;" and he at once resolved to cut short the novitiate period (which he had previously considered so essential "to give time for the people to become acquainted with each other, for testing the steadiness of the members, and above all, for instructing and training every one in the knowledge and practice of the true principles of society), and at once try the grand experiment of full Communism. Accordingly a new constitution was adopted by the Society, which was henceforth to be styled The New Harmony Community of Equality—the government of which was to be in the hands of an Executive Council of Six. But the adoption of the new constitution and bestowal upon the members of the privileges of full Communism, instead of increasing the harmony of the Society, appears to have had the contrary effect. Difficulties multiplied immediately. "How rapidly," says Robert Dale Owen, "they came upon us! Two weeks after the formation of the new Community a resolution was adopted by the Assembly directing the Executive Council to request the aid

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

of Mr. Owen for one year in conducting the concerns of the Community.' He accepted, and assumed the whole management. Then ensued for a time harmony, business activity and industry, and general attention to the interests of the Community: but soon new troubles arose; new divisions occurred; the demon of disintegration entered; two new Communities (Macluria and Feiba Peven) were formed in the immediate vicinity of New Harmony, mainly from its members; there were attempts to form other Communities, and to improve existing conditions in the New Harmony Community; but nothing availed to prevent the impending disaster, The Community, as Mr. Noyes truly says in his history, was "like a great ship, wallowing helpless in the trough of a tempestuous sea, with nine hundred passengers, and no captain or organized crew!" The end came in June, 1827.

The failure of New Harmony is ascribed to many causes. Macdonald, who spent eighteen months there, and was a great admirer and personal friend of its founder, was certain that the absence of Owen in the first year of the Community was one of the great causes of its failure.

Sampson of Cincinnati, who was at New Harmony from the beginning in 1825 to the end in 1827, says the failure was caused by a rogue named Taylor, who insinuated himself into Owen's favor, and afterwards swindled and deceived him in a variety of ways, among other things establishing a distillery, contrary to Mr. Owen's wishes and principles, and injurious to the Community.

NEW HARMONY COMMUNITY

Paul Brown, who wrote a book entitled "Twelve Months at New Harmony," attributed all the troubles to the anxiety about individual exclusive property, principally on the part of Owen and his associate leaders.

Owen's biographer states his conviction, in discussing the causes of the failure of the New Harmony experiment, that "it is impossible to carry out a communistic system, unless in a place utterly removed from contact with the world, or with the help of some powerful religious conviction. Mere benevolence, mere sentiments of universal philanthropy (he says), are far too weak to bind the self-seeking affections of men."

Robert Dale Owen, who was a prominent member from the early months of 1826, said his father made a mistake in not establishing his Community in England, instead of the United States, and a greater mistake in admitting as members all comers, without recommendation or any examination whatever. He also said: "At New Harmony there was not disinterested industry, there was not mutual confidence, there was not practical experience, there was not union of action, because there was not unanimity of counsel; and these were the points of difference and dissension—the rocks on which the social bark struck and was wrecked."

Mr. Owen, the founder, said: "he wanted honesty of purpose, and he got dishonesty. He wanted temperance, and instead he was continually troubled with the intemperate. He wanted industry, and he found

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

idleness. He wanted cleanliness, and found dirt. He wanted carefulness, and found waste. He wanted to find desire for knowledge, but he found apathy. He wanted the principles of the formation of character understood, and he found them misunderstood. He wanted these good qualities combined in one and all the individuals of the Community, but he could not find them, neither could he find those who were self-sacrificing and enduring enough to prepare and educate their children to possess these qualities."

The author of the "History of American Socialisms," after reviewing at length Owen's career, finds that he had uniform success until he turned against the Bible and made war on religion; "from that time fortune deserted him, and the splendid success of New Lanark was followed by the terrible defeat at New Harmony."

The story of New Harmony, as told by Owen's biographer, by Macdonald and other writers, presents few attractions; but Robert Dale Owen, in his "Experiences of Community Life," as related in his *Atlantic Monthly* article already referred to, makes us realize that New Harmony gave its members glimpses of a happier life than is found in common isolated households. He says:

"When I reached Harmony early in 1826, I looked at every thing with eyes of enthusiasm; and for a time the life there was wonderfully pleasant and hopeful to me. This, I think, is the common experience of intelligent and well-disposed persons who have joined the Brook Farm or other reputable Community. There is a great charm in the good fellowship and in

NEW HARMONY COMMUNITY

the absence of conventionalism which characterize such associations. Then there was something especially taking—to me at least—in the absolute freedom from trammels, alike in expression of opinion, in dress, and in social converse, which I found there. The evening gatherings, too, delighted me; the weekly meeting for discussion of our principles, in which I took part at once; the weekly concert, with an excellent leader, Josiah Warren, and a performance of music, instrumental and vocal, much beyond what I had expected in the backwoods; last, not least, the weekly ball, where I found crowds of young people, bright and genial, if not specially cultivated, and as passionately fond of dancing as in those days I myself was.

“The accommodations seemed to me, indeed, of the rudest, and the fare of the simplest; but I cared no more for that than young folks usually care who forsake pleasant homes to spend a summer month or two under canvas,—their tents on the beach, perhaps, with boats and fishing-tackle at command; or pitched in some sylvan retreat, where youth and maiden roam the forest all day, returning at nightfall to merry talk, improvised music, or an impromptu dance on the greensward.”

“On the whole,” he says, “my life in Harmony for many months was happy and satisfying. To this the free and simple relation there existing between youth and maidens much contributed. We called each other by our Christian names only; spoke and acted as brothers and sisters might; often strolled out by moonlight in groups, sometimes in pairs; yet withal, no scandal or harm came of it.”

Many persons have given testimony like that above of Robert Dale Owen regarding the peculiar charm of social life in the larger Communities.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Of the Societies tracing their origin to Robert Owen the

YELLOW SPRINGS COMMUNITY

ranks next in interest to New Harmony: indeed, it appears to have been started before the latter, and to have been the first result of Owen's personal efforts in the United States in behalf of Communism. The only account of it now extant was written by one who resided with his parents in the Community, and after arriving at manhood was associated with several of its leading men, and through them gained reliable facts relating to its history.* The author of "American Socialisms" commends it as a "model memoir of the life and death of a non-religious Community, that would serve for many others, by changing a few names, as ministers do when they re preach old funeral sermons:"

"About the year 1824 Owen arrived in Cincinnati. He brought with him a history of his labors at New Lanark; with glowing and not unjust accounts of the beneficent effects of his efforts there. He exhibited plans for his proposed Communities here; with model farms, gardens, vineyards, play-grounds, orchards, and all the internal and external appliances of the social paradise. At Cincinnati he soon found many congenial spirits, among the first of whom was Daniel Roe, minister of the New Jerusalem Church, a society of the followers of Swedenborg. This society was composed of a very superior class of people. They were intelligent, liberal, generous, cultivated men and women—many of them wealthy and highly educated. They were apparently the best possible material to or-

*Macdonald's MS. collection.

YELLOW SPRINGS COMMUNITY

ganize and sustain a Community, such as Owen proposed. Mr. Roe and many of his congregation soon became fascinated with Owen and his Communism; and together with others in the city and elsewhere organized a Community and furnished the means for purchasing an appropriate site for its location. In the meantime Owen proceeded to Harmony; and with others purchased that place, with all its buildings, vineyards and lands, from Rapp, who emigrated to Pennsylvania and established his people at Economy.

"After careful consultation and selection, it was decided by the Cincinnati Community to purchase the Yellow Springs as the most eligible site for their purpose. It was really one of the most delightful regions in the whole West, and well worthy the residence of a people who had resolved to make many sacrifices for what they honestly believed to be a great social and moral reformation.

"The Community as finally organized consisted of seventy-five or one hundred families, and included professional men, teachers, merchants, mechanics, farmers, and a few common laborers. Its economy was nearly as follows:

"The property was held in trust forever, in behalf of the members of the Community, by the original purchasers and their chosen successors, to be determined from time to time by the voice of the Community. All additional property thereafter to be acquired, by labor, purchase, or otherwise, was to be added to the common stock, for the benefit of each and all:

"Schools were to be established to teach all things useful (but religion):

"Opinion upon all subjects was free; and the present good of the whole Community was the standard of morals:

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"The Sabbath was a day of rest and recreation, to be improved by walks, rides, plays, and pleasing exercises and by public lectures:

"Dancing was instituted as a most valuable means of physical and social culture, and the ten-pin alley and other sources of amusement were open to all.

"But although Christianity was wholly ignored in the system there was no free-lovism or other looseness of morals allowed. In short, this Community began its career under the most favorable auspices, and if any men and women in the world could have succeeded these should have done so. How they did succeed, and how they did not, will be shown.

"For the first few weeks, all entered into the new system with a will. Service was the order of the day. Men who seldom or never before labored with their hands devoted themselves to agriculture and the mechanic arts with a zeal which was at least commendable, though not always according to knowledge. Ministers of the gospel guided the plow, called the swine to their corn, instead of sinners to repentance, and let patience have her perfect work over an unruly yoke of oxen. Merchants exchanged the yard-stick for the rake or pitch-fork; and all appeared to labor cheerfully for the common weal. Among the women there was even more apparent self-sacrifice. Those who had seldom seen the inside of their own kitchens went into that of the common eating-house (formerly a hotel), and made themselves useful among pots and kettles; and refined young ladies, who had all their lives been waited upon, took their turns in waiting upon others at the table. And several times a week all parties who chose mingled in the social dance in the great dining-hall.

"But notwithstanding the apparent heartiness and cordiality of this auspicious opening, it was in the social atmosphere of the Community that the first cloud

YELLOW SPRINGS COMMUNITY

arose. Self-love was a spirit which would not be exorcised. It whispered to the lowly maidens, whose former position in society had cultivated the spirit of meekness—'Thou art as good as the formerly rich and fortunate; insist upon your equality.' It reminded the favorites of former society of their lost superiority, and in spite of all rules tinctured their words and actions with the love of self. Similar thoughts and feelings soon arose among the men; and though not so soon exhibited they were none the less deep and strong. It is unnecessary to specify: suffice it to say, that at the end of three months—three months!—the leading minds in the Community were compelled to acknowledge to each other that the social life of the Community could not be bounded by a single circle. They therefore acquiesced, though reluctantly, in its division into many. But they still hoped, and many of them no doubt believed, that though social equality was a failure community of property was not. But whether the law of mine and thine is natural or incidental in human character it soon began to develop its sway. The industrious, the skillful, and the strong saw the products of their labor enjoyed by the indolent, the unskilled, and the improvident, and self-love rose against benevolence. A band of musicians insisted that their brassy harmony was as necessary to the common happiness as bread and meat, and declined to enter the harvest-field or the work-shop. A lecturer upon natural science insisted upon talking only while others worked. Mechanics, whose single day's labor brought two dollars into the common stock, insisted that they should in justice work only half as long as the agriculturist, whose day's work brought but one.

"Of course, for a while these jealousies were only felt, but they soon began to be spoken also. It was useless to remind all parties that the common labor

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

of all ministered to the prosperity of the Community. Individual happiness was the law of nature, and it could not be obliterated; and before a single year had passed this law had scattered the members of that society which had come together so earnestly, and under such favorable circumstances, back into the selfish world from which they came.

"The writer of this sketch has since heard the history of that eventful year reviewed with honesty and earnestness by the best men and most intelligent parties of that unfortunate social experiment. They admitted the favorable circumstances which surrounded its commencement; the intelligence, devotion, and earnestness which were brought to the cause by its projectors; and its final, total failure. And they rested ever after in the belief that man, though disposed to philanthropy, is essentially selfish; and a community of social equality and common property impossible."

It was but natural that the members of the above-described experiment should reach the conclusion that "a community of social equality and common property is impossible;" but Communists will utterly reject it, and press forward with faith undimmed that "the highest form of their ideal will yet be made divinely real."

It is unnecessary to give in any detail the history of the other communistic experiments in this country owing their origin to the labors and principles of Robert Owen. Their lives were short and devoid of special interest.

Robert Owen himself was by no means discouraged by the results at New Harmony. The very next year after its ending (1828) he crossed the Atlantic for

YELLOW SPRINGS COMMUNITY

the purpose of inducing the Mexican government to grant a tract of land whereon Communities might be established for the exemplification of his plans and principles; and nearly twenty years later (1845) he was in the United States, delivering addresses in Washington and other large cities, and at a World's Convention of his own calling in New York, and then, says Adin Ballou of Hopedale, had "his vast schemes to develop, and vast hopes of speedy success in establishing a great model of the new social state—a large Community, all to be finished and in perfect order, before he introduces to their home the well-selected population who are to inhabit it, and for which he insists on obtaining a million of dollars, to be expended in lands, buildings, machinery, conveniences and beautifications."

In justice to Owen's memory it should be stated that late in life he ceased to be a mere materialist, and confessed that he then saw (what he had in all his previous life overlooked) the necessity of good spiritual conditions in forming the character of man, and that "these are the most important of all in the future development of mankind."

Whatever may be thought of Robert Owen's theories, schemes and experiments, his motives were of the noblest. Not personal aggrandisement, but the good of humanity, was the central, dominant object of his life. In his own words: "Crown, coronet, mitres, military displays, pomp of war, wide colonies and a huge empire, are, in my view, all trifles light as air, unless with them you can have a fair share of contentment, comfort and happiness among the great body of the people."

THE PERFECTIONISTS AND THEIR COMMUNITIES.

The Perfectionists, like the Shakers, the Harmonists, the Inspirationists, the Jansonists and the Zoarites, were religionists before they were Communists, and like them, because of their new and higher views of Christian life, were Separatists from the established churches.

These Separatists, one and all, trace their origin to revivals—the Perfectionists to that of 1831, which was unparalleled in its scope and power, stirring the nation as it had never been stirred before. The New England States especially were pervaded with the most intense religious excitement.

John Humphrey Noyes, afterwards known as the 'Perfectionist leader and preacher, and still later as the founder of the Putney, Oneida and Wallingford Communities, was then only twenty years of age, his birthday being Sept. 3, 1811, but he was old enough to fully enter into the enthusiasm of the times, and thus early, as he relates in his "Religious Experience,"* he "determined with all his inward strength to be a young convert in zeal and simplicity forever." "My heart," he says, "was fixed on the millennium, and I resolved to live or die for it."

Upon his conversion to religion he at once and

*Much of the material used in this account of Mr. Noyes' early religious life is taken from this work, published fifty-two years ago, and now out of print.



JOHN HUMPHREY NOYES.

THE PERFECTIONISTS

forever dropped the legal studies which he had pursued for a year, after his graduation from Dartmouth College in 1830, and in four weeks prepared himself for admission to the Theological Seminary at Andover, N. H.

He relates that at this period of his youth, on one occasion while conversing with his father, who had himself been a minister and was fond of theological argument, he suggested an interpretation of some passage of Scripture which his father thought was new. "Take care," said he, "that is heresy." "Heresy or not," said the son, "it is true." "But if you are to be a minister," said the father, "you must think and preach as the rest of the ministers do; *if you get out of the traces they will whip you in.*" The son was very indignant at this suggestion, and replied, "Never! never will I be whipped by ministers or any body else into views that do not commend themselves to my understanding as guided by the Bible and enlightened by the Spirit."

This colloquy with his father is interesting as disclosing the natural independence of mind and unconquerable adhesion to what he considered the truth that, as will soon appear, led him to accept and defend doctrines at variance with those of his theological teachers and the orthodox churches, and still later made him one of the most radical religious and sociological thinkers of the nineteenth century. Here plainly was a man that never would follow the well-beaten paths of thought and doctrine because the fathers had trodden them—his own mind and heart

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

must be satisfied before any dogma would be accepted by him as truth, however hoary with age. Luther himself was not more ready to nail his theses to the gate of the Wittenberg church than was Mr. Noyes to proclaim and defend what he had once fully accepted as Bible truth.

At Andover Theological Seminary his enthusiasm in spiritual things was chilled by the religious apathy there prevailing. In his first devotion to God he had supposed that all Christians were full of zeal and love, and especially had he supposed "that a theological seminary, where the choice young men of all the churches gather, was little less heavenly than a habitation of angels;" but he soon found, he says, that Andover was a very poor place for one who had vowed to live in the revival spirit and be a young convert forever. Instead of zeal he found indifference; instead of sobriety he found levity; instead of love he found bickerings, jealousies, intrigues; instead of purity he found sensuality. Still there were a few students in the Seminary "who were zealous for progress in holiness—especially among those who had devoted themselves to the foreign missionary service." He was cautioned by a friend before entering the Seminary against taking the infection of the missionary spirit, but he naturally sought the society of the most earnest and godly students, and as many of these were pledged to missionary labor he was led to inquire what his personal duty was; and as a result of this inquiry he decided within three months of his conversion to consecrate his life to the work of for-

THE PERFECTIONISTS

eign missions, and placed himself under the American Board of Missions.

His relations with the missionary students became more and more intimate, and he was admitted into their most secret society ("The Brethren"), whose membership at that time included among others Lyman and Munson, who met their death at the hands of cannibals in the East India Islands; Tracy, who became a Chinese missionary; Justin Perkins, afterwards a Nestorian missionary. The object of this secret society was "to effect in the person of its members a mission or missions to the heathen," and one of its exercises was a frank criticism of one another's character for the purpose of personal improvement—the subject "holding his peace while the other members, one by one, told him his faults in the plainest way possible." Mr. Noyes submitted to this ordeal with great personal benefit, and subsequently introduced it into his Communities as a means not only of personal improvement, but of government, calling it Mutual Criticism.*

At Andover Mr. Noyes was taught by Prof. Moses Stuart that the 7th chapter of Romans is a description, not of Christian experience, but of a carnal man before conversion, which strengthened his conviction that it is possible to continue in the revival spirit, and thus became the germ of his later doctrine of personal holiness; and the teaching of the same emi-

*For a fuller account of this system and of the society at Andover in which it originated, see the Congregational Quarterly of April, 1875, and the pamphlet on "Mutual Criticism," compiled by the author and published by the Oneida Community, 1876.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ment professor, that the 24th chapter of Matthew has reference altogether to events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem, started him on a course of independent scriptural study that ultimated in his new views about the Second Coming of Christ.

The autumn of 1832 found Mr. Noyes at the Yale Theological Seminary, the principal inducement to change from Andover being that at New Haven he "could devote a greater part of his time to his favorite study of the Bible." Of his life after entering the Yale Seminary, and immediately preceding his becoming a Perfectionist, he says in his "Religious Experience"—"I attended lectures daily, and studied sufficiently to be prepared for examination; but my mind was chiefly directed with my heart to the simple treasures of the Bible. I went through the Epistles of Paul again and again, as I had gone through the Evangelists at Andover; and in the latter part of the time, when I had begun to exercise myself in preaching, I was in the habit of preparing the matter of every sermon by reading the whole New Testament through with reference to the subject I had chosen."*

During this same period Mr. Noyes aided in the organization of one of the earliest Anti-Slavery Societies in the country, and devoted part of his time to religious labor among the colored people of New Haven. He also became connected with about a

*As showing Mr. Noyes' great familiarity with the Scriptures in later years, I recall that on one occasion in 1853 a circle surrounding him read passages from the Prophets, challenging him to name book, chapter and location on the page of his favorite polyg. ot Bible of each passage as read, and that there was scarcely an error in his answers.—W. A. H.

THE PERFECTIONISTS

dozen revivalists; "for I was burning," he says, "with the same zeal which I found in them (but nowhere else in the city) for the conversion of souls." Their number multiplied, and calling themselves "The Free Church" they secured for their preacher, upon the recommendation of Mr. Noyes (who had witnessed his work in the vicinity of his own Vermont home), James Boyle, a powerful revivalist, under whose labors a great awakening was soon in progress in New Haven; the membership of the Free Church rapidly increased, and ultimately it became a large and prosperous society.

Meantime Mr. Noyes' association with these zealous revivalists, and his constant study of the Scriptures, made him dissatisfied with the religious life of the existing churches, and caused him to doubt whether Christianity in its full, saving operation was widely diffused even in this so-called Christian country. It was natural that his missionary zeal for work in foreign lands should decline, and that his heart should turn toward the work of converting nominal Christians here to higher views of Christian life.

But up to this time there had been no break between Mr. Noyes and his teachers in the theological seminary. He says himself that his

FIRST ADVANCE INTO POSITIVE HERESY,

that is, doctrines not accredited by the churches, was made in the summer of 1833, and thus occurred: in his New Testament studies his attention had been arrested by Christ's suggestion concerning John, *"If I will that he tarry till I come what is that to thee?"*

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

“Here,” Mr. Noyes said to himself, “is an intimation by Christ himself that John will live till his Second Coming; the Bible is not a book of riddles; its hidden treasures are accessible to those who make the Spirit of Truth their guide; and how is it possible to reconcile this intimation with the accepted theory that Christ’s Second Coming is yet future?” For days he gave himself to the study of all that is said in the Bible concerning that great event, reading the New Testament through ten times with his eye on the question suggested by Christ, “If I will that he (John) tarry till I come what is that to thee?” his heart struggling in prayer for the truth. His mind finally became clear. “I no longer conjectured or believed,” he says, “in the inferior sense of these words; but I *knew* that the time appointed for the Second Advent was within one generation from the time of Christ’s personal ministry.”

Here was an absolute and radical innovation in Church doctrine. He felt and wrote to his friends that he “had entered upon a course of departure from popular belief which would probably end in ecclesiastical outlawry.”

Still, in August, 1833, he was licensed with the other members of his class to preach, and for six weeks, during the summer vacation of the seminary, labored as pastor of a church in North Salem, N. Y.

On his return to the seminary to complete his studies he was thrown into the society of zealous young men who had recently entered the seminary, and “their constant fellowship and conversation, to-

THE PERFECTIONISTS

gether with the reading of such works as the life of J. B. Taylor and Wesley on Christian Perfection," and his own study of the Bible, all kept his heart, as he records, "in steady and accelerating progression toward perfect holiness." "My chief delight, next to that of communing with Christ through the Scriptures, was in prayer. I was in the habit of spending not less than three hours in my closet daily."

Still his heart and mind were unsatisfied, for he felt certain that his experience thus far was only preparatory to that state of full consecration to God which was attained by some in the Primitive Church, and was therefore attainable by every true believer in Christ—a state in which all the affections of the heart are given to God, and there is complete unity with him, and no sin. "The burden of Christian perfection accumulated upon my soul," he wrote to his mother, "until I determined to give myself no rest while the possibility of the attainment of it remained doubtful. At last the Lord met me with the same promise that gave peace to my soul when first I came out of Egypt: 'If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' By faith I took the proffered boon of eternal life. God's spirit sealed the act, and the blood of Christ cleansed me from all sin. I know not how the Lord will dispose of me, only he forewarns me that contempt and persecution await me."

Nor were these things long delayed. The very evening of the day of his second conversion to

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

CHRIST AS A SAVIOR FROM ALL SIN

he preached at the Free Church on the text, "*He that committeth sin is of the devil.*" He left the church with the feeling that he had irrevocably committed himself to the doctrine of holiness. The next morning a theological student who heard his discourse of the previous evening came to labor with him, and asked him directly, "Don't you commit sin?" The answer was an unequivocal "*No.*" The man stared as though a thunderbolt had fallen before him, and repeated his question, and got the same answer. Within a few hours word was passed through the college and the city, "*Noyes says he is perfect!*" and immediately afterward it was reported that "*Noyes is crazy!*"

This confession by Mr. Noyes that Christ had saved him from sin was made on the 20th of February, 1834—a day held in remembrance by his devoted followers as the day-dawn of a new and higher religious experience than had been previously known in the so-called Christian churches of modern days, and its anniversary was for very many years observed by them as a festival occasion.

No sooner had Mr. Noyes made this personal confession of holiness than the ministers and theological professors of New Haven took vigorous measures to arrest the heresy. He was notified that he was to be tried by the Association that had licensed him to preach; but on his appearing before that body and saying, "he had no disposition to avail himself of their

THE PERFECTIONISTS

license in preaching doctrines which he knew they did not sanction," he was allowed to resign. Not content with this, he was requested to withdraw altogether from the college premises. He also received notice of a vote of the Free Church, in whose growth he had been so greatly interested, requesting him to discontinue all communication with its members.

"I had now lost," he says, "my standing in the Free Church, in the ministry and in the college. My good name in the great world was gone. My friends were fast falling away;" and all because he had dared to believe in Christ as a present and full Savior—dared to accept Christ's words in their full meaning. This was the very head and front of his offending.

In his "Sartor Resartus" Carlyle makes Herr Teufelsdröckh say there is nothing more natural than that, when the "God-given mandate first prophetically stirs within one, and the clay must now be vanquished or vanquish, he should be carried of the spirit into grim solitudes, and there fronting the tempter do grimmest battle with him; defiantly setting him at naught till he yield and fly. Name it as we choose, with or without visible devil, whether in the natural deserts of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral desert of selfishness and baseness—to such temptation are we all called. Unhappy if we are not!" And to such temptation was Mr. Noyes now called. The years immediately following were years of fierce contest with the spiritual powers of darkness that threatened to overwhelm his faith—of perils among false brethren—of contentions with those who having once embraced

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

the truths of Perfectionism* had turned away from them and dishonored them, and especially of fierce and prolonged struggles with those who at first were recognized as leaders in the new dispensation; but he never wavered in his purpose. When other Perfectionist leaders, in that darkest period of discouragement, proposed to engage in other fields of labor, he reminded them of the disciples who after the death of their Master turned back to their old employment of fishing, and said that whatever they might do "he for one should not go a-fishing." He felt that the darkest time was not the time for him to desert his post; "and I resolved," he says, "to labor alone if necessary to repair the breaches of our cause."

In carrying out this resolution he returned to his father's family in Putney, Vt., where he remained, save for temporary absences, till the great hegira of 1847. "At this time," he says, "I commenced in earnest the enterprise of repairing the disasters of Perfectionism, and establishing it on a permanent basis, not by preaching and stirring up excitement over a large field, as had been done at the beginning, nor by laboring to reorganize and discipline broken and corrupted regiments, as I had done at different places, but by devoting myself to the patient instruction of a few simple-minded, unpretending believers, chiefly belonging to my father's family. I had now come to regard the quality of the proselytes of holiness as more important than their quantity; and the quality which

*A name given in derision to the new doctrines, and accepted by those who believed in them—the believers themselves being called "Perfectionists."

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

I preferred was not that meteoric brightness which I had so often seen miserably extinguished, but sober and even timid honesty. This I found in the little circle of believers at Putney; and the Bible School which I commenced among them in the winter of 1836-7 proved to be to me and to the cause of holiness the beginning of better days."

I date the beginning of

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

from this return of Mr. Noyes to his father's house, although it was several years thereafter before there was any recognized Community at Putney. His mother, his sisters Harriet and Charlotté, and his younger brother George, received him with open hearts, for they were all now believers in his doctrines and mission. Miss Harriet A. Holton of the neighboring village of Westminster soon joined this family circle as Mr. Noyes' wife, and I doubt not ever remembered the 28th of June, 1838, with as much pleasure and sense of honor, because of her marriage on that day, as Queen Victoria did because of her coronation.

The two brothers and two sisters and the wife of the elder brother thenceforth were united in faith and in every interest, and their lives consecrated to the perfect realization of the gospel of Christ in their own hearts and in the hearts of all who should accept the glorious truths which had been revealed to them. And whether one appreciates or contemns the object for which this union was formed, he cannot withhold

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

his admiration of the motives which led them to place on the sacrificial altar their social position, their wealth, their ambitions and life-prospects, and devote all their powers to a despised cause, in whose service they had so much to lose. For the Noyes family was one of wealth, position, and social influence. The father, John Noyes, was a graduate of Dartmouth College, a tutor in this college of the class of Daniel Webster, and in 1816 was a Vermont Representative in Congress. The mother (whose maiden name was Polly Hayes) was also of a highly respectable family, President Rutherford Hayes being a nephew, and she was herself a most queenly woman, and strongly religious—just the mother to consecrate her children to what she deemed the Lord's interest whithersoever it might lead. "Her children knew from the time they knew any thing," writes her daughter Harriet, "that they had higher relations than those of this world, and that they must fear the Lord. She was ready to spoil their chances for worldly advantage rather than that they should forget God, and many were their youthful mortifications in this way. She did not merely preach to us that we were immortal beings, and that it would profit us nothing if we gained the whole world and lost our own souls, but she put this truth into action in every possible way."

The Bible School which Mr. Noyes thus established at Putney continued for many years, confirming its students in the new doctrines of Salvation from Sin and the Second Coming of Christ, and resulting in the discovery of many other doctrines at

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

variance with the dogmas of the divinity doctors and commentators. Under their constant searching eyes the Bible became an unsealed book and almost a new revelation.

This Bible School was afterwards styled "Corporation," "Association," and finally "Community;" but it was virtually from the beginning a Pentecostal Community. No one said that "aught of the things he possessed was his own." A farm came to the two brothers on the settlement of their father's estate, and another farm to the two sisters; still there was no "mine" nor "thine;" and in the publication of their paper the writing, editing, type-setting, printing and mailing were for years all done by the five Noyeses, and never was the question of remuneration for labor once mooted among them. This unity of external interests was only the natural and inevitable result of their unity of heart and purpose.

The first important accession to this nucleus of the Communities subsequently established was John Langdon Skinner of New Hampshire, of a family eminent in the ministerial and other professions. He joined the Putney School in the autumn of 1839, and was for several years associated with Mr. Noyes in the editorial management of *The Witness* and its successor, *The Perfectionist*. He married Harriet H. Noyes.

The next important accession was that of the Cragin family, consisting of George Cragin and wife and child, in September, 1840. Mr. Cragin had been a merchant of New York City, the General Publishing

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Agent of the *Advocate of Moral Reform*, a co-laborer of John McDowall in reform work, and a revivalist under Chas. G. Finney. His wife had been a teacher and Sunday-school worker in New York City and a zealous revivalist. Mr. Noyes never had more active and willing helpers.

In 1841 John R. Miller, a young and popular merchant of Putney, identified his interests with those of the Bible School, as it was still called, and subsequently married Charlotte A. Noyes. Until his death in 1854 Mr. Miller was devoted heart and soul to that School and the various organizations that succeeded it in different places. He was their special business representative and manager, and their spokesman, negotiator and pacificator in all collisions with surrounding society. His courage and unflinching faith were contagious, and made him a trusted leader, and his genial, brotherly, gentlemanly conduct won him hosts of friends within and without their little world.

Other persons came later, notably Stephen R. Leonard, a fully instructed printer; Wm. H. Woolworth, who subsequently was one of the trustees of the Oneida Community, and otherwise a leading member; Lemuel H. Bradley, the Baker family, Rev. H. W. Burnham and family, Wm. A. Hinds, and others. But these were the accessions of years. Mr. Noyes sought not a loose, disjointed association, understanding fully the importance of selecting suitable material, and increasing in numbers only as fast as they could be disciplined and organized into a compact body. But to Perfectionists generally the idea

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

of discipline, organization, submission one to another, was intolerable. Were they children of the covenant, that "gendereth to bondage?" they asked themselves, or were they called to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free?" Were they not living in the very days foretold by the prophet, when all were "to know the Lord from the least unto the greatest," and when no one "should teach his neighbor or his brother, saying, Know the Lord?" "Perfectionists," said the eloquent James Boyle, "stand as independent of each other as they do of any anti-Christian churches—they will not be taught of each other, as they are all taught of God, nor will they acknowledge any man as a leader or chief or any thing of the kind." When Mr. Noyes returned to Putney, as previously mentioned, in 1836, and established his Bible School, he realized that the cause of Perfectionism was doomed to come to naught if such Ishmaelitic doctrines prevailed; and he set himself earnestly to work, first to foster the growth of an organized body of believers in the new-covenant doctrines; secondly to counteract among Perfectionists generally the influence and teachings of leaders, like James Boyle and T. R. Gates, who denounced all organization and made it their first and chief business to fight evil.

On the other hand, Mr. Noyes was impatient with the social philosophers who promised relief from the evils of society by changing its external conditions. Their error, he affirmed, is in conceiving the disease to be objective, when in fact it is subjective; and for this reason he felt bound to counsel his friends to be-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ware of Owenism, Fourierism, and all like schemes. "In tribulation and oppression, in poverty and persecution, under the weight of labor and care, let the believer," he said, "suppress that longing for outward relief which is so natural, and fall back upon the everlasting resources of God within his own heart."

One of the most vigorous of these warnings was published in July, 1843, and yet in the following February a "Contract of Partnership" was entered into by Mr. Noyes and his associates, which provided that their property and its increase should be controlled by the company in its united capacity; that the unanimous agreement of the partners should be necessary in all important transactions; that the expenses and labors of each of the partners, with their families and necessary dependents, should be held as the expenses and labors of the company; and gave the amount of their individual interest in the partnership or company. This contract did not state the object of the partnership, and provided for no increase of numbers, and was superseded on March 9, 1845, by the "Constitution of the Association of Perfectionists of Putney, Vt.," which was a much more complete instrument; and as it distinctly marks the advance of the Putney believers towards the full Communism that afterwards prevailed among them, and remained in force while their organization continued at Putney, its important provisions are here given:

The Association was to be called the Putney Corporation.

Its objects were stated to be, "sustaining the publi-

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

cation of the gospel of salvation from sin," and "the social and economical advantages of union, mutual assistance and aggregate capital."

The officers of the Corporation were to be a President, Secretary and three Directors.

The officers were to direct the executive affairs of the Corporation, and the agreement of at least three of them was to be necessary to the validity of any measure; and if in any case such agreement could not be had then a meeting of the whole Corporation was to be called, and the matter submitted to general discussion and vote.

The unanimous consent of the members of the Corporation was required for the admission of new members.

Any member could withdraw from the Corporation at any time, by notifying the board of officers and assuming his own maintenance.

Any member could be excluded from the Corporation by a vote of the majority of the members.

All property the members severally possessed at the time of subscribing to the constitution, or which might at any time while they remained in the Corporation come into their possession, was to be held as its property, subject to the control of the executive officers.

But while no formal organization was effected till 1845, the persons forming it had for some time attracted public attention as an Association or Community, and their paper of Jan. 1, 1844, contained a

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

brief statement of the conditions and objects of their organization, as follows :

“Our establishment, such as it is, exists in the midst of an ordinary village, and differs not in its relation to the community around from a manufacturing corporation or any other ordinary association. A few families of the same religious faith, without any formal scheme or written laws, have agreed to regard themselves as one family, and their relations to one another are regulated as far as possible by this idea. The special object of the association is not to make money, nor to exemplify the perfection of social life, but to support the publication of the gospel of salvation from sin, by papers, books, tracts, etc. Formal community of property is not regarded by us as obligatory on principle, but as expedient with reference to our present circumstances and objects. We are attempting no scientific experiments in political economy nor in social science, and beg to be excused from association in the public mind with those who are making such experiments. Our highest ambition is to be able to preach Christ without being burdensome to any, and to act out as far as possible the family spirit of the gospel. When we find a better way than our present plan to attain these objects we shall freely change our mode of living.”

And their paper of Feb. 1st, 1844, contained the following interesting account of those early days copied from *The Olive Branch*, and endorsed by Mr. Noyes as “quite correct as a description of our arrangements up to 1843, though it would require some modifications at the present time:”

“The Community founded by J. H. Noyes, of Putney, Vt., is something like the following:—Any per-

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

son who is favorable to their belief can become a member if he wishes, whether he puts money into the treasury or not—provided he sustains a good character. They have no particular rule to abide by except the rule of the gospel, 'love thy neighbor as thyself;' and if any one acts contrary to this he is either severely reprimanded and allowed to remain or excommunicated. They live together as one family under the guardianship of J. H. Noyes. There are seven or eight families in the Community, who have 'sold their possessions' and laid the prices at the apostle's feet, after the manner of Acts 4: 32-34. They are engaged in several branches of business—farming, mercantile, printing, etc., each person at his own trade. A chapel belongs to the Community, in which they hold their meetings, and there is a large library for the use of all who attend their meetings. Six months in the year, from November to May, all who feel disposed can go to the chapel at 9 o'clock A. M. and spend three hours every day in study. The old as well as the young attend for the improvement of the mind and to keep the spirit in a state of health. The afternoon is devoted to manual labor. The evenings are generally passed in reading, writing, debating, singing, praying, etc., the younger members attending to studies of various kinds,—and so the whole time is usefully taken up. The Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages are taught; in fact, all branches of study. They have about five hundred acres of good land, seven dwelling-houses, a store, printing-office, and several other buildings for the convenience of mechanics. When a person is disposed to leave he receives whatever he brought with him and nothing more, the advantages he has had, clothes, board, etc., being considered equivalent to his labor. The object is not gain, but to improve the mind, to gain strength of the inner man. During the summer months they

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

do not labor more than eight or ten hours a day, either on the farm or in the shop; the remainder of the time being spent in study or otherwise. Invitation is given to any who do not belong to the Community to avail themselves of the benefits of their library, during the time the chapel is open, free of expense."

The statement in the above article, that the Putney Communists "lived together as one family," is misleading. They lived as one family so far as separate accounts were concerned, but in several houses in different parts of the village.

Up to this time Mr. Noyes had carefully avoided even the appearance of evil respecting the relations of the sexes in his Community. While he recognized from the very beginning of his career as an independent thinker, that the substitution of grace for law would inevitably result in the most radical changes in man's social relations, he also saw clearly that for believers scattered over the country, not only without organization and safe leadership, but exposed to the machinations of carnal, ungodly men, to declare their freedom from the restraints and safeguards with which society has surrounded the marriage relation, could only result in bringing the doctrine of holiness into disgrace and themselves into the misery of self-condemnation. Moreover, he thoroughly believed himself to be the Moses of the new dispensation, and that he, and he alone, could safely lead the holiness believers into the Canaan of social freedom. Hence he spoke as one having authority and the power to enforce it, and never ceased to insist, as well after the

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

day of social freedom had dawned for him and his Putney disciples as before, "that any attempt to revolutionize sexual morality before settlement with God is out of order; that holiness must go before free love."

The adoption of the Constitution of 1845 marked an advance by the Putney School in the direction of unity of external interests, increase of numbers, and enlarged plans for the future. "We had," writes one of the School, "a scheme in our heads, and a prophecy in our hearts, of a grand phalanstery and an enormous business. The phalanstery was to be on 'the plain,' a sunny plateau on one part of our hilly farm, and the business a great printing establishment, like the New York Bible-House, or Methodist Book-Concern, for the publication of Community doctrines and literature. The grand phalanstery was realized in the Oneida Community of after years, but the demand for its literature never required a publishing-house of the suggested dimensions, though its various papers were sent to all applicants, on gospel terms, 'without money and without price.'" It was from the first a cherished hope with Mr. Noyes and his co-laborers, that they might some day publish a free, religious, daily paper that should rival in its circulation and influence that of the most powerful journals devoted to secular interests, one of the planks in their theocratic platform being, "A Daily Paper, divorced from Mammon, and devoted to God;" and in their zeal for its realization they advanced from a weekly to a semi-weekly, and in 1853-4 to a tri-weekly issue of the

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Brooklyn Circular, having for its motto, "Devoted to the Sovereignty of Jesus Christ."

But to return: the year following the adoption of the Constitution of 1845 was, like its predecessors, mainly one of preparation; the printing of the Bearer was now begun—a book of over 500 pages, and containing the most complete exposition of Perfectionist doctrines ever published. The Putney paper (*The Perfectionist*) was at the same time continued, its articles being mainly devoted to the exposition of the new doctrines, and to strengthening its believing subscribers in the purpose of honoring Christ and the cause of holiness by leading godly lives in their existing circumstances, whether favorable or unfavorable. These subscribers were widely scattered throughout the New England, Middle and other States, and many of them looked for guidance, with reference to this world and the next to the Putney believers. Had Mr. Noyes at this time followed the example of Robert Owen and other Socialist leaders in advertising for members, he might speedily have gathered about him a Community of hundreds, but in all probability it would almost as speedily have ended in utter failure. His wisdom was shown in continuing the preparatory work, only admitting new members as they would strengthen the organization.

In this preparatory work the meetings of the Putney believers for religious testimony, for study, for mutual criticism, and other similar objects, was of first importance; and of them let one speak who

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

joined the Putney School or Corporation early in 1846:

"The family meetings were now held regularly two or three times a week. I recall them with pleasure. They were truly revival meetings—seasons of heart-refreshing. There was no excitement and no effort to produce it; but I am sure there were prepared conditions that attracted a good spirit, and love, joy and peace were shed abroad in every heart. The new social life, heaven-ordained, was to the heart what the advent of spring is to the earth;* the frost and ice of selfishness and exclusiveness melted and disappeared under the warm rays of unselfish brotherhood. The revival that was experienced was different from ordinary revivals; it had the pentecostal element in it. The spirit of Communism, which left this world with the Primitive Church, reappeared and came down on this little body of believers who were together in one place, and no man said that

*The following lines, written by Mrs. Mary E. Cragin in this year of 1846, beautifully express the same thought:

The earth, ice-bound by winter's chilling sway,
Lies lifeless as in funereal array:
No genial warmth her frozen bosom thaws;
Her pulse stands still 'neath Nature's sterner laws.
But when to Spring the desolator yields,
And life's glad warmth broods o'er the grateful fields,
Then, bubbling up from myriad secret stores,
And rushing out through countless unseen pores,
Those juices flow which yield earth's fruits and flowers,
And clothe the hills with glorious forest bowers.
'Tis thus with hearts: unblest by love's warm rays,
In death's drear barrenness men pass their days—
Unconscious of the wealth within their souls,
Blind to the boundless treasures heaven holds.
But when love's sunshine dawns upon the heart
New hopes, new joys, new powers, its beams impart.
Its quick'ning fire invigorates the mind;
'Tis health and hope and joy and zeal combined.
Ye weary moralists, who vainly toil
To plow and fertilize a frozen soil,
Behold your only hope—the fount of bliss—
God's perfect love—the sun of righteousness;
'Tis rising, and shall renovate the earth;
Destroy all evil; to all good give birth.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

aught of the things he possessed was his own, for they had all things common.' They had held their external property in common for years, and so had enjoyed partial Communism, but the spirit that now controlled them would eliminate all selfishness; it would have Communism of life and of the affections; in short, vital, organic society.

"The weekly meetings for criticism were conducted in the spirit of deep sincerity and faithfulness, and though none shrank from the ordeal all felt that 'judgment was laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet.' The general character was subjected to close scrutiny, and habits, manners and the spiritual and social state passed under crucial analysis. A good margin was always left for praise, and the kind, impersonal way in which the criticisms were given caused but temporary soreness.

"The Sunday meetings at the Chapel were well attended by the believers living in the village and those residing in the outskirts of the town. Mr. Noyes usually spoke at these meetings, giving extemporaneous discourses that were deeply interesting—characterized by sound speech that none could gainsay nor resist. Their effect was very apparent in drawing believers together in the bonds of love and devotion, and binding all hearts in confidence and loyalty to Mr. Noyes as an inspired man and leader. They prepared the Putney believers for the persecutions that soon followed. The trial was severe when the shock came, but the unity was unbroken, and there was no disorder nor desertion in the ranks, though some were for a time outcasts and wanderers."

The persecutions mentioned in the above paragraph culminated in November, 1847, and naturally resulted from the various forces that had been long struggling for victory. On one side were arrayed the

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

churches and all who represented the conservative elements of society; on the other the little band of Perfectionists, claiming to have rediscovered the fullness of Christ's gospel—to be living no longer under law, but under grace—to be special mediums of heaven's inspiration, and endued even with miraculous power. What wonder that the would-be conservators of existing institutions "doubted of them whereunto this would grow," and began to consider means of suppressing it, regardless of the counsel given of old by one Gamaliel, that "if this counsel or this work be of men it will come to naught; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it."

Heeding not the premonitory signals of the coming storm, the believers became more and more courageous in their faith and testimony, more and more persuaded that they were called and chosen to do a great work in behalf of Christ and his cause in the world. They steadily advanced from one position to another until they reached the culmination on the evening of June 1st, 1847, when their leader startled his Putney disciples with the question: "Is not now the time for us to commence the testimony that the kingdom of God has come—to proclaim boldly that God in his character of Deliverer, Lawgiver and Judge has come to this town and in this Association?"

It is recorded that "all the believers present expressed themselves deliberately and freely on the subject under consideration. The possession of indivisible unity and unfeigned brotherly love, the growing momentum of improvement, the increasing intimacy

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

of communication with God's invisible kingdom, were mentioned among the proofs of God's pleasure and purpose concerning them. Respecting the existence and operation of the fire of judgment and the power of the resurrection among them there was but one belief and one voice. It was seen that a new and further confession of truth was necessary; that it was the next thing before them in the course of progress to which they had been called. *It was unanimously adopted, therefore, as the confession and testimony of the believers assembled, that the kingdom of God had come.*"

Events followed this confession in quick succession of such a character as to convince those making it that the heavens had approved it, and welcomed them into new and more vital relations with their spiritual superiors; and they did not hesitate to make a present personal application of Christ's promises of miraculous power to those who believed in him. Many of the Putney believers testified that they had personally experienced miraculous healing, with and without the laying on of hands. One case was especially noteworthy, and was claimed by the believers to have been "as unimpeachable as any of the miracles of the Primitive Church." Mrs. Harriet A. Hall, known to all the villagers to have been sick for many years with a complication of diseases, lying in nearly total darkness, pronounced incurable, and consigned to an early grave by the physicians of the town, was reported to have been "raised instantly, by the laying on of hands, and by the word of command, into

THE PUTNEY COMMUNITY

strength which enabled her to walk, to face the sun, to ride miles without inconvenience, and with excessive pleasure."*

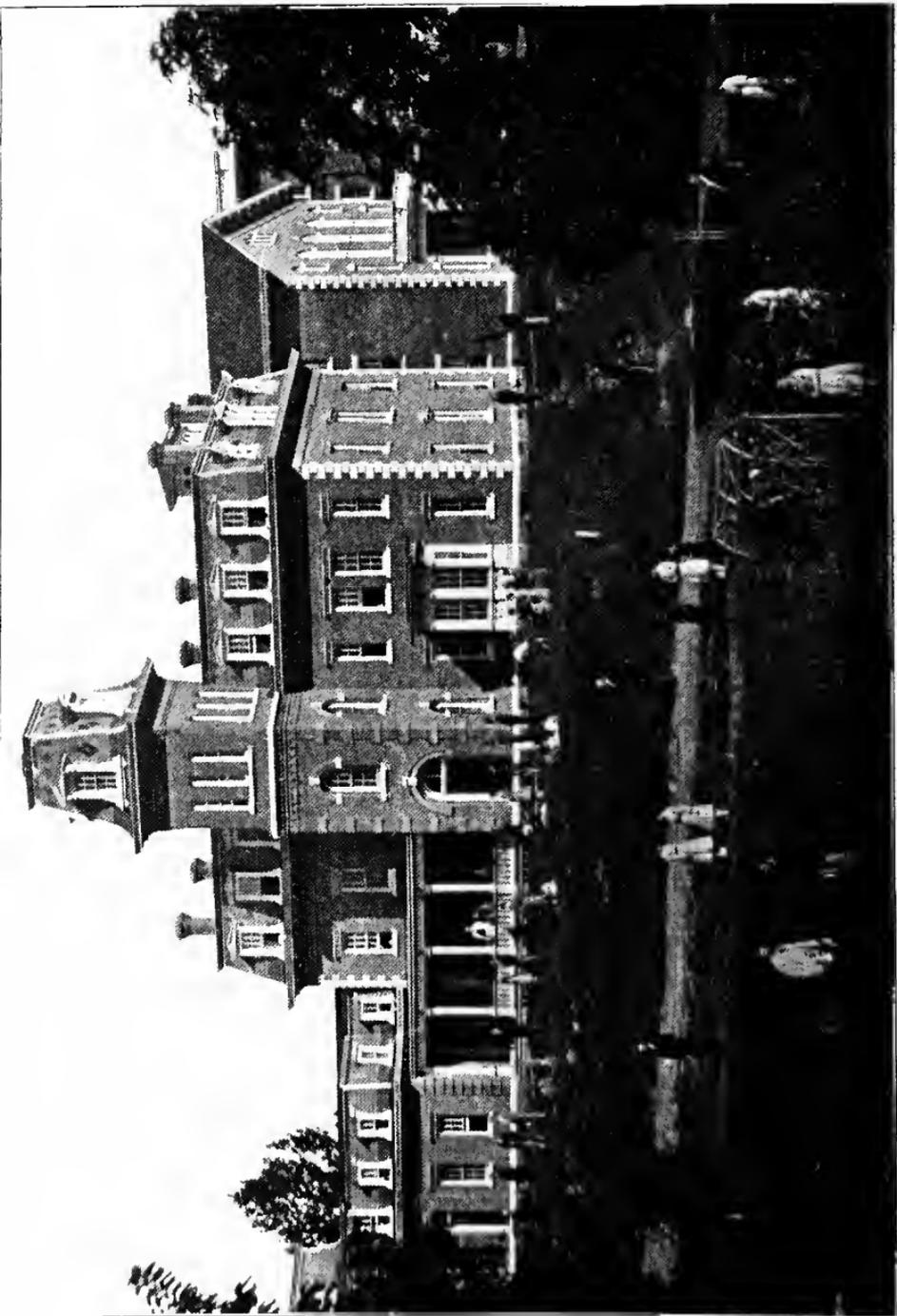
Great excitement ensued, which was not allayed when her husband, previously an avowed infidel, testified that his wife had been raised by the power of God, and that the same power had saved him from the darkness and misery of unbelief; and when, in addition to all this, sensational reports of the social innovations made by the Perfectionists were put in circulation, indignation meetings were held in which the doctrines and practices of Mr. Noyes and his followers were denounced, the immediate suppression of their paper demanded, and legal proceedings threatened. Should the utmost fury of the storm be withstood? or should they "rather give place unto wrath" and take such measures as would allay the popular excitement? The latter alternative was chosen. The publication of the paper was suspended Nov. 23d, 1847. Mr. Noyes left Putney Nov. 26th, and the departure of other prominent members soon followed, and when accommodations were prepared for them all removed to Oneida, N. Y., the rear-guard leaving in June, 1849; but ere this the tumult in the town of Putney had subsided; and in less than three years a colony of the Oneida Community was established at Putney, which was maintained there for five years, free from every disturbance, and many regrets were expressed when all the Community prop-

*She lived to be 74 years old, dying in 1898.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

erty there was sold and the final exodus of the Perfectionists took place.

Much space has been given to this first of the Perfectionist Communities, because of its historical importance as the precursor and beginning of the Oneida Community. Though its membership was small compared with its successor, never having reached even two-score souls, yet it embodied, and in a measure exemplified, the radical theological and social principles that gave such world-wide fame to the latter organization, which indeed cannot be fully appreciated or understood by one who has not first acquainted himself with the early religious life of its founder, and with the history of his Putney Bible school. There is, in fact, no evidence that Mr. Noyes at first contemplated gathering his Perfectionist disciples into Communities. The whole burden of his utterances for many years was—present salvation from sin; the recognition of an indwelling Christ; the realization by believers of the fullness of the gospel in their daily lives, whatever their external conditions. And even after the Putney Bible school had virtually become a Community by the elimination of “mine and thine” from their property relations, they disclaimed any idea of attempting a scientific experiment in social science, and begged to be excused from association in the public mind with those so engaged. They were still revivalists more than socialists, and so continued till after the transfer of their school and Community to Central New York.



MAIN DWELLING OF ONEIDA COMMUNITY - AN OLD VIEW.

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY.

It has ever been regarded by the Perfectionists as a remarkable fact, that on the very day the exodus from Putney began, Nov. 26, 1847, the initial steps were taken for the establishment of a Community at Oneida, N. Y., though Feb. 1, 1848, is the accepted date of its full organization.

In *The Spiritual Magazine* of July, 1847, notice was given of two conventions to be held in central New York in September of that year, called for the avowed object of promoting unity and co-operation between the New York and Putney believers. Mr. Noyes was present as the representative of the latter, and took a leading part in the proceedings of both conventions.

At the second convention the following resolutions were presented by the committee appointed to draft them (of which Mr. Noyes was chairman), and after a full day's discussion were adopted without a dissenting vote:

"1. Resolved, That we will devote ourselves exclusively to the establishment of the kingdom of God; and as that kingdom includes and provides for all interests, religious, political, social and physical, that we will not join nor co-operate with any other association.

"2. Resolved, That as the kingdom of God is to have an external manifestation, and as that manifestation must be in some form of association, we will acquaint ourselves with the principles of heavenly as-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

sociation, and train ourselves to conformity to them as fast as possible.

“3. Resolved, That one of the leading principles of heavenly association is the renunciation of exclusive claim to private property.

“4. Resolved, That it is expedient immediately to take measures for forming a heavenly association in central New York.”

It is on record that after the passage of these resolutions, “with great fervor the strongest men of the convention came forward and pledged ‘their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor’ to the enterprise proposed in the resolutions, and for the establishment of the kingdom of God in the world.”

The foregoing resolutions will astound many readers; and doubtless those of more radical import were never passed by any convention or assembly of persons; but it must be said in their favor that they definitely express what was then in the mind and heart of the founder of the Oneida Community.

About the first of February, 1848, J. H. Noyes (who, since the dispersion at Putney in the previous November, had resided in New York City) accepted an invitation to visit Oneida, where Jonathan Burt, Joseph C. Ackley and Daniel P. Nash had united their interests in the hope of establishing a Community in accordance with the resolutions passed at the convention in September of the previous year. He was heartily welcomed by the new organization, and was thenceforth its leader and president. In Mr. Burt he found a man after his own heart, and the union then formed between them was never broken.

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

He was a man without guile, earnest, enthusiastic, whole-souled in his devotion to every cause he espoused, and to the friends who fully gained his confidence.

In a few months all who had left Putney on account of the disturbances, and a part of those who remained in the village after the dispersion, had gathered at Oneida. There were accessions of members during the year from different parts of New York State, from Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Jersey, making the membership on the first day of January, 1849, eighty-seven. Of the adults twenty had been members of the Congregationalist churches, seven of Methodist, three of Presbyterian, two of Dutch Reformed, one of Quaker. During the year 1849 the membership of the Community doubled; Feb. 20, 1851, there were 205 members; in 1875 there were 298 in the Oneida Community and its branches; and 306 in 1878.

In 1849 a small branch Community was established in Brooklyn, N. Y.; and within the next few years branch Societies were established in Wallingford, Conn., Newark, N. J., Putney and Cambridge, Vt., and Manlius, N. Y. But in 1855 the policy of concentrating all interests in the two Communities at Oneida and Wallingford, and of limiting the membership to very gradual increase, was adopted; and the financial prosperity of the Community dates from this concentration.

At first the Community buildings at Oneida consisted of two small frame dwellings, a log-hut, and an

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

old saw-mill, once owned by the Indians. It was a dozen years before their members got beyond the necessity of sleeping in garrets and out-houses. Though the means brought in by the members enabled them to live tolerably well at first, they soon learned to content themselves with the humblest fare. Their first meetings were held at the old log-house; in the absence of chairs, persons sat on stairs, trunks, cradles, or whatever else they could find. Their Sunday gatherings, which attracted outside people, were first held in an old barn; and after the "Mansion House," as they called it, was completed, their meeting- and dining-rooms were furnished with pine benches.

The industries of the Community were also at first of the simplest and rudest kinds; farming, logging, milling, and clearing swamps, in which latter occupation the women courageously engaged, as they did also in lathing and other work connected with the building of the first houses. There were no distinctions of classes in respect to labor, the founder taking the lead as mason in laying up chimneys and foundation-walls.

The Community treasury was frequently empty in those early days; it was not always easy to pay their postage; and they often could not tell a day beforehand where the money was coming from with which to buy the necessary groceries. Nothing but the strictest economy and adherence to the rule, "Pay as you go!" and above all the blessing of God, as they believed, kept them from the financial ruin which con-

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

tinually threatened. As it was, during the first nine years of pioneer work the Community reduced its capital from \$107,000 to \$67,000; but in the same time it improved its organization, developed important principles and measures, and started several businesses, some of which proved fairly remunerative. Eventually the Community achieved a pecuniary success, and steadily grew in the esteem of good people far and near, though it never received, and could not expect to receive, the right-hand of fellowship from the bigots of society and church.

The Oneida Community attracted more visitors than any other of the American Communities—perhaps more than all others. They came from Maine and California, from England, France and other foreign countries; while excursion parties from the surrounding cities and villages were common during the summer months. These were occasionally more than a thousand strong. Indeed, as many as fifteen hundred persons have visited the Community grounds in a single day. Such crowds usually contained persons who sought more information than their eyes would give them, and their respectful inquiries were always frankly answered. The following colloquy may be supposed to have occurred a few years before the reorganization of the Community into a joint-stock corporation in 1880:

“May I inquire the present membership of the Oneida Community and its branch Society at Wallingford, Conn.?”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"There are here at O. C. 268; at Wallingford 38; in all 306."

"How are the sexes divided?"

"There are 145 males and 161 females."

"How many children are there?"

"Sixty under 14 years of age; 82 under 21."

"What nationalities are represented in the Community?"

"We have a few English; the rest are Americans."

"Have you some educated people?"

"The Community members include, along with common laborers and mechanics, a fair proportion of the so-called cultured classes. It has two families of physicians, two men who have received medical diplomas during their membership of the Community, three who have had a legal education, three ministers and their families, a number of other college graduates, and several editors and writers."

"How are your women employed?"

"They do the housework with the assistance of a few of the men and half a dozen hired people in the kitchen; they work in the sewing-room, in the printing-office and counting-room, in the children's department and in the school-room, etc."

"Do you believe in the equality of men and women?"

"No; we don't believe even in the equality of men; but we do believe that every man, woman and child should be surrounded with circumstances favoring the best development of heart, mind and body, and that no one should be excluded on account of age, sex, or

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

race, from engaging in any occupation for which he or she is adapted by nature or culture."

"Do Community women talk much about their rights?"

"No; there is no occasion for that: they have all the rights they desire. One of them thus defines the position of woman in the Community:

"'Communism gives woman, without a claim from her, the place which every true woman most desires, as the free and honored companion of man. Communism emancipates her from the slavery and corroding cares of a mere wife and mother; stimulates her to seek the improvement of mind and heart that will make her worthy a higher place than ordinary society can give her. Freed from forced maternity, a true and holy desire for children grows in her heart. Here no woman's hand is red with the blood of innocents, as is whispered so often of many of her sisters in bondage. Gradually, as by natural growth, the Community women have risen to a position where, in labor, in mind, and in heart, they have all and more than all that is claimed by the women who are so loudly asserting their rights.'"

"You remarked that there were about half a dozen hired assistants in the kitchen; how many outsiders do you employ in all your departments of industry?"

"From one hundred to two hundred and fifty, according to the necessities of our businesses."

"How do you reconcile this with Communism?"

"We do not reconcile it. We expect that Communism will some time displace the hiring system; in the meantime we propose to help our neighbors and ourselves by furnishing remunerative labor to

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

those who are not prepared for Communism. Many of our workmen, besides supporting themselves and families, have built houses, while a few have bought farms."

"How are your men employed?"

"They work in all our departments; in some of them doing most of the manual labor; in others being mainly employed as foremen and superintendents."

"Don't some of your people, who have had the superintendence of outside workers, come to feel above manual labor?"

"If there is a tendency of that kind it is likely to be corrected by the frequent changes made in our superintendents, by our system of criticism, and by the public opinion of the Community, which considers all kinds of labor alike honorable."

"Are superintendents of the different departments elected or appointed?"

"Both; i. e., the leaders exercise at their option the appointing power, generally after free consultation with others; and the Business Board at its option elects persons to fill particular posts of responsibility, subject to the approval of the leaders."

"Who compose the Business Board?"

"All members who choose to attend its sessions, both male and female."

"Don't the Business Board and the leaders of the Community sometimes differ in their judgment?"

"We don't recall any serious case of that kind. We seek harmony and work for unanimity, and defer

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

the execution of any plan so long as it meets with decided opposition from even a small minority."

"Is the Community managed by one man?"

"No; there are at least as many managers as there are departments of business. The larger businesses, as the trap, silk and fruit-packing, are under the supervision of boards or committees, organized by, or with the approval of, the general Business Board of the Community. Besides, all questions of considerable importance are brought before the Community for decision, and in the general assembly every person, male and female, has a voice and vote."

"But don't some have much more influence than others?"

"Of course; that is true of every organization. The best and wisest ought to rule every-where."

"Are persons allowed to leave the Community?"

"Certainly."

"Can they take away any property?"

"Our practice has been to refund to seceders all the property they brought into the Community, or its equivalent in money, and to give those who had no property when they joined a good outfit of clothing and one hundred dollars in case of their peaceable withdrawal. But our present covenant cuts off all claim on the part of seceders, and leaves the matter of refunding any property entirely at the option of the Community."

"Why was this change made?"

"To test more thoroughly the sincerity of applicants, and to avoid trouble in cases of secession."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"Have you any creed?"

"No."

"But have you not religious doctrines which are generally accepted by members of the Community?"

"Yes; they are set forth in 'The Berean,' a large work written by Mr. Noyes. The most important of these doctrines, and the one regarded as most essential to Communism, is that of salvation from sin through the grace of Christ."

"What! Do you hold that men can be saved from sin in this life?"

"Yes; as we read the New Testament Christ's mission was to save people from their sins now, in this life; to make them altruistic here, loving their neighbors as themselves; and so making it possible for them to live in a common home with a common purse."

"Will you mention some other doctrines deemed important by the Community?"

"We believe that God is a dual being; that God is not responsible for the existence of evil, its author, as the author of all good being uncreated; that the Second Coming of Christ is a past event, and hence that his true disciples are living in a dispensation of grace, in which personal, spiritual communication with him and his risen church is possible."

"What are the social principles of the Community?"

"We recognize no claim of individual property in one another. We affirm that the same spirit which on the day of Pentecost abolished exclusiveness in regard

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

to money tends to obliterate all other property distinctions. But we have no affiliation with those commonly termed Free Lovers, because their principles and practices seem to us to tend toward anarchy. Our Communities are *families*, as distinctly bounded and separated from promiscuous society as ordinary households. The tie that binds us together is as permanent and sacred, to say the least, as that of common marriage, for it is our religion. We receive no new members (except by deception and mistake) who do not give heart and hand to the family interest for life and forever. Community of property extends just as far as freedom of love. Every man's care and every dollar of the common property are pledged for the maintenance and protection of the women and the education of the children of the Community."

"I have heard something of your ideas of stirpiculture, and would like more definite information regarding them."

"The principles of race-culture or scientific propagation, as every one knows, have been applied during the last century to the great improvement of the domestic animals, while the conditions of human reproduction are controlled by chance or wealth or social position; and the world's best thinkers are now demanding that at least as much scientific attention shall be given to the physical improvement of mankind as has been given to the sheep, the horse, cow, and hog. We are greatly interested in this subject, believing the future of the race is largely dependent upon the right application of stirpicultural principles."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

“Are the children of the Community healthy and happy?”

“Our own testimony on this point might savor of partiality, and so I give you the testimony of Goldwin Smith, the eminent English author and critic, who in visiting the Community gave special attention to its children’s department. He said:

“The children are regarded as children of the Community, and are brought up together on that footing. The mother is allowed to take part in nursing them as much as she pleases, but she is not required to do more. Undeniably they are a fine, healthy-looking, merry set of infants. . . . The Oneida children are reared under conditions of exceptional advantage, which could not fail to secure health to the offspring of any but positively diseased parents. . . . The nurseries with every thing about them are beautiful. Large play-rooms are provided for exercise in winter. The nurses are not hirelings, but members of the Community who voluntarily undertake the office. Every precaution is taken against the danger of infection. A simple and wholesome dietary is enforced, and no mother or grandmother is permitted to ruin digestion and temper, by administering first a poison from the confectioner’s and then another poison from the druggist’s.”

“Will you explain more fully the arrangements of your Children’s House? How much care, for instance, does the mother have of her child?”

“She has the exclusive care of her child until the time of weaning, which in most cases takes place at nine months, though about this there is no rule except the one of common sense. When fully weaned

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

the child enters the first department of the Children's House, where there are others of nearly the same age, who are cared for by nurses, serving half a day at a time. The child then leaves its mother at 8 o'clock in the morning, and returns to her again at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, remaining with her through the night. At about a year and a half, according to the degree of development, the child passes into the second department, where it remains all day. The parents are free at any time to take the child away for a walk or a ride or a visit at their room. While it is in this department the mother, however, gradually gives up all particular responsibility about its clothing, diet and night-care. She is then free to fill her place in the various industries of the household. There is still a third department, which the child enters at about three years, and in which it continues until the age of thirteen or fourteen, when it leaves the department altogether. During this entire period, as in the previous ones, no mother is separated from her child for any considerable time. We aim to deal with our children according to the dictates of the most enlightened common sense combined with a tender regard for human weakness; but if parents were to keep the exclusive care of their children, Communism would be difficult, and there would be, besides, great waste of force. The more fully different functions, like that of child-training, can be differentiated, the more economical will be the workings of the institution; and it is imperative that economies of this kind be studied, or a Community would be a great lumbering machine,

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

increasing instead of saving labor. By such differentiation, and by placing in special charge of the children, after they are weaned, the persons best fitted for the responsibility, while parents are left at liberty to associate with their children freely, so far as such association does not militate with the best interests of either, we claim to have made considerable improvement upon the common way of rearing children."

"Very likely; but I can see that the system might occasionally result in trials to parents; and now let me ask whether your form of life does not have, along with its many comforts, many things hard to be borne?"

"Certainly, it has. Our Society is based on the idea that selfishness must be displaced in all the relations of life; and that is a work which cannot be accomplished without suffering of the keenest kind. But to the earnest lover of improvement it brings its present rewards; and then we encourage ourselves with the assurance that whatever makes us harmonic and altruistic here will help us in 'the beyond.'"

"Has the Community any literature of its own?"

"For thirty years it has printed a paper; and the Putney Community, which preceded this Community, also had a press which it kept busy. 'The Berean,' 'History of American Socialisms,' 'Home-Talks,' by J. H. Noyes, 'Scientific Propagation,' 'Male Continence,' 'Faith Facts,' 'Bible Communism,' 'The Trapper's Guide,' 'Foot Notes,' by Alfred Barron, and

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

other books and pamphlets have been published by the Putney and Oneida Communities."

"Other Communities have gone to pieces after a few years; yours is still prosperous, and, for aught I can see, harmonious; what is your explanation of this?"

"Many Communities in this country have had a short-lived existence, but not all. The Ephratans, the Shakers, the Rappites, the Zoarites existed long before the Oneida Community or the Putney Community, which antedated it, was thought of; and they are still in existence. We think that religion and able leadership have been chiefly responsible for their success as well as our own. Goldwin Smith, in writing of our founder, said, he is 'a man whose ability is written on his brow, on the pages of his vigorously written books, and on the work of his organizing hands;' but if the members had recognized in him only natural ability the Community would have gone to pieces years ago."

"What are the conditions of membership?"

"We insist that candidates shall, first, understand and hold by heart our religious and social doctrines; secondly, count the cost of enlisting with us for life; thirdly, secure their freedom from any claims of kindred, etc., that might entangle us; and, fourthly, pay all their debts. Joining the Community is like marriage; and these are simply the prudent preliminaries of such a decisive act. If the parties are not in full sympathy, or are in external circumstances unfavor-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

able to a union, it is better for them to remain friends than to venture on a closer connection.”

The Community had a library of between five and six thousand volumes, and kept the best magazines and journals on file, accessible to all the members.

There was a school-building; and it was the purpose of the Community to give all its children good educational advantages. Prior to 1880 a dozen of its young men had taken full or partial courses at Yale University, and since then an equal number of its young men and women have had the benefit of instruction at Cornell and other institutions of learning.

A play-house was erected for the children within convenient distance of the home buildings. Amusements in the Community were subject only to such restrictions as are required by good order.

There was a photographic studio, and attention to the fine arts was encouraged.

The Community had a summer-resort at Oneida Lake, twelve miles distant, which was frequented by parties for fishing, hunting and general recreation; also one at Short Beach, Conn., on Long Island Sound.

The Community had at one time 650 acres of good land, devoted to meadow and pasturage, orchards and vineyards, and the raising of vegetables and fruits for their canning establishment.

The dairy included Ayrshires, Holsteins, grades and natives—in all 113 animals; and there were 45 horses and colts.

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

Shoemaking, tailoring, dentistry, printing, carpentry, and other common trades were carried on; but the capital and industry of the Community were mainly concentrated in three businesses: the canning of fruits and vegetables, and the manufacture of silk and of steel traps.

The home buildings were heated by steam. Steam was also found an invaluable aid in the laundry and kitchen, where it was made to do much of the work. The greatest advantage was taken of machinery and labor-saving contrivances in both of these departments.

For securing good order and the improvement of the members, the Community placed much reliance upon a very peculiar system of plain speaking they termed *Mutual Criticism*, which originated, as mentioned on a previous page, in a secret society of missionary brethren with which Mr. Noyes was connected while pursuing his theological studies at Andover Seminary, and whose members submitted themselves in turn to the sincerest comment of one another as a means of personal improvement. Under Mr. Noyes' supervision it became in the Oneida Community a principal means of discipline and government. There was a standing committee of criticism, selected by the Community, and changed from time to time, thus giving all an opportunity to serve both as critics and subjects, and justifying the term "mutual" which they gave to the system. The subject was free to have others besides the committee pres-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ent, or to have critics only of his own choice, or to invite an expression from the whole Community. The Communists had this to say of the practical application of the system :

“It is not easy to overestimate the usefulness of criticism in its relation to Community life. There is hardly a phase of that life in which it does not play an important part. It is the regulator of industry and amusement—the incentive to all improvement—the corrector of all excesses. It governs and guides all. Criticism, in short, bears nearly the same relation to Communism which the system of judicature bears to ordinary society. As society cannot exist without government, and especially without a system of courts and police, so Communism requires for its best development Free Mutual Criticism.

“Our object being self-improvement, we have found by much experience that free criticism—faithful, honest, sharp truth-telling—is one of the best exercises for the attainment of that object. We have tried it thoroughly; and the entire body of the Community have both approved and honestly submitted themselves to it.

“In the great majority of cases criticism is desired and solicited by individuals, because they are certain from their own past experience, or from observation of the experience of others, that they will be benefited by it; but in some instances, where it is noticed that persons are suffering from faults or influences that might be corrected or removed by criticism, they are advised to submit themselves to it. In extreme cases of disobedience to the Community regulations, or obsession by influences adverse to the general harmony, criticism is administered by the Community or its leaders without solicitation on the part of the subject. In general, all are trained to criticise freely,

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

and to be criticised without offense. Evil in character or conduct is thus sure to meet with effectual rebuke from individuals, from platoons, or from the whole Community.

"We only claim for our system of criticism that it is a new and improved application of old principles. Common society is not exempt from criticism. Thought is free, and faults draw censure wherever they exist. Every person is more or less transparent to those around him, and passes in the surrounding sphere of thought for pretty much what he is worth. Speech is free, too, in a certain way, and industriously supplies the demand for criticism with an article commonly called backbiting. If you have faults you may be sure they are the measure of the evil-thinking and evil-speaking there is going on about you. Supply meets demand, but not in a way to tell to your account under the common system of distribution. Criticism is not more free with us, but it is distributed more profitably. We have a systematic plan of distribution, by which criticism is delivered in the right time and place, and in a way to produce the best results. Criticism as it goes in society is without method; there is no 'science' in it; it acts every-where like the electric fluid, but is not applied to any useful purpose; it distributes itself, and sometimes injuriously. In the Community we draw it off from the mischievous channels of evil-thinking and scandal, and apply it directly to the improvement of character."*

The Community had another ordinance which they regarded as of great importance to their harmony and general progress, viz., *Daily Evening Meetings*. These were of an hour's duration, and

*"Mutual Criticism,"

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

conducted with little formality. Matters of business, of Community order and government, the news of the day, scientific discussion, home lectures, religious testimony and discourse, music, and every thing of common interest, here came in for their share of attention. There was of course a moderator, but every member was free to take part in both the presentation and discussion of subjects. There were shorthand reporters, who noted down for permanent record or transmission to the sister Community matters of special importance.

The Community had no definite regulations respecting hours of rising and of labor, leaving such matters for the most part to the judgment and inclination of the individual members; and they had little trouble from the lazy and shiftless. Where reproof or counsel was needed it was given through their system of criticism, already described.

Several of the Communities have fallen upon similar customs respecting labor; one of which is to work *en masse*, or muster together in "bees" for the performance of certain definite enterprises. The Oneidians from the first made great account of this custom, as a means of increasing both the attractiveness and the productiveness of labor. In the earlier days they had "bees" for cutting and husking corn, working in the hay-field, harvesting peas, beans, etc., in which men and women and children took part with great enthusiasm, sometimes marching to the field with music. Later these occasions of gregarious industry were mostly restricted to indoor labor, taking

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

volunteers by scores to the kitchen, laundry and fruit-packing room, with an occasional outdoor "bee," especially for the harvesting of fruit.

In common with the Shakers and Harmonists the Oneida Communists had some peculiarities of dress. They were, however, confined to the women, who wore a costume which originated in the Community, consisting of short dress and pantalets. They were enthusiastic in praise of its convenience, but had less to say of its beauty. The women also adopted the practice of wearing short hair, which saved time and vanity.

The Oneida Communists, like the Shakers, Harmonists and other Communists, were long-lived. Many lived to be over four score years, and 22 died between 85 and 96. They gave much attention to hygienic conditions, living on simple food and following after temperance in all things. Among other health-maintaining and health-restoring agencies their Turkish baths deserve mention. Perhaps credit is due also to the facilities which such a Community has for taking care of the sick. A large Community naturally accumulates the conveniences which belong to a hospital, and in addition has at command cheerful and experienced nurses such as few hospitals can supply.

Though the Community claimed that their system was founded on religion, and they had little faith in the success of any system of Communism which had not a religious basis, yet they were practical rather than theoretical religionists, and were far from being

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

mere formalists. Their reverence even for the Bible was reverence for its spirit rather than its letter. They paid little attention to the ordinances deemed so important by many sects. They were not afraid that religion would suffer from any truth which science might discover; and the works of Huxley, Tyndall, Darwin and Spencer, were well represented in their library. Neither did they believe that religion necessarily expresses itself in ascetic forms. Hence their freedom to encourage education, art, music, amusements, and every thing which tends to human culture and happiness.

THE WALLINGFORD COMMUNITY,

of Wallingford, New Haven Co., Conn., was the only branch Society that had a life of much duration. In its founding in 1851 the beautiful home of Henry Allen and family in the valley of the Quinnipiac was enlarged into a Community home. Adjoining lands were purchased until the domain consisted of 366 acres. The membership of the Wallingford Community varied from twenty-five to eighty-five, according to the demands of its businesses. It gave much attention to farming and horticulture, raising large quantities of strawberries and other small fruits for market; and after the creation of a fine water-power by damming the Quinnipiac river, it engaged in several branches of manufacturing, having at one time a silk-factory, later a spoon-factory, and for several years a printing establishment that attracted work from the

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

neighboring cities and villages, besides printing the Community publications.

Perfect unity of interests existed between the Oneida and Wallingford Communities, men and means being freely exchanged as occasion required. The property of the two Communities was the common property of both. They also had the same principles, the same customs, the same means of discipline and government. A journal of the important events happening at each Community was regularly transmitted to the other, and read publicly at the evening meeting, which was an institution of both.

A large Community dwelling was erected at Wallingford in the summer of 1876 at a cost exceeding \$10,000 (now used as a Masonic Home), but its buildings and accommodations were always much more limited than at Oneida, necessitating a smaller membership. Each place had, however, its peculiar attractions, and there were advantages in having the two Communities thus connected. Those who preferred a smaller family than that at Oneida, or a larger one than that at Wallingford, could be suited; and it was found agreeable to nearly all to occasionally change their residence from one place to the other.

A cottage on Long Island Sound, owned by the two Communities, was much visited during the summer months by parties from both.

Had other branches been established they would only have extended the unity existing between the Oneida and Wallingford Communities.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

REORGANIZATION INTO A JOINT-STOCK CORPORATION.

A quarter of a century ago few of the members of the Oneida and Wallingford Communities had a thought of the great changes then impending. The Communities were financially prosperous; the relations with their neighbors were more than friendly; they had as large a membership as was desired; their younger members were proving their ability to fill positions of responsibility and trust; and although there were, as at nearly all times in their history, some discontented members, and a few who were inclined to censure the general management as unnecessarily restrictive of individual action, yet the religious, social, educational, industrial and disciplinary arrangements of the Communities were apparently in successful operation. But, as events soon proved, forces external and internal were working that were destined to produce ere long a revolution in their practical life.

In 1873 a committee of seven was appointed by the Presbyterian Synod of Central New York "to confer with other religious bodies, and to consider the expediency and feasibility of any further measures" regarding the Oneida Community, "and to report at the next meeting of the synod;" and from that time there was concerted action on the part of synods and clergy inimical to the Community. Dr. J. W. Mears of Hamilton College was its chief organizer and leader. He preached and wrote against the Community, and brought it to the attention of many religious organizations, urging the passage of condemnatory

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

resolutions. This activity culminated in 1879 in a call for a conference or convention, to be held in the University Building at Syracuse, N. Y., in February of that year, signed by Dr. J. W. Mears, Bishop Huntington, Chancellor Haven, Dr. A. F. Beard and Rev. E. G. Thurber. Forty-seven persons, mostly ministers, took part in its proceedings. As they entered the hall copies were handed to them of an article by Mr. Noyes, calling attention to the fact that there was no analogy between the Oneida Community and the Mormons, and especially emphasizing these points: that the Communists had always been peaceable subjects of civil authority, no seditious act ever having been charged upon them; that they had never proposed to carry out their peculiar principles in defiance of the laws or of the public opinion of their neighbors; and if special legislation should be obtained unfavorable to them they would still be faithful to their record in submission to "the powers that be." In all this the Communists, it affirmed, were the very antipodes of the Mormons, as they also were in their social theory and practice, there being more analogy and more practical sympathy between them and the Shakers than between them and the followers of Joseph Smith.

Whatever the effect of this article may have been upon the members of the convention, it did not prevent their passing resolutions denunciatory of the Community, and appointing a committee to consider what measures should be taken against it and report at a future meeting.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

The proceedings of the conference attracted wide attention, and much comment by the press, whose attitude toward the Community experiment was often more than tolerant, as shown by the following excerpts, which may also serve in this connection as a permanent record of the good-will entertained toward the Communists by intelligent, liberal-minded people in its own and other States:

[The Republican, Springfield, Mass.]

Let us be fair with these people who are trying a new experiment in sociology. Nothing can be more unfair than to couple them with the Mormons. Mormonism is a gross tyranny of superstition and outrage, the worst example of priestcraft existing in the world; but the Oneida Community is a mutual compact of free men and women. Mormonism, as priestcraft, always cultivates depression and ignorance; the Oneida Community, by the testimony of their most strenuous opponents, cultivate equality and intelligence. Mormonism reduces women, both by theory and practice, to the condition of the harem—the slaves and victims of man; the Oneida Community makes them theoretically, and, so far as we have any evidence, practically co-laborers and companions with man.

[The Truth-Seeker, New York City.]

The Communists are a very temperate, industrious, peaceful, prosperous, law-abiding, virtuous people. They believe their social life is a decided improvement on the old style, and many things go to confirm the fact of their being correct. They have had fifty children in their Community of remarkable healthfulness and promise, and not one has died. They are working out problems of great importance to the human race; they are violating no law of the land,

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

and it will be far better for the clergymen to attend to their own affairs and let the Community alone.

[The Evening Times, Albany, N. Y.]

The Oneida Community is *sui generis*; there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world. The visitor sees nothing either to alarm or annoy him in the least. Plain, thoughtful people, well informed and well behaved, are attending to their daily duties, which are light and pleasant, under apparently the most cheerful and agreeable circumstances. All are moderately busy; all are comfortably dressed; the common table is loaded with the most healthful food; the conversation is intelligent; the library is large and well stocked with the latest works in science and literature; and one sees and hears as little to shock decorum as he would at a Presbyterian prayer-meeting.

A citizen of Oneida, N. Y., wrote to one of the Syracuse papers:

"The Oneida Community are extremely polite, gentlemanly in dress and manners, using no profane or vulgar language, no cigars, tobacco or whisky, are never sued or sue any one, furnish no cases for the police court, no paupers nor bastard children. Every department of their business is a model of neatness and order. They are a hive of industry; they make the best goods in the market in every department which they manufacture. They have a model farm. You may take the people of this village and surrounding country who know the Community best, and see them every day, and I care not how much they may differ in politics, religion or other subjects, when the Oneida Community is mentioned in their hearing they generally will answer, 'The Community is all right; I wish all the people in the world were as honest as they are.'"

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

[The Times, Vineland, N. J.]

There are several things which can be said in favor of the Oneida Community, and as truth hurts no one we shall not hesitate to say them. First, not one of the women is forced to become a mother against her own wishes. Secondly, "secret diseases" of all sorts, either male or female, are unknown in this Community. Third, there is almost no mortality among the children.

[Sunday Register, New Haven, Conn.]

So highly esteemed are these Communities, and this is especially true of the Wallingford Society, that their immediate neighbors could hardly, if at all, be induced to take legal proceedings against them. The conduct of the Wallingford Community, at the time of the terrible tornado of last summer, won the admiration and gratitude of the people of Wallingford. In many respects their habits are commendable. They are thrifty, industrious and honest—qualities all too rare.

[The Syracuse Courier.]

The Oneida Community claims to be a religious institution. . . . Certainly they do not violate any laws of the State. They live in harmony with their neighbors, and are a thrifty people. . . . The children born among them are carefully reared, and it is said that it is seldom, if ever, that one of them dies in infancy. There have been fifty children born alive in the Community in nine years, and not one has died, and all are now well and free from disease. Five children have died at or about birth, and there has not been a single case of abortion. In the United States, 30 per cent. of the children die under ten years of age. In the Community there has not been a case of croup, cholera infantum, or diphtheria, for fifteen years.

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

These are but a few of the press comments favorable to the Community, and unfavorable to the clerical crusaders against it, which immediately appeared in different parts of the country; but they had no effect upon the committee appointed by the Syracuse Conference. It was called together in June, and its membership increased, and there were so many indications of its activity and persistent purpose against the Community, and especially against Mr. Noyes, as its founder and head, that his quiet withdrawal from his Oneida home may have been wisely resolved upon.

Thus relieved from the details incident to the management of the Community (which was placed with his approval in charge of an Administrative Council) he gave himself to the faithful study of the situation. Always carefully noting the trend of public opinion, he was ever ready to yield to its behests so far as the practical assertion of any principle not deemed vital was concerned. "Had the time now come," he asked himself, "when it is best for all interests that the practice of our radical social principles shall be given up?" Should he not now utter the word that would remove the "rock of offense," and secure to his people an unmolested future? Doubtless, too, he considered that he had not at this time the same complete control over the Community itself that he had during its earlier history, and that his power might diminish with his advancing years (he was now nearly 68); and under other management than his might there not be disorder and results disastrous to all his life-long in-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

terests? Moreover, many of the rising generation in the Community had not the intense religious earnestness of their fathers and mothers, nor had they the same unquestioning confidence in his inspired guidance. But whatever were the considerations influencing Mr. Noyes at that time, they ultimated Aug. 20, 1879, in a message from him reminding the Community that they had always claimed freedom to change their social practices, and to abandon that part of their Communism if so required by public opinion; that they had recently pledged themselves to conform to any new legislation affecting them; that within the last year he had frequently said he did not consider their present social arrangements essential parts of their profession as Christian Communists, and that they would probably have to recede from them sooner or later. "I think the time has come," he said, "for us to act on these principles of freedom, and I offer for your consideration the following modifications of our practical platform. I propose—

"1. That we give up the practice of Complex Marriage, not as renouncing belief in the principles and prospective finality of that institution, but in deference to the public sentiment which is evidently rising against it;

"2. That we place ourselves, not on the platform of the Shakers, on the one hand, nor of the world, on the other, but on Paul's platform, which allows marriage but prefers celibacy.

"If you accept these modifications the Community will consist of two distinct classes—the married and the celibates—both legitimate, but the last preferred.

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

"What will remain of our Communism after these modifications may be defined thus:

"1. We shall hold our property and businesses in common, as now;

"2. We shall live together in a common household and eat at a common table, as now;

"3. We shall have a common children's department, as now;

"4. We shall have our daily evening meetings, and all of our present means of moral and spiritual improvement.

"Surely, here is Communism enough to hold us together and inspire us with heroism for a new career. With the breeze of general good-will in our favor which even Prof. Mears has promised us on the condition of our giving up the objectionable features of our system, what new wonders of success may we not hope for in the years to come!

"For my part, I think we have great reason to be thankful for the toleration which has so long been accorded to our audacious experiment. Especially are we indebted to the authorities and people of our immediate neighborhood for kindness and protection. It will be a good and graceful thing for us to relieve them at last of the burden of our unpopularity, and show the world that Christian Communism has self-control and flexibility enough to live and flourish without Complex Marriage."

This message was considered and its proposition accepted by the Oneida Community in full assembly Aug. 26th; and thus was accomplished this great change in its social life, not without individual trial and deep regret on the part of many members; for they had accepted the social principles of the Community as Bible truth; it was a part of their religion; their

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

hope of the reorganization of society was largely based upon it; and it was otherwise a terrible blow, severing hearts united by the strongest and tenderest of ties. Besides, though the change was not intended to affect other than the social relations, the far-seeing prophesied other important changes in the near future as the result of this one; for individualism in the family relations almost necessarily leads to individualism in property and the various phases of competition.

But the social system of the Community was surrendered, and in full sincerity; and such was the general confidence in the good word of the Communists that, with rare exceptions, their worst enemies gave full credence to the published statement that the Oneida Community had given up the practice of its social principles; and never was there less cause for distrust. The Communists carried into their new relations the same rigid truthfulness that had characterized them in all their previous history.

The new social platform of the Community, as proposed by Mr. Noyes, contemplated its division into two classes, "the married and the celibate, both legitimate, but the last preferred;" and it was at first expected that the preferred class would for a considerable time be the most numerous; but events turned out differently. In addition to those cases in which there was a resumption of former marriage relations there were twenty marriages in the Community before the close of the year; the work continued apace, and for some years there have remained of the preferred

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

celibate brethren of 1879 scarcely half a dozen honored representatives. The long and intimate acquaintance of the members had prepared them for the quick and happy marriages that followed, for happy have they proved with rarely an exception.

The change from Communism of property, in which no individual ownership is recognized, to joint-stockism, in which each person's interest in the general holdings is represented by the shares of stock standing in his name, was difficult. At first those favoring joint-stock were largely in the minority, much the greater number desiring Communism in some form, either that of the past, or some modification of it that would allow of more individual liberty. A Commission of eight persons was finally appointed on the 17th of July, 1880, "to consider and report what changes, if any, in our present arrangements are, in their judgment, necessary to enable us to continue our communal organization in peace and good order." The Commission recognized at the outset of their deliberations that the introduction of monogamic marriage was a radical departure from the full Communism of the past, and involved in itself great changes. The first step out of Communism was taken when "mine" and "thine" were applied to husbands and wives; then followed naturally an exclusive interest in children; then the desire to accumulate individual property for their present and future use. There ensued prolonged discussions and the consideration of many plans, which, with the exception of the one adopted, had for a chief object the preserva-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

tion of as many communistic features as possible; and a principal reason why the joint-stock plan was finally adopted was because it would enable all to subsequently choose and follow their own plan of life—whether of full or partial Communism, or joint-stock, or extreme individualism. Mr. Noyes, writing in 1885 of the changes in the Community, said:

“On the 20th of August, 1879, I proposed that the practice of Complex Marriage be given up; on the 26th my proposition was adopted by the Community unanimously; on the 28th it was published to the world; and was received by the press generally with commendation. From that time the proposal of a general change from Communism to private ownership and joint-stock began to be agitated in the Oneida Community. It was discussed carefully and peaceably; and after sixteen months of study and preparation of details Communism of property was given up, as complex marriage had been before it, and on the 1st of January, 1881, the joint-stock company called the Oneida Community, Limited, took the place of the Oneida Community.”

Thus Mr. Noyes tells briefly of the great revolution in the Community which he founded and so successfully managed for thirty-two years. His sister, Harriet H. Skinner, writing six years later, gives the following graphic account of events connected with and subsequent to the transformation of 1881:

“Though the Oneida Community as a peculiar form of society is practically no more, as a business organization it is practically intact and in active operation. The new company assumed at once all the businesses of the old, and has carried them on down

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

to this date, 1891, with much the same success as before. In the change the works were not suspended for an hour. The old superintendents were retained with the entire industrial corps. The factories and agencies, the farm and gardens, the domestic service, and the thousand details of the communistic hive, all went on as usual; ignorant, as may be said, of the new management for weeks after it commenced.

“There were forty legalized marriages (almost exclusively between the members) during the subsequent two or three years, affording the spectacle—sometimes exhibited in the Community Hall—of a novel and impressive ceremony, naturally exciting to the curiosity of the youthful portion of the Society. The tenants (once simply the occupants) of the Mansion House gradually diminished in number, families disposed to try house-keeping finding houses already on the domain or building new. A colony of over twenty went to California; others to New York and Boston. The new works of the company at Niagara Falls drew off fifty or more. Some of the absentees have come back homesick, and most of them are more than glad to make this place their summer-resort,* season by season, bringing their children to enjoy the lawns and many country pleasures they find here. These visitors are always welcome, many of them having kindred among the residents on the domain.

“Mr. Noyes left the Community in 1879, but it was not in any sense of desertion. Up to the time of his death he was virtually its President. To his influence may be ascribed the peace and equity and mercy which prevailed in the division of the Community estate, something which attracted much public admiration, not to say wonder. The following

*About fifty persons (former members and their families), now resident in New York, Boston, Niagara Falls, and other places, spent their last summer vacation at the Kenwood home.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

items in regard to the settlement may serve to suggest some of the difficulties of the problem. The adult members, each and all, without regard to sex, and without regard to service and usefulness, received four shares of stock, or one hundred dollars, for every year they had been members, and half the money any person put in on joining was refunded in shares. Those who chose could have, instead of shares, an annuity of two hundred dollars with guarantee for care in sickness and some other considerations; only two, however, accepted this alternative. The children were guaranteed from eighty to one hundred and twenty dollars a year (according as the profits of the company might be more or less) and eight months' schooling, till the age of sixteen, when they were to receive two hundred dollars as a kind of bridge to self-support. The results of this division, against which there were no complaints at the time, have proved highly satisfactory."

Mrs. Skinner might well have added, that the hearty acceptance of the members of the conditions of division which she enumerates most forcibly illustrates the benefits to character resulting from long communal training. Had those who aided the Community with their money demanded its full return, or had those who most aided it with their labors of mind or muscle insisted upon shares of the property commensurate with their labors, it is doubtful whether any peaceable division could have been effected; and even if possible, it would have left many in unfavorable circumstances, especially those who, having brought to the Society little money, had, by reason of ill health or age or infirmity, been unable to give to it the effective service of the more fortunate mem-

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

bers. Under the plan of division adopted the weakest woman fared as well as the strongest man, those with few talents as well as those with many, so far as remuneration for services was concerned; and hence there were no cases of want or suffering, and have been none in all the years following, except as sickness or misfortune has come to individuals; and then the friendship of their old Community associates is found as good as a bank deposit.

It was perhaps to be expected that many who had left the Oneida Community for various causes in years preceding should desire to share in its property when they heard of the great change impending in its organization and polity; and six persons sought to enforce their claims by legal proceedings, while others wisely concluded to await results in the suits already instituted. One of these suits was continued for over seven years, passing from the first court to a referee (who decided adversely to the claimant), from the referee to the General Term (which unanimously sustained the decision of the referee), and thence to the Court of Appeals, which also unanimously approved the previous decisions, viz., that "the plaintiff is not vested with any several proprietary interest in the property of the Oneida Community or any part thereof;" and that he "has entirely failed to prove or establish any cause of action in his favor or against the defendants or any of them." The company has not regretted the expenditure of \$10,000 in this case, since the verdict secured has silenced all claimants; and, moreover, it should be of great value to communists

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

in all cases of future litigation that may arise, as it makes clear the right of any number of persons to hold their property in common, and to enter into such covenantal obligations with one another as will protect them and their common property from all claims of wages and of property on the part of dissatisfied and withdrawing members.

It was natural, too, that for a time after the transformation to joint-stock those who had hoped to live and die in Communism should be tempted to say, woe unto those who were chiefly instrumental in displacing it; but such temptations were short-lived, as the most devoted Communists soon realized that their preferred form of social life was only possible under a leader as wise, as strong, as much loved and revered as Mr. Noyes was at the acme of his influence over the Community; and among the members they saw no one with the requisite qualities of mind and heart for his position; and after his death all came to recognize a beneficent Providence in the fact that the transformation occurred as it did when his influence could be so strongly exerted, as mentioned by his sister in the passage quoted from her pen, in aid of "peace, equity and mercy in the division of the Community estate." Even Mr. Noyes himself said, "No!" to all suggestions of starting a new Community, realizing that it was wisest to rest after having conducted such an experiment for over thirty years with so much success. The practicability of complete Communism of property and affections he believed had been fully

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

demonstrated by that experiment, and must prove an object-lesson for all time.

Financially, the new company has been successful. Beginning in 1881 with a paid-up capital of \$600,000, it has distributed quarterly dividends averaging six per cent. per annum, and accumulated a considerable surplus; it has disposed of its outlying properties in Connecticut and elsewhere; concentrated its businesses at Kenwood and Niagara Falls, N. Y., and Niagara Falls, Canada; established offices in New York, Chicago, St. Louis and other places; improved its facilities of production and distribution; many of its first leaders and managers have given place to their juniors, who are proving themselves worthy successors; the reputation of the old Community for honest work and honest dealing is rigidly maintained; and altogether the future prospects of the new organization are full of encouragement. It is managed by a Board of nine Directors, who are annually elected by the stockholders; the executive officers are a President, Secretary and Treasurer, annually elected by the Directors. Erastus H. Hamilton, George Campbell, John R. Lord and Dr. Theodore R. Noyes (son of the founder of the Community) have successively filled the office of President of the new company, Dr. Noyes being the present incumbent.

Certain co-operative privileges and immunities, greatly appreciated in the old organization, were guaranteed in the new company by a unanimous vote

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

of the Community at the time of the transformation, viz.:

“The right to employment by the company in preference to others not former members of the Oneida Community, other things being equal ;

“The right to inhabit the dwellings belonging to the company at a rent no higher than will, in the total, cover their maintenance, superintendence, insurance, taxes and general care ;

“The right to purchase goods for their own individual or family consumption through the company at wholesale rates, paying only actual cost, including transportation and legitimate expenses in buying and distribution ;

“The right to the use of a common kitchen, dining-room, laundry, library, the use and enjoyment of the lawns and common grounds, together with such other common immunities and privileges as it may be found expedient to retain.”

It is not too much to say that the above enumerated privileges and immunities have largely contributed to the prosperity of the new company by their aid in retaining in its service, not only the ablest members of the old organization, but many of the second generation ; that they have done much to reconcile those most attached to the old communistic forms and principles to their changed conditions in other respects ; and that they were never more highly appreciated than at the present time.

While many of the older members have a vivid remembrance of past happiness in their life of full Communism, and especially of the supreme joy there was in the consciousness of living for others, as well as for

THE ONEIDA COMMUNITY

themselves, and working for mankind and for God, as they fully believed they were doing, they are yet ready to affirm that, with their large circle of old and new friends, living under the same roof or near by, their beautiful grounds, ample accommodations, common library and reading-room, unitary kitchen and dining-room, large hall for common entertainments, freedom from the vexatious cares of small households, and from many of the rudenesses of common society, as also from the miseries of "upper tendom," they have the best home in the world; and, moreover, they are happy in the conviction that, however premature and imperfect may have been the attempted exemplification of the religious and social principles of the Oneida Community, they will be fully realized in the distant future, and their leader honored as one who was "wiser than his time," though now

"placed in the cold world's ban,
For sending his bright, far-seeing soul
Three centuries in the van."

HOPEDALE COMMUNITY.

This Community (or Association, as it should be called since it was founded on joint-stock) was much longer-lived than any of the Fourier experiments, having an existence of seventeen years, and was in many respects well-planned and wisely managed. The founder and first President, Rev. Adin Ballou, was an exceedingly worthy man, and commanded the respect of all who knew him. His whole soul was enlisted in the enterprise, and it took long years to reconcile him to its failure. He sacrificed all other prospects that he might practically realize his great socialistic scheme. Nor was he a mere theorizer. In recounting his experiences he once said that oftentimes, in the early days of Hopedale, he would be so tired at his work in the ditch or on the mill-dam, that he would go to a neighboring haystack and lie down on the sunny side of it, wishing that he might go to sleep and never wake again; and that nearly all the recreation he had in those days was to go out occasionally into the neighborhood, and preach a funeral sermon! What was then his recreation, alas, became in his later years his principal business. He received applications for this labor from far and near, and was in fact gone to Rhode Island to preach a funeral sermon when years ago I called at Hopedale.

Of this Society's beginning, principles, objects, and achievements up to 1851, the following statement from the pen of its founder is given :

HOPEDALE COMMUNITY

“The Hopedale Community, originally called Fraternal Community, No. 1, was formed at Mendon, Mass., January 28, 1841, by about thirty individuals from different parts of the State. In the course of that year they purchased what was called the Jones Farm, *alias* ‘The Dale,’ in Milford, their present location. This estate they named Hopedale—joining the word ‘Hope’ to its ancient designation, as significant of the great things they hoped for from a very humble and unpropitious beginning. About the first of April, 1842, a part of the members took possession of their farm and commenced operations, under as many disadvantages as can well be imagined. Their present domain (Dec. 1, 1851), including all the lands purchased at different times, contains about 500 acres. Their village consists of about thirty new dwelling-houses, three mechanic shops, with water-power, carpentering and other machinery, a small chapel, used also for the purposes of education, and the old domicil, with the barns and out-buildings much improved. There are now at Hopedale some thirty-six families, besides single persons, youth and children, making in all a population of about 175 souls.

“It is a Church of Christ (so far as any human organization of professed Christians, within a particular locality, have the right to claim that title), based on a simple declaration of faith in the religion of Jesus Christ, as he taught and exemplified it, according to the Scriptures of the New Testament,’ and of acknowledged subjection to all the moral obligations of that religion. No precise theological dogmas, ordinances or ceremonies are prescribed or prohibited. In such matters all the members are free, with mutual love and toleration, to follow their own highest convictions of truth and religious duty—answerable only to the great Head of the true Church Universal. But in practical Christianity this church is precise

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

and strict. There its essentials are specific. It insists on supreme love to God and man—that love which 'worketh no ill' to friend or foe. It enjoins total abstinence from all God-containning words and deeds; all unchastity; all intoxicating beverages; all oath-taking; all slave-holding and pro-slavery compromises; all war and preparations for war; all capital and other vindictive punishments; all insurrectionary, seditious, mobocratic and personal violence against any government, society, family or individual.

—“It is a civil State, a miniature Christian republic—existing within, peaceably subject to, and tolerated by the governments of Massachusetts and the United States, but otherwise a commonwealth complete within itself. Those governments tax and control its property, according to their own laws, returning less to it than they exact from it. It makes them no criminals to punish, no disorders to repress, no paupers to support, no burdens to bear. It asks of them no corporate powers, no military or penal protection. It has its own constitution, laws, regulations, and municipal police; its own legislative, judiciary and executive authorities; its own educational system of operations; its own method of aid and relief; its own moral and religious safeguards; its own fire insurance and savings institutions; its own internal arrangements for the holding of property, the management of industry, and the raising of revenue; in fact, all the elements and organic constituents of a Christian republic, on a miniature scale. There is no Red Republicanism in it, because it eschews blood; yet it is the seedling of the true democratic and social republic, wherein neither caste, color, sex nor age, stands proscribed, but every human being shares justly in 'liberty, equality and fraternity.' Such is The Hopedale Community as a civil state.

“It is a universal religious, moral, philanthropic

HOPEDALE COMMUNITY

and social reform Association. It is a missionary society, for the promulgation of New Testament Christianity, the reformation of the nominal church, and the conversion of the world. It is a moral suasion temperance society on the teetotal basis. It is a moral power anti-slavery society, radical and without compromise. It is a peace society on the only impregnable foundation of Christian non-resistance. It is a sound theoretical and practical woman's rights association. It is a charitable society for the relief of suffering humanity, to the extent of its humble ability. It is an educational society, preparing to act an important part in the training of the young. It is a socialistic Community, successfully actualizing, as well as promulgating practical Christian socialism—the only kind of socialism likely to establish a true social state on earth.

“It guarantees to all its members and dependents employment, at least adequate to a comfortable subsistence; relief in want, sickness or distress; decent opportunities for religious, moral and intellectual culture; an orderly, well-regulated neighborhood; fraternal counsel, fellowship and protection under all circumstances; and a suitable sphere of individual enterprise and responsibility, in which each one may by due self-exertion elevate himself to the highest point of his capabilities.

“It affords a peaceful and congenial home for all conscientious persons, of whatsoever religious sect, class or description heretofore, who now embrace practical Christianity, substantially as this Community holds it, and can no longer fellowship the popular religionists and politicians.

“It affords a most desirable opportunity for those who mean to be practical Christians in the use of property, talent, skill or productive industry, to invest them. Here those goods and gifts may all be so em-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ployed as to benefit their possessors to the full extent of justice, while at the same time they afford aid to the less favored, help build up a social state free from the evils of irreligion, ignorance, poverty and vice, to promote the regeneration of the race, and thus resolve themselves into treasure laid up where neither moth, nor rust, nor thieves can reach them. Here property is pre-eminently safe, useful and beneficent. It is Christianized. So, in a good degree, are talent, skill, and productive industry.

“The Hopedale Community was born in obscurity, cradled in poverty, trained in adversity, and has grown to a promising childhood, under the Divine guardianship, in spite of numberless detriments. The bold predictions of many who despised its puny infancy have proved false. The fears of timid and compassionate friends that it would certainly fail have been put to rest. Even the repeated desertion of professed friends, disheartened by its imperfections, or alienated by too heavy trials of their patience, has scarcely retarded its progress. God willed otherwise. It has still many defects to outgrow, much impurity to put away, and a great deal of improvement to make—moral, intellectual and physical. But it will prevail and triumph. The Most High will be glorified in making it the parent of a numerous progeny of Practical Christian Communities.”

∕ In 1854 the founder of Hopedale published a large octavo volume of 655 pages, entitled “Practical Christian Communism, a Conversational Exposition of the True System of Human Society,” wherein the author passes in review all the theories of social reorganization that have had a practical test in the United States, and points out their defects as compared with that exemplified at Hopedale. It is an able treatise,

HOPEDALE COMMUNITY

but wholly theoretical, expository and didactical, containing no statistics relative to the actual conditions of the Hopedale Society at the date of its publication; and I have been unable to obtain trustworthy information regarding its practical life from 1851 to 1858. The latter date is given in Noyes' "American Socialisms" as that of its dissolution, the special cause being the divided interest of the then President, E. D. Draper, who was engaged with his brother in a profitable outside business to the neglect of the Community business, which for some years had not been profitable. Draper finally obtained control of three-fourths of the company's stock, and so was able to say to the other stockholders, "This thing must not go any further." Mr. Ballou in giving an account of the matter said, "There was no other way but to submit to it;" and he only insisted that all the Community obligations should be paid, which was done by Mr. Draper.

But there is an addendum: three years later, i. e., in 1861, the Hopedale people attempted to reorganize on principles more favorable to individual action and enterprise, and yet preserving many of the peculiarities and advantages of the old Community organization. The following is the preamble to the new constitution, dated May 12th, 1861:

"In order to establish a state of society governed by divine modern principles, with as little as possible of mere human constraint, in which, while the members may be sufficiently free to associate or separate their secular interests, according to inclination and

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

congeniality, no individual shall suffer the evils of oppression, poverty, ignorance or vice, through the influence or neglect of others, we whose names are hereunto subscribed do unite in a voluntary Association, to be called The Hopedale Community."

The various articles of the constitution were such as, carried out, would have made a model village of peace, plenty and happiness. To what extent these objects were realized, and how long the new constitution was enforced I cannot say. A letter in the *Wallingford Circular*, written by A. E. Newbold after visiting Hopedale, says:

"As a result of past years, Hopedale stands forth as a thriving, orderly, and handsome village, without a shabby dwelling upon its domain, except the old, original farm-house. A church has been built, chiefly by the subscription of the 'temple' manufacturers, who also have erected elegant dwellings for themselves. If Mr. Ballou has not realized the very difficult undertaking of an agricultural and mechanical Association, as at first projected, he can look with pleasure on the smiling and respectable village, which has sent many young people into the world with a basis of good principles and with a familiarity with many leading and earnest questions of reform."

Glancing at Dun's Commercial Report, I note that Hopedale has now a population of about 2,000, and that one of its manufacturing companies has a rating of AAA₁, signifying that its holdings are valued at more than one million dollars.

FOURIERISM AND ITS EXPERIMENTS.

Occasionally a book appears that just matches public opinion, producing marvelous effects. Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward" are examples, and so is Albert Brisbane's "Social Destiny of Man," published in 1840, and introducing Charles Fourier of France and his scheme of social reorganization to the attention of the American people. The series of religious excitements that swept over the country during the preceding decade naturally left their subjects dissatisfied with the existing relations of man to man, and together with the great financial depression of 1837 prepared thousands to welcome the new social gospel. Brisbane, as its chief exponent, took the fullest advantage of the situation, and in many ways increased and intensified the interest awakened by his book. Early in 1842 he arranged for the full control of a column in the daily edition of the *New York Tribune*, a paper of large circulation and influence, and for more than a year filled it with matter of interest to thousands of readers. Then followed the publication of *The Phalanx*—a paper wholly devoted to Fourierism. This in 1845 was superseded by *The Harbinger*, published at the Brook-Farm Society, which meantime had been converted to Fourieristic principles and become one of the phalanxes. Fourierism now commanded a large share of public attention. It had for its god-fathers Albert Brisbane and Hor-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ace Greely, editor of the *New York Tribune* and later a candidate for President of the United States, and for its apostles such brilliant men as Rev. George Ripley, founder of the Brook Farm Community, afterwards an editor of the "American Cyclopaedia," and literary editor of the *New York Tribune*; Parke Godwin, author of a "History of France" and other works, and editor of the *New York Evening Post*; William Henry Channing, Unitarian minister, editor and author; Charles A. Dana, a leader at Brook Farm, and afterwards one of the editors of the "American Cyclopaedia," assistant editor of the *New York Tribune*, Assistant Secretary of War, and editor-in-chief of the *New York Sun*; Geo. W. Curtis, editor of *Harper's Weekly*; Nathaniel Hawthorne, the celebrated novelist; Miss Elizabeth P. Peabody, a well-known writer; Osborne Macdaniel; John Allen; John Orvis; E. P. Grant; Francis G. Shaw; R. R. Van Amringe; T. C. Leland, and other able men and women. Their plans embraced the entire nation. They anticipated the time when the whole people would be indoctrinated with the principles of associative unity, and in fact entered into a life-long pledge that they "would not rest nor turn back" until this was accomplished. Their zeal was unbounded; their enthusiasm resistless; their courage betokened only victory; these were their ringing words: "Our white flag is given to the breeze. Our three-fold motto—unity of man with man in true society, unity of man with God in true religion, unity of man with nature in creative art and industry—is blazoned on its folds. Let hearts, strong

FOURIERISM AND ITS EXPERIMENTS

in the might of faith and hope and charity, rally to bear it on in triumph. We are sure to conquer. God will work with us; humanity will welcome our word of glad tidings. The future is ours. On! in the name of the Lord."*

And such brave words were accompanied by brave deeds of labor and sacrifice. The great-hearted Horace Greeley pledged to the cause of association his entire fortune, present and prospective. "Fellow Associationists," he said, "I shall do whatever I can for the promotion of our common cause; to it whatever I have or may hereafter acquire of pecuniary ability is devoted."

In a few years, beginning with 1842, Fourierism by such various means of propagandism as we have mentioned was brought to the attention of hundreds of thousands of people, in the Eastern, Middle and Western States, and resulted in the founding of six associations, phalanxes or colonies in Ohio, seven in New York, six in Pennsylvania, two in Massachusetts, two in Illinois, two in New Jersey, one in Michigan, two in Wisconsin, and one in Indiana.† The following statistics are gathered mainly from Macdonald's manuscript collection on the Communities of the United States, now deposited in the Yale University, and kindly loaned by its librarian to the author:

*Appeal of the Secretary of the American Union of Associationists.

†Of Fourieristic colonies of a later date, that founded by E. V. Boissiere, of France, at Silkville, Kan., was probably the most important, it having existed for many years. Victor Considerant's Texas colony should perhaps also be mentioned, though it scarcely entered upon the practical stage.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

	State.	Mem. bers.	Acres.	Be- gun.	Duration.
Alphadelphia Phalanx.....	Mich.	200*	2,814	1844	2½ years
Bloomfield Association.....	N. Y.	148	500	1844	1½ years
Brook Farm Community.....	Mass.	115	200	1841	6 years
Bureau County Phalanx.....	Ill.	?	?	1843	?
Clarkson Industrial Association....	N. Y.	420	2,000	1844	6 months
Clermont Phalanx.....	Ohio	120	900	1844	2½ years
Columbia Phalanx.....	Ohio	128	large	1844?	1 year?
Goose Pond Community.....	Penn.	60	2,000	1844	few months
Integral Phalanx.....	Ill.	120	508	1845	17 months
Jefferson Co. Industrial Asso'n....	N. Y.	400	1,200	1843	1 year
Lagrange Phalanx.....	Ind.	120	1,045	1811	2 years
Leraysville Phalanx.....	Penn.	40	1,500	1841	8 months
McKean County Association.....	Penn.	?	30,000	1843	?
Marlboro Association.....	Ohio	24	?	1841	Most 4 years
Moorehouse Union.....	N. Y.	?	?	1843	1 year
North American Phalanx.....	N. J.	112	673	1843	13 years
Northampton Association.....	Mass.	130	500	1842	4 years
Ohio Phalanx.....	Ohio	100	2,200	1844	10 months
One-Mention Community.....	Penn.	40	800	1843	1 year
Ontario Phalanx.....	N. Y.	150	150	1844	?
Prairie Home Community.....	Ohio	130	500	1843	1 year
Raritan B y Union.....	N. J.	...	268	1853
Social Reform Unity.....	Penn.	20	2,000	1842	10 months
Sodus Bay Phalanx.....	N. Y.	300	1,400	1844	few months
Spring Farm Association.....	Wis.	40	1846	3 years
Sylvania Association.....	Penn.	145	2,394	1843	2 years
Tru-bull Phalanx.....	Ohio	200	1,500	1844	3 years
Western N. Y. Industrial Asso'n....	N. Y.	350	1,460	1844
Wisconsin Phalanx.....	Wis.	120	1,800	1844	6 years

From this list of experiments several names on Macdonald's list are omitted, being apparently duplicates of other names for same experiments, as, for instance, "Grand Prairie Community" for "Prairie Home Community" in Ohio; "Sangamon Phalanx" for "Integral Phalanx," at Sangamon, Ill.; others are omitted which were clearly names of projected experiments that had not reached the practical stage. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that there were many experiments made, of which there is no published record. But an extended sketch of their experiences would be profitless except as showing that the projectors had more zeal than wisdom, and that the hope of better social conditions is so strong in the human

*Alphadelphia had 1,300 nominal members.

FOURIERISM AND ITS EXPERIMENTS

heart that people are easily induced to risk every thing in their attempted realization. Some account should, however, be given of the two most notable of these experiments—Brook Farm and the North American Phalanx; but in doing so, it is only justice to the Fourierists to say that neither of them can be regarded as a practical illustration of Fourier's system of social reorganization. They could only imperfectly illustrate a few (not perhaps the most important) features of that system, because of their small numbers and inadequate means, as compared with what Fourier insisted were indispensable to success. But if for this reason we let the French master go "scot free" of responsibility for the disasters of the Fourier campaign, and give our meed of praise to those who like Ripley worked with heart, brain and muscle to win success, what shall be said of the talking agitators, who were chiefly responsible for the many experiments brought to a premature birth, and under conditions giving no promise of life beyond their "teething?" The financial losses in such cases may have been the least; for "the setting of a great hope is like the setting of the sun: the brightness of our life is gone."

BROOK FARM.

I count myself favored in having visited the site of the old Brook-Farm Community, strolled over its gentle hills and through its pleasant groves, and been on the very ground trod by the noble souls who here strove with such zeal and self-sacrificing labors to establish a society founded on the highest ideals; for an interest centers in this experiment more intense, more wide-spread, than in any other of the many Communities, Associations and Phalanxes which lived and died during the twenty years succeeding its organization in 1841. Here were gathered the very elite of society—its orators, its philosophers, its poets, its transcendentalists. Here some of the world's brilliant minds consecrated themselves in their first and holiest enthusiasm to the work of social reorganization, and they endeavored to live a life of justice and harmony. Here they proposed "to establish the external relations of life on the basis of wisdom and purity; to apply the principles of justice and love to our social organization in accordance with the laws of Divine Providence; to substitute a system of brotherly cooperation for one of selfish competition; to institute an attractive, efficient and productive system of industry; to diminish the desire of excessive accumulation by making the acquisition of individual property subservient to upright and disinterested uses; and to guarantee to each other forever the means of physi-



W. H. W. 1892

PROOF FARM.

BROOK FARM

cal support and of spiritual progress.”* “We had left,” says Hawthorne (for a short time one of its members), “the rusty iron frame-work of society behind us; we had broken through many hindrances that are powerful enough to keep most people on the weary treadmill of the established system, even while they feel its irksomeness almost as intolerable as we did. We had stepped down from the pulpit; we had flung aside the ledger; we had thrown off that sweet, bewitching, enervating indolence, which is better, after all, than most of the enjoyments within mortal grasp. It was our purpose—a generous one, certainly, and absurd no doubt, in full proportion with its generosity—to give up whatever we had heretofore attained, for the sake of showing mankind the example of a life governed by other than the false and cruel principles on which human society has all along been based. And, first of all, we had divorced ourselves from pride, and were striving to supply its place with familiar love. We meant to lessen the laboring man’s great burthen of toil, by performing our due share of it at the cost of our own thews and sinews. We sought our profit by mutual aid, instead of wresting it by the strong hand from an enemy, or filching it craftily from those less shrewd than ourselves (if, indeed, there were any such in New England), or winning it by selfish competition with a neighbor; in one or another of which fashions every son of woman both perpetrates and suffers his share of the common evil, whether he

*Preamble to Articles of Agreement and Association, signed by the Brook Farmers.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

chooses it or no. And, as the basis of our institution, we purposed to offer up the earnest toil of our bodies, as a prayer no less than an effort for the advancement of our race."

The location was in many respects well chosen. Within easy reach of Boston (in whose extending limits it is now included), its landscape is exceedingly attractive. The descriptions which have been given of its natural beauty are not overdrawn. Its winding brook, its broad meadows, its pleasant woods, its numerous groves, its huge rocks, its commanding prospects, all gratify our love of the picturesque and beautiful. Nor was nature left unaided. Here and there are evidences, especially in the grouping of trees, that efforts were made to increase the natural attractiveness of this chosen Eden.

Men in the neighborhood who remembered the Brook-Farmers evidently regarded them as a superior order of beings. Their intelligence, culture and "high toned" way of doing things impressed all who came in contact with them. I was curious to learn whether Hawthorne's picture of their awkward labors in agriculture was really a caricature; and I heard no such "slanderous fables" as he reports about "their inability to yoke their oxen, or to drive them afield when yoked, or to release the poor brutes from their conjugal bond at night-fall; of milking their cows on the wrong side; of hoeing up acres of Indian corn, while carefully drawing the earth about the weeds; of severing themselves asunder with the awkward sweep of their own scythes!" They left behind

BROOK FARM

them a fair report in respect to general industry, the leaders in particular; and they also left a pleasant savor of higher virtues.

Brook-Farmers themselves, so far as I have been able to learn, take great pleasure in recalling their experiences, and look back at the few years spent in associative life as the happiest and most profitable they have known; and this is true of all who have made a record of their experiences in that remarkable experiment. Indeed, so cherished are these memories that a few survivors of Brook Farm and a score of kindred souls gather annually in the summer months among the foot-hills of Mt. Hurricane in the Adirondacks, to live again the Brook-Farm life, "being guided in all their arrangements by a spirit of admiring remembrance for that extraordinary associative experiment of sixty years ago."

Although classed with the Fourier experiments, Brook Farm owed its origin, not to Fourierism, but to Transcendentalism, and more definitely to an organization of cultured people formed in Boston in 1836, and subsequently called "The Transcendental Club." The founder of Brook Farm, Rev. George Ripley, was a member of this Club, and frankly avowed to his Unitarian Church his unity with the Transcendentalists in their belief "in an order of truth that transcends the sphere of the external senses, and that the truth of religion does not depend on tradition nor historical facts, but has an unswerving witness in the soul." He at the same time said: "I rejoice to say I strongly and entirely sympathize with

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

those persons who are devoted to the removal of the abuses that prevail in modern society. They witness the oppressions done under the sun, and they cannot keep silence. They have faith that God governs man; they believe in a better future than the past; their daily prayer is for the coming of the kingdom of righteousness, truth and love; they look forward to a more pure, more lovely, more divine state of society than was ever realized on earth."

This simple avowal discloses the underlying purpose of Mr. Ripley in founding the Brook-Farm Society. All his religious impulses impelled him to the undertaking. Most joyously would he have welcomed the aid of the brilliant men and women who had participated in the discussions of the Transcendental Club, written articles for its magazine, *The Dial*, and with him felt in their inmost souls that the time had come for Christianity to embody itself in a form of society more accordant with its precepts and life; but with or without their aid he would go forward. A farm was purchased at West Roxbury, and a beginning made in 1841. The first colonist workers were: George, Sophia and Marianne Ripley, Minot and Maria J. Pratt, Geo. C. Leach, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Warren Burton, Lemuel Capen, Geo. P. Bradford, and Wm. Allen. Conspicuous among those who later joined the Brook-Farm settlement were: Chas. A. Dana, John S. Dwight, John Orvis, L. K. Ryckman, John G. Drew, John T. Codman, F. S. Cabot.

Mr. Ripley's experiment is usually spoken of as the Brook Farm Community, and there were many

BROOK FARM

things in its life and arrangements justifying the name. They had common industries, equal wages, a common guaranty of support to all members, their children and family dependents, house-rent, food, clothing, and the other necessaries of life, without charge exceeding a certain amount, fixed annually by the members; no charge could be made for support during inability to labor from sickness or old age, except to shareholders, and then not exceeding interest on their shares; no charge could be made to members for education, nor for the use of library and public rooms—in short, as Frothingham says in his account of the society, “to a certain extent the principle of community in property was recognized, community of interest and co-operation requiring it.”* Mr. Ripley, too, in writing to the founder of the Skaneateles Community, says: “In our little Association we practically adopt many community elements. We are eclectics and learners, but day by day increases our faith and joy in the principle of combined industry and of bearing each other’s burdens, instead of seeking every man his own.” Yet as the Society was not founded on common property, but on joint-stock proprietorship—its capital being divided into shares of \$100 each, on which there was a guaranteed interest of five per cent. per annum—it could not with strict propriety be called a Community. Still it is evident from the above-quoted words of its founder that his heart had the genuine communistic spirit; and in that more than

* “Transcendentalism in New England.” By O. B. Frothingham. P. 164.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

any thing else, I feel sure, may be found the secret of the wonderful charm of life at Brook Farm during the first two years of its existence. What society could be more delightful to one desiring the happiness of all around him, and what more truly communistic than that described in the following paragraph?—

“To recognize practically the nobility of labor in and of itself, none were appointed to special kinds of work. All took their turn at the several branches of employment. None were drudges or menials. The intellectual gave a portion of their time to tasks such as servants and handmaidens usually discharge. The unintellectual were allowed a portion of their time for mental cultivation. The benefits of social intercourse were thrown open to all. The aim was to secure as many hours as was practicable from the necessary toil of providing for the wants of the body, that there might be more leisure to provide for the deeper wants of the soul. ~~The acquisition of wealth was no object.~~ No more thought was given to this than the exigencies of existence demanded. To live, expand, enjoy as rational beings, was the never-forgotten aim. The Community trafficked by way of exchange and barter with the outside world; sold its surplus produce; sold its culture to as many as came or sent children to be taught. It was hoped that from the accumulated results of all this labor the appliances for intellectual and spiritual health might be obtained; that books might be bought, works of art, scientific collections and apparatus, means of decoration and refinement, all of which should be open on the same terms to every member of the association. The principle of co-operation was substituted for the principle of competition; self-development for selfishness. The faith was

BROOK FARM

avowed in every arrangement that the soul of humanity was in each man and woman."*

Brook Farm became a Fourieristic phalanx in 1844—the principal leaders and Directors, (George Ripley, Minot Pratt, Charles A. Dana) announcing their conversion to Fourierism in an address to the public dated (Jan. 18, 1844.) In the same address they proposed that Brook Farm, rather than any new organization, be chosen for the practical test of association demanded by the public; and solicited contributions of additional capital that, "with a view to ultimate expansion into a perfect phalanx, they might organize immediately the three primary departments of labor, viz., agriculture, domestic industry and the mechanic arts." Then followed:

A new constitution;

The incorporation of the Society by the State legislature;

A complicated system of government and management, including: The General Council, consisting of the Council of Industry with five members; a Council of Finance with four members; a Council of Science with three members; and the Central Council, formed of the President and the Chairman of the other three Councils.

Then there were Series of workers, as the Farming Series, the Mechanical Series, the Domestic Series, each Series being composed of groups. Thus the Farming Series had a Cattle Group, a Milking Group, a Plowing Group, a Nursery Group, a Planting

*Frothingham's account of Brook Farm.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Group, a Hoeing Group, a Weeding Group, a Haying Group, etc.

The reader shall be spared further details of this cumbersome machinery. Whatever advantages it might have in an association of one or two thousand members, it would seem well adapted to destroy the enthusiasm and charm of labor in one of seventy members, like Brook Farm, and must have greatly interfered with the frequent changes in labor found so essential a factor in making industry attractive in such Society.

We cannot question the sincerity of the leaders of the Brook Farm enterprise in affirming that their "whole observation had shown them the truth of the practical arrangements" deduced by Fourier from his doctrine of universal unity; still we may inquire what considerations other than theoretical led them to attempt the application of these arrangements to Brook Farm. The author of the articles in the *Atlantic Monthly* of 1878 on "Home Life of the Brook-Farm Association,"* says the determination to change the organization into a Fourier phalanx "was no doubt influenced in a great degree by the absolute necessity there was of some bold effort to enable us to exist, and there seemed no other alternative than either to adopt this course or to dissolve the association;" and Dr. Codman, in his work, † brings out the same idea in speaking of the second phase of life at Brook Farm, which "began with an attempt to introduce social

*Amella Russell.

†"Brook Farm Historic and Personal Memoirs." By John Thomas Codman, 1894.

BROOK FARM

science and to add mechanical and other industries to those already commenced," saying, while the members had increased from twelve to seventy, and every thing was getting more settled and the social life was charming, still "the financial success had not been all that was desired;" "the little Community, with its bright, cheerful school and its happy members, was not paying its way. There were philosophers enough in it, but the hard-fisted toilers and the brave financiers were absent." What should be done? Should they "take among them men and women endowed only with practical every-day talents, able to be honest and make shoes and sew garments; to strike with a sledge and a blacksmith's arm; to be adepts, maybe, in all the cares for the outward wants of the body, but who had never read Goethe or Schiller, and possibly neither Shakspeare, Scott, nor Robert Burns, and might not care to read or study Latin, French, German or philosophy?" And it was further expected now that the works of Fourier and the words of his eloquent disciples had arrested the attention of so many thousands, and a great wave of reform was sweeping over the land, that by joining forces with Fourierism it would be easy to draw to Brook Farm the sturdy workers and capital necessary to insure a grand success. "Should the Community," says Codman, "moor itself where it was, or be borne on with the flood?" It chose the latter alternative, and as a result, he says, it soon ceased to attract the interest and favor of Emerson and his coterie; some of the associates, pupils of the school, and boarders, fearing they would lose caste if

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

they remained at Brook Farm, left, but their places were filled by others, and the phalanx, as we must now call it, was "inundated with applications of all kinds by person and by letter," and "every curious, investigating and odd mortal, from one end of the country to the other, wanted to visit the place." Four thousand persons, including many of distinction, called there in a single year.

Under the new *regime* there was greater industrial activity than before; several new businesses were added, including the publication of *The Harbinger*; and the life of the Society, if it had suffered from the transformation, was still very attractive to its members. But financially the phalanx, like the Community preceding it, was not a success. Some of its businesses, as the greenhouse, were an expense from the first; others yielded a slight profit only; others, that might have given fair returns, had not the requisite capital; and few cared to invest their money in stock that paid no dividends. But the courage of the members did not fail; even after the destruction of the large unitary building on which \$7,000 had been expended, and which was to afford ample accommodation for a hundred and fifty persons, spacious and convenient public halls and saloons, with a church or chapel in the second story, they could say: "We have every reason to rejoice in the internal condition of our association. For the few last months it has more nearly than ever approached the idea of a true social order. The greatest harmony prevails among us; not a discordant note is heard; a spirit of friendship, of

BROOK FARM

brotherly kindness, of charity, dwells with us and blesses us; our several resources have been greatly multiplied, and our devotion to the cause that brought us together receives new strength every day."

Still it is undeniable that the great disaster had a depressing effect on the members, and one by one they lost heart, and sought other fields of labor, until the bravest surrendered. "The cattle were sold, and all the industry ceased. . . . No more came down from the distant houses school lads and lasses, and the long, tridaily procession of young and old had ceased forever. No more rushed the blue tunics for the mail when the coach came in—alas, it came no more! The fields remained as when last cropped."*

The author of "Transcendentalism in New England" says the coalition between Brook Farm and Fourierism, "which promised so much proved disastrous in its result;" and that "had Brook Farm been a Community in the accepted sense, had it insisted on absolute community of goods, etc., its existence might have been continued, and its pecuniary basis made sure."

Dr. Codman, who for years was a member of Brook Farm, and whose perennial interest in it made him a prime mover in the latter-day Summer Brook Farm mentioned on a preceding page, writes approvingly of that coalition, and finds an answer to the question, "Why did Brook Farm fail?" in its lack of capital, in the unprofitableness of its businesses, in not realizing prospective income from persons of

*Codman's "Brook Farm Memoirs."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

means who had been promised an opportunity to become members, but for whom there were no available rooms after the "Phalanstery" was burned, and because the associationist leaders were not unitedly in favor of supporting Brook Farm. The North American Phalanx of Red Bank, New Jersey, was much nearer New York City, the center of the associationist movement, was often visited by Horace Greeley, the man of most general influence among the associationist leaders, and received the financial aid of himself and others, whose assistance might otherwise have gone to Brook Farm.

Another has said the leaders of Brook Farm were too literary to make a success of their enterprise.

Another that they "began at the wrong end, neglecting the self-denying pioneer work," and is ready to hurl at them the curse of Meroz because they did not stick to their cause as the old Covenanters and Puritans did to the cause of civil and religious liberty.

For my part, I think the Brook Farm pioneers should be showered with blessings, and their names ever held in grateful remembrance for the grand example of social reorganization they gave the world, short-lived though it was; and that their founder should be ranked with earth's noble workers. True to the last, he discharged every obligation incurred by the Brook-Farm Community for which he was in any manner personally responsible. Like Father Meacham of the Shakers, Father Rapp of the Harmonists, Father Bimeler of the Separatists, Father Noyes of the Perfectionists, and all who have had a degree of

BROOK FARM

success in founding colonies, George Ripley was a worker as well as theorizer, and could wear cow-hide boots without hurting his pride.

Before Brook Farm's decease, in 1845, Mr. Ripley gave utterance to these prophetic words, which may well close this sketch: "We know that God has no attributes that can favor the existing order of fraud, oppression, carnage, and consequent wretchedness. We may be sure of the triumph of our cause. The grass may grow over our graves before it will be accomplished, but as certain as God reigns will the dominion of justice and truth be established in the order of society."*

*Students of Brook Farm history may consult the following periodicals, articles and books:

"A Glimpse of Christ's Idea of Society," in *The Dial* of October, 1841.

"Plan of the West Roxbury Community," in *The Dial* of January, 1842.

"The Present," edited by Rev. Wm. Henry Channing.

"The Phalanx," edited by Albert Brisbane and Osborne MacDaniel.

"The Harbinger," published from June 14, 1845, to Oct. 30, 1847, by Brook Farm.

"Blithedale Romance," by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

"Life of George Ripley," by O. B. Frothingham.

"Transcendentalism in New England," by O. B. Frothingham.

"Recollections and Impressions," by O. B. Frothingham.

"Brook Farm: Historic and Personal Memoirs," by John T. Codman.

"Brook Farm: Its Members, Scholars and Visitors," by Lindsay Swift.

"Biography of John S. Dwight, Brook Farmer, Editor and Critic of Music."

"Brook Farm to Cedar Mountains in the War of the Great Rebellion."

"Brook Farm," by Anna Maria Sallsbury, 1898.

"A Girl of Sixteen at Brook Farm," in *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1900.

"Summer Brook Farm."

"Reminiscences of Brook Farm," by G. P. Bradford, in *The Century*, 1892.

"Home Life of Brook Farm," by Amelia Russell, in *Atlantic Monthly*, 1878.

"A. Bronson Alcott: His Life and Philosophy," by F. B. Sanborn and W. T. Harris.

"History of American Socialisms," by John H. Noyes.

NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX.

This phalanx was organized Aug. 12, 1843.

Its practical operations were begun in September, 1843-

It was the longest-lived of the Fourier experiments, surviving till January, 1856.

It attracted more general interest than any other of these experiments excepting Brook Farm.

The "History of American Socialisms" says it was "the test experiment on which Fourierism practically staked its all in this country."

In *The Phalanx* of Oct. 7, 1844, there is a very encouraging report of what had been accomplished in its first year, and the conviction is expressed that it is based on a sure foundation.

In *The Phalanx* of Dec. 9th of the same year there is a letter addressed to the Convention of Associations held in New York, signed by members of the North American Phalanx, setting forth its many superior advantages in location, soil, etc., and what had already been accomplished, as follows:

"We have finished a dwelling that accommodates 100 persons, each family having a parlor and two bedrooms. We have built and have in operation a blacksmith-shop and a machine-shop, fitted up with an excellent steam-engine. We have built a saw-mill, nearly ready for operation. Four hundred acres of our land are under improvement.

"We have demonstrated the important fact that association is founded, not upon a fancifully de-

NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX

vised theory, but upon principles existing in nature, and brought to light by the genius of one who devoted his life to the improvement of his race; and we rejoice that we are privileged to behold the dawning of so bright and glorious a morn as now opens upon the darkness of the civilized world."

The following statistics regarding the experiment were published in the *New York Tribune* in 1854:

"The domain upon which the phalanx is located consists of 673 acres of land. Upon this they have erected a steam flour-mill and saw-mill, a Mansion-house, a two-story brick building, called the 'packing-house,' and blacksmith's and carpenter's shops. The Mansion-house contains the parlor, dining-room, and numerous dormitories, with a wing for suites of family rooms. In the basement under the dining-room is the dairy and kitchen apartments; and back of that, in an adjoining building, is a steam-engine which does the churning, ironing and washing. Near by is a small cottage used as a nursery, where the children are taken care of while their mothers are otherwise engaged. The domain, with all its improvements, is valued at \$67,350. The phalanx numbers about one hundred members. Labor is credited by the hour. Each person is charged with his board, lodging, and whatever he receives from the association, and the balance due him for labor is paid. All eat in the same dining-hall—a bill of fare is made out, as at an eating-house, and every one orders what he likes, and is charged accordingly. The departments of labor are various. The business of drying fruit is carried on to some extent. Some kinds of fruit are bottled when ripe, and hermetically sealed so as to retain a great degree of their original flavor. They have seventy acres of apple and peach trees; and raise large crops of potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, melons, cucumbers

and garden-seeds. Wheat, rye, and buckwheat-flour, corn-meal, samp, and hominy, are manufactured and sold in New York."

A year later, Aug., 1855, a correspondent of *Life Illustrated*, after a visit to the phalanx, gave this joyous glimpse of its life, with a hint of impending trouble :

"After supper (the hour set apart for which is from five to six o'clock) the lawn, gravel walks, and little lake in front of the Phalanstery, present an animated and charming scene. We look out upon it from our window. Nearly the whole population of the place is out of doors. Happy papas and mammas draw their baby-wagons, with their precious freight of smiling innocence, along the wide walks; groups of little girls and boys frolic in the clover under the big walnut-trees by the side of the pond; some older children and young ladies are out on the water in their light canoes, which they row with the dexterity of sailors; men and women are standing here and there in groups engaged in conversation, while others are reclining on the soft grass; and several young ladies in their picturesque working and walking costume—a short dress or tunic coming to the knees, and loose pantaloons—are strolling down the road toward the shaded avenue which leads to the highway.

"There seems to be a large measure of quiet happiness here, but the place is now by no means a gay one. If we observe closely we see a shadow of anxiety on most countenances. The future is no longer assured. Some of these people have been clamorous for a dissolution of the association, which they assert has, as far as they are concerned at least, proved a failure; but some of them, we have fancied, now look forward with more fear than hope to the day which

NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX

shall sunder the last material ties which bind them to their associates in this movement."

This is the first suggestion I have found of the dissolution that was so near. The members had planned to erect a new mill, in respect to the location of which there was some difference of opinion; and they were called together to talk over the matter, and in the course of the discussion some one raised the question whether there was any use in going on with the experiment. The question was put to the vote, and, to every one's surprise, a majority was found to be in favor of the dissolution of the phalanx.

And thus ended one of the best organized, best sustained and best conducted of all the phalanxes.

The property was disposed of at forced sale, and the stockholders received only sixty-six cents on the dollar, although the stock had paid a fair dividend for several years.

N. C. Meeker, an editor of the *New York Tribune*, and years previously a prominent member of the Trumbull Phalanx of Ohio, visited the site of the North American Phalanx in 1866, ten years after its failure, and wrote an interesting account of it, from which the following paragraphs are taken:

"Four miles from Red Bank, Monmouth Co., New Jersey, six hundred acres of land were selected about twenty years ago, for a phalanx on the plan of Fourier. The founders lived in New York, Albany, and other places. The location was fortunate, the soil naturally good, the scenery pleasing, and the air healthful. It would have been better to have been

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

near a shipping-port. The road from Red Bank was heavy sand.

“First, a large building was erected for families; afterward, at a short distance, a spacious mansion was built, three stories high, with a front of one hundred and fifty feet, and a wing of one hundred and fifty feet. It is still standing, in good repair, and is about to be used for a school. The rooms are of large size and well finished, the main hall spacious, airy, light and elegant. Grape-vines were trained by the side of the building, flowers were cultivated, and the adjoining ground was planted with shade-trees. Two orchards of every variety of choice fruit, one of forty acres, were planted, and small fruit and all kinds of vegetables were raised on a large scale. The Society were the first to grow okra or gumbo for the New York market, and those still living there continue its cultivation and control supplies. A durable stream ran near by; on its banks were pleasant walks, which are unchanged, shaded by chestnuts and walnuts. On this stream they built a first-class grist-mill; not only did it do good work, but they established the manufacture of hominy and other products which gave them a valued reputation, and the profits of this mill nearly earned their bread.

“It was necessary to make the soil highly productive, and many German and other laborers were employed. The number of members was about one hundred, and visitors were constant. Of all the associations, this was the best, and on it were fixed the hopes of the reformers. The chief pursuit was agriculture. Education was considered important, and they had good teachers and schools. Many young persons owed to the phalanx an education which secured them honorable and profitable situations.

“The society was select, and it was highly enjoyed. To this day do members, and particularly

NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX

women, look back to that period as the happiest in their lives. Young people had few proper wishes which were not gratified. They seemed enclosed within walls which beat back the storms of life. They were surrounded by whatever was useful, innocent and beautiful. Neighborhood quarrels were unknown, nor was there trouble among children. There were a few white-eyed women who liked to repeat stories, but they soon sunk to their true value."

I visited the phalanx when its members were most numerous and most sanguine of success, and again when there were few reminders of its eventful history, save the enormous phalanstery building and a few of the former members, including Mr. Bucklin, who was for years its President. Saddening was the reflection that here were centered, not only the hopes of the hundred or more souls practically identified with the phalanx, but of thousands in different parts of the country, including many whose names are highly honored. Brisbane, Greeley, Godwin, Channing, aided the few who formed its nucleus by correspondence and lectures, before any practical steps of organization were taken. Brisbane headed the delegation commissioned to select for it a suitable domain. Greeley was its interested patron from first to last—was one of its Vice-Presidents, and in his enthusiasm said at one time (as reported to me by Bucklin), "I would rather be President of the North American Phalanx than of the United States!" After its organization and during its life of more than twelve years these friends kept up their connection with it, occasionally visited it and addressed the members

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

on various topics of socialistic interest. A regular course of lectures was at one time maintained. On one fourth of July there was a grand festival. Wm. Henry Channing and Horace Greeley were among the guests. The festival was enlivened by toasts and speeches, after which all were summoned to the hay-field, where every rake and fork were in requisition. "A merrier group never raked and pitched; never was a meadow more dexterously cleared." Then

"Toil remitting lent its turn to play,"

and there were music and dancing, which were prolonged till midnight. Fancy the genuine delight which these scenes gave the great man whose last days were made unutterably wretched by the disappointments of political ambition.

The North American had probably more of the conditions deemed essential to success than any other of the phalanxes that have lived and died in this country :

It had a fertile domain of nearly 700 acres; Ripley called it "beautiful" and "enchanted"—an "estate combining picturesque attractions with rare agricultural capabilities;" and such was the general verdict.

It was within easy reach of the centers of trade—only forty miles from New York City.

It had varied industries. The first labors of the members were mainly agricultural and horticultural; and they surrounded themselves with gardens and orchards. Subsequently they introduced mechanical industries and milling, and owned shares in two steamboats running between Red Bank and New York.

NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX

It had some good leaders. Charles Sears was a manager from first to last, and was probably one of the ablest developed during the Fourier campaign.

Financially it was moderately successful—paying from 1845 to 1852 four and four-tenths to five and six-tenths per cent. on its capital, and wages to all its members and workers.

It had as a rule good material for its experiment. Of its members George Ripley, the Father of Brook Farm, wrote with expressions of high appreciation, as also of the appearance of the children. Neidhart was deeply and favorably impressed with the phalanx people, and eulogized the refinement he found among them.

It successfully passed through many of the preliminary trials which broke up other experiments of a similar nature. As Mr. Sears says in his account of its history: "Personal difficulties occurred as a matter of course, and parties were formed, and two pretty strongly marked divisions—one contending for authority, enforced with stringent rules and final appeal to the dictation of the chief officer, the other standing out for organization and distribution of authority;" and he adds, "it would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that our days were spent in labor and our nights in legislation for the first five years of our associative life." But neither personal difficulties nor party struggles destroyed their union.

What then did? No one has given a satisfactory answer. The burning of their mill, which was the immediate occasion, was no sufficient cause of the

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

break-up, for Mr. Greeley offered to loan \$12,000 to build a new one. There was some religious controversy; there was a secession of members under George B. Arnold, who subsequently founded the Raritan Bay Union; there was evil-thinking of the stockholders; there was a lack of educational facilities; and doubtless all of these things and others had some bearing on the final catastrophe. Bucklin, one of its presidents, considered that its wage-regulation was the principal cause of the dissolution—too little difference being made between the labor of brain and muscle. He said that as president and chief of the agricultural department he received only ten cents a day more than the common laborer. A skillful teacher, who received at the phalanx nine cents an hour, on going into the outside world was paid five dollars for two hours' labor. Meeker in his *post mortem* takes the same view. "One of the chief foremen," he says, "told me that after working all day with the Germans, and working hard, so that there would be no delay, he had to arrange what each was to do in the morning. Often he would be awakened by falling rain, and would long be sleepless in rearranging his plans." And for this he received an additional pittance of five or ten cents.

But all this talk about wage-troubles, to my mind, only proves that the great objects which originally drew the members together had lost their first power over them, and that lower and more material considerations were becoming dominant in their minds and hearts. That, in fact, is usually, perhaps always, the

NORTH AMERICAN PHALANX

case when any such organization starts on its downhill course; and, alas! there are few eager to call the attention of the faint-hearted to the fact that the Society was organized for the very purpose of destroying such wage and wealth distinctions as they now covet, and could not exist with them; and that the sweetest joy in this world comes, not from riches and what riches can procure, but from sharing life's burdens with others, as such society helps us to do. When this sentiment has been wholly displaced in a Phalanx, Association or Community, it is about time to make arrangements with the undertakers.

FRUITLANDS.

The Brook Farm Association is popularly supposed to have been the most perfect fruit of New England Transcendentalism;* but this will be questioned by those acquainted with the history of Fruitlands, which would never have been founded by A. Bronson Alcott and his friends Lane, Hecker and others, in 1843, had Brook Farm (founded in 1841) been sufficiently exalted in its objects. Noble in soul, disinterested in purpose, as were those who inaugurated that wonderful experiment, it was too gross, too earth-like and commonplace, to satisfy the ethereal desire of the Fruitlanders. Brook Farm was from first to last a joint-stock-association, based on individual ownership; the freedom from "mine" and "thine" at Fruitlands would have satisfied an Essene of the early centuries. The Brook-Farmers worked for wages; the Fruitlanders were as children of the same family. Brook Farm owned property and sought to acquire it; Fruitlands disclaimed all rights of ownership, regarding property as the seeds of many evils. Brook Farm handled money, "filthy lucre," the "root of all evil;" Fruitlands recognized no such medium of exchange. Brook Farm possessed animals, consuming their products and even their flesh; Fruitlands would neither use nor consume any thing

*"The Transcendentalist was satisfied with nothing so long as it did not correspond to the ideal in the enlightened soul; and in the soul recognized the power to make all things new. Nothing will content him short of the absolute right, the eternally true, the unconditional excellence."—"Transcendentalism in New England," by O. B. Frothingham, 1876.

FRUITLANDS

which caused suffering or harm to any living being. Their diet was strictly of the pure and bloodless kind. No animal substances, neither flesh, butter, cheese, eggs, nor milk, polluted their tables or corrupted their bodies. Neither tea, coffee, molasses, nor rice, tempted them beyond the bounds of indigenous productions. Their sole beverage was pure fountain water. They consumed the native grains, fruits, herbs and roots, dressed with the utmost cleanliness and regard to their purpose of nourishing a healthy body. No oil or tallow illuminated their abode, using instead pine knots and the wax of the bayberry, or sitting in darkness. Their theory contemplated the disuse of all animals for draught, and the substitution of the spade for the plow; and it was even thought, while awaiting the discovery of some substitute for leather, that it was an excellent plan, for those who would carry out their highest ideal, to go bare-footed!*

Many years ago I visited the "Wyman Farm," in Harvard, Mass., the location of this most idealistic of Communities, and the old red farm-house, then well advanced toward decay, in which the *creme de la creme* of Transcendentalism lived. The domain consisted of nearly one hundred acres, on which there were only ten ancient apple-trees. The sanguine founders of this new Eden called it Fruitlands, in anticipation of the orchards and vineyards which would soon adorn its hillsides and vales. The land is poor, and wholly unsuitable for a Community proposing to subsist on the products of the soil; but the location is

*"A Journey to Fruitlands," by Miss Louisa M. Alcott.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

extremely beautiful. The Communists could well claim that for picturesque beauty, both in the near and distant landscape, the spot had few rivals. A semi-circle of hills and mountains stretches from south to west, among which the Wachusett and Monadnoc are conspicuous. Through the valley, and immediately west of the Community dwelling, flows a tributary to the Nashua. From the highest point on the east of the old domain seven villages can be counted, and with the aid of a glass fifteen spires.

Here the Fruitlanders rose (we are told) at early dawn, and commenced the day with cold bathing, succeeded by a music lesson, and then a chaste repast; then each one found occupation until the meridian meal, when usually some interesting and deep-searching conversation gave rest to the body and development to the mind; occupation, according to the season and the weather, engaged them out of doors or within until the evening meal, when they again assembled in social communion, prolonged generally until sunset, when they resorted to sweet repose for the next day's activity. "Their life," said the venerable Alcott to me, "was *consociate*, not *associate*"—the latter term appropriately describing the less vital life of the phalanxes. In their work of reform they relied

"Not nearly so much on scientific reasoning or physiological skill as on the spirit's dictates. The pure soul, by the law of its own nature, adopts a pure diet and cleanly customs; nor needs detailed instruction for daily conduct. The greater part of man's duty consists in leaving alone much that he is in the habit

FRUITLANDS

of doing. Shall I sip tea or coffee? the inquiry may be. No. Abstain from all ardent, as from alcoholic drinks. Shall I consume pork, beef or mutton? No, if you value health or life. Shall I stimulate with milk? No. Shall I warm my bathing water? Not if cheerfulness is valuable. Shall I clothe in many garments? Not if purity is aimed at. Shall I prolong my dark hours, consuming animal oil, and losing bright daylight in the morning? Not if a clear mind is an object. Shall I teach my children the dogma inflicted on myself, under the pretense that I am transmitting truth? Nay, if you love them, intrude not these between them and the Spirit of all Truth. Shall I become a hireling, or hire others? Shall I subjugate cattle? Shall I trade? Shall I claim property in any created things? Shall I adopt a form of religion? Shall I become a parent? Shall I interest myself in politics? To how many of these questions, could we ask deeply enough, could they be heard as having relation to our eternal welfare would the response be—'Abstain. Be not so active to do as sincere to Be.'"

Who will say, in view of such a record, that the Community at Fruitlands is not entitled to take its place at the head of transcendental societies? Where else do we find such freedom from the world's conventionalities? Where else such an effort to return to the simplicity of the first Eden? What matter if it existed only from early spring-time to early winter, and its members were counted by the dozen instead of hundred? What matter if it failed financially, socially, spiritually, and the noblest of them all lost all? It was a genuine experiment—a sincere effort to found a new and glorious order of society, which

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

should ultimate in the regeneration of the world. And shall we say that it was utterly in vain; that the "transcendental wild oats" sown at Fruitlands will never yield any good to man? Mr. Alcott himself, when full of years and fame, while recognizing that Fruitlands was a premature and crude experiment, apparently did not regret his own conspicuous part in it, nor regard it as valueless to future workers in the same field; and it was exceedingly gratifying to learn from his own lips that his zeal for social reorganization was unquenched and unquenchable.

SKANEATELES COMMUNITY.

This Community has been classed with the Fourier experiments, but incorrectly, as common ownership was one of its basic principles, and there was no attempt to embody in its practical life any of the arrangements proposed by Fourier. In its Communism and no-religion it was Owenistic, but in other things it might be termed Collinistic, after the name of its founder, John A. Collins, the eloquent Anti-Slavery orator, who, as General Agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, is credited with the superintendence of one hundred national conventions. In accepting his resignation the Society passed a resolution expressing its appreciation of "the zeal and disinterestedness with which at a great crisis he threw himself a willing offering on the altar of the Anti-Slavery cause, as well as of the energy and rare ability with which for four years he discharged the duties of its General Agent." That Communism should take such a man from such a cause, while thus honored, shows the general interest the subject then commanded.

The earliest record relative to the Skaneateles Community that has come to my notice is a published report of a meeting held in Syracuse, N. Y., about Sept. 1, 1843, of the friends of the reorganization of society upon the so-called "true social principles of Community"—principles that, it was believed, "would ultimately work a perfect regeneration of the race,

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

by bringing man into harmony with the physical, moral and intellectual laws of his being;" which meeting was called for the purpose of hearing a report from Mr. Collins and his friends, who had undertaken to find a suitable location for a Community. It states that Mr. Collins gave an eloquent description of the place selected near Skaneateles, N. Y., and then presented a written report, signed by five residents of Waterloo and two of Syracuse, which says: "The healthiness of the climate—the warmth, strength, and fertility of the soil—the splendor of its water-scenery, and the abundance of its hydraulic privileges—the beauty and value of its woodlands—the abundance of stone and timber for building; these, and other advantages, which we have not time to enumerate, render this one of the most valuable and delightful locations for the proposed Community which has ever fallen under our observation."

The meeting proceeded to elect a financial committee, and to pass a resolution in favor of raising a cash-fund of \$5,000 "to meet the first installments on the domain, and to put in operation the necessary mills and machinery for immediate use and other necessary purposes."

Two months later (Nov. 19, 1843), Mr. Collins read to his prospective associates, gathered at Skaneateles for the purpose, a statement of the fundamental principles which he regarded as essential in the formation of the proposed new Community, and which in his opinion should be assented to by every applicant for admission. Briefly, they favored communism of prop-

SKANEATELES COMMUNITY

erty, the maintenance of marriage, the care of children by the Community; asserted that a vegetable and fruit diet is essential to physical health, mental purity and social happiness; denounced the killing of animals, the eating of their flesh, the use of all narcotics and stimulants; and refused all recognition of human government or divine revelation.

This statement of principles was not unanimously approved when first presented, and was soon abandoned; and in its place was the declaration: "We repudiate all creeds, sects, and parties, in whatever shape and form they may present themselves. Our principles are as broad as the universe, and as liberal as the elements that surround us. We estimate a man by his acts rather than by his peculiar belief, and say to all, 'Believe what you may, but act as well as you can.'"

On the first of January, 1844, the Community began practical operations. The editor of the *Onondaga Standard* visited the Community in the summer following, and gave its readers a description of its property, conditions and prospects, from which it appears that the Community location was one of the most favorable that could have been selected; that 70 of its 300 acres were covered with the finest growth of timber, and the remainder was well-fenced and in a fair state of cultivation; that there were 40 acres of wheat and 130 acres of Indian corn and other growing crops, besides fields of oats, barley, beans, pumpkins, cabbages, and other garden vegetables; a large apple-orchard of grafted fruit, and a nursery of fruit

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

stock; a two-story stone-house well furnished throughout, with a 30-foot extension, also a rough two-story dwelling and a log-house; two large and two small barns and a 40-foot shed; all located on an elevation from which the entire farm could be overlooked, and a fine view obtained of the surrounding country; that there was a never-failing stream of water and an ample water-power, for the utilization of which the communists had erected a two-story, 30 by 60 foot saw-mill, wherein were a number of buzz-saws in operation, and lathes for turning both iron and wood; that a mill for sawing stone for door and window-sills, a lime-kiln, a tannery, and an iron furnace or foundry, were all in contemplation; that the number of people on the premises was then upwards of 90, and all were usefully employed, and, so far as the editor and his friends could perceive, were satisfied and contented. The article concludes: "Their numerous difficulties and discouragements have been successfully encountered, their wants supplied, their crops put in, a mill erected, engagements promptly met, \$4,000 paid on their property, and all this at the outset, and within the space of eight months—is it too much to expect that they will soon prove to the world that their efforts will be crowned with entire success?"

The Community terminated in May, 1846, having existed about two and a-half years. It did not fail through any pecuniary embarrassment, its property being worth twice as much when the Community dissolved as when it began, and was much more than

SKANEATELES COMMUNITY

sufficient to pay all its debts. Deeper causes for its failure must be sought.

Macdonald says in his manuscript collection :

“A calamitous error was made in the deeding of the property. It appears that Mr. Collins, who purchased it, and whose experiment it really was, permitted the name of another man* to be inserted in the deed, as a trustee, in connection with his own. He did this to avoid even the suspicion of selfishness. But his confidence was misplaced; as the individual alluded to subsequently acted both selfishly and dishonestly. Mr. Collins and his friends had to contend with the opposition of this person and one or two others during a great portion of the time.”

An article in the *New Moral World* ascribes the troubles of the Community mainly to indiscriminate acceptance of members, and the lack of suitable measures for the expulsion of the unworthy. It says :

“Mr. Collins held to no-government or non-resistance principles; and while he claimed for the Community the right to receive and reject members, he refused to appeal to the government to aid him in expelling impostors, intruders, and unruly members; which virtually amounted to throwing the doors wide open for the reception of all kinds of worthless characters. In consequence the Community soon swarmed with an indolent, unprincipled and selfish class of ‘reformers,’ as they termed themselves; one of whom, a lawyer, got half the estate into his own hands, and well nigh ruined the concern.”

The Community published a paper called *The Communitist*, and in its issue of Sept. 18, 1845, ap-

*Described as a “long-headed, tonguey, Syracuse lawyer,” who antagonized the founder from the beginning until induced by a large money consideration to relieve the Community of his presence.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

peared an article evidently written by Mr. Collins, which, while exultingly announcing that the prospects of the Community were then cheering, as "the dark clouds which so long hung over it, and at times threatened not only to destroy its peace, but its existence, had disappeared," gives an instructive description of the two widely divergent classes of people that are attracted to such experiments, and tells how the undesirable class was "hired to go" from the Skaneateles Community :

"Our previous convictions have been confirmed, that not all who are most clamorous for reform are competent to become successful agents for its accomplishment—that there is floating upon the surface of society a body of restless, disappointed, jealous, indolent spirits, disgusted with our present social system, not because it enchains the masses to poverty, ignorance, vice and endless servitude, but because they could not render it subservient to their private ends. Experience has convinced us that this class stands ready to mount every new movement that promises ease, abundance and individual freedom; and that when such an enterprise refuses to interpret license for freedom, and insists that every member shall make his strength, skill and talent, subservient to the movement, then the cry of tyranny and oppression is raised against those who advocate such industry and self-denial—then the enterprise must become a scapegoat, to bear the fickleness, indolence, selfishness and envy of this class. But the above is not the only class of minds that our cause convened. From the great, noble and disinterested principles which it embraces, from the high hopes which it inspires for progress and reform—in a word, for human redemption—it has

SKANEATELES COMMUNITY

called many true reformers, genuine philanthropists, men and women of strong hands, brave hearts and vigorous minds.

“For the last year it has been the principal object of the Community to rid itself of its cumbersome material, knowing that its very existence hinged upon this point. In this it has been successful. Much of this material was hired to go at an expense, little if any short of three thousand dollars. People will marvel at this. But the Community, in its world-wide philanthropy, cast to the winds its power to expel unruly and turbulent members, which gave our quondam would-be-called ‘reformers,’ an opportunity to reduce to practice their real principles. In this winnowing process it would be somewhat remarkable if much good wheat had not been carried off with the chaff. With a small crew well acclimated we have doubled the cape, and are now upon a smooth sea, heading for the port of Communism.

“The problem of social reform must be solved by its own members—by those possessed of living faith, indomitable perseverance, unflinching devotion and undying energy. Stability of character, industrious habits, physical energy, moral strength, mental force, and benevolent feelings, are characteristics indispensable to a valuable communist. A Community of such members has an inexhaustible mine of wealth, though not in possession of one dollar.”

After the discordant elements had thus been removed the Community went on harmoniously for a time, but at the end of eight months, May, 1846, the founder, Mr. Collins, became convinced, Macdonald says, “that he and his fellow-members could not carry out in practice the principles of Communism; and calling the members together he explained to them

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

his feelings on the subject, and that he had resolved to abandon the experiment. Thereupon he resigned into their hands the deed to the property, and soon departed from Skaneateles, like one who had lost his nearest and dearest friend. Most of the members soon left, and the Community quietly dissolved.”

THE AMANA COMMUNITY.

Of existing Communistic Societies Amana has the largest membership, the highest commercial rating for wealth and credit (AA A1), the best prospect of permanency. Its seventeen or eighteen hundred members* live in seven villages near the center of Iowa: Amana, East, West, South, Middle and High Amana, and Homestead, all located within convenient distances of one another. Homestead is a station on the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific railroad, twenty miles west of Iowa City, and was purchased by the Society in 1861, in order that it might have suitable railroad facilities; and for other reasons another small village two miles west of Amana was bought in 1862, and called Middle Amana. The Amana villages are in the midst of a domain of 26,000 acres.

Besides its enormous farm, supporting hundreds of horses and thousands of other stock, the Society has saw-mills, grist-mills, a tannery, a print-factory, two woolen mills, and seven stores. It makes cotton prints, yarns, flannels and other woolen goods, and has a high reputation both in manufacturing and farming.

Amana is supplied with water by a nine-mile canal from Iowa river, which it took three years to complete. An artesian well 1,600 feet deep yields warm sulphurized water, used in the dye-works.

* "Brief History of the Amana Society," published in 1900 by the Society, says its membership for several years has been stationary between 1,700 and 1,800.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

These Communists are undoubtedly wealthy, but say their wealth is exaggerated, and that some years their expenses exceed their income. But "making the two ends meet" in such a Community, with nearly five hundred children under fifteen years of age and very many aged people, is a problem that may well tax their financial ability; and the fact that they are gradually accumulating property commends both their financial management and the principles that underlie their organization.

One of the most fundamental and distinguishing principles of the Amana Community is that Christians may now receive the same true inspiration that was given to believers at the beginning of the Christian dispensation.

According to authorities quoted by Prof. Rufus Perkins in his work on the Amana Society, published by the Iowa University, its beginnings may be traced to the Pietists of the 16th and 17th centuries, and the first one to receive the true inspiration was a lady of noble rank, Rosamunde Juliane of Asseberg. She began her inspirations in 1679. Dr. Johann Wilhelm Peterson, a learned Professor of Luneberg, was the next "Inspired Instrument" (the name used to designate the mediums of the divine messages), and from 1693 to 1700 he was many times subject to inspiration. His two volumes of hymns are still in use in the Amana Society. Peterson was succeeded by one Myer, a cooper, and by the three Pott brothers, Johann Fabius, Johann Heinrich, and August Friedrich Pott. Still Eberhard Ludwig Gruber, a Lutheran

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

minister, and Johann Friederich Rock, the son of a Lutheran preacher, are regarded as the real founders of the Amana Society. They were men of zeal and ability, and in 1714 began their work in Hesse, Germany, by separating themselves from the established or Lutheran church, because they desired to worship God in greater simplicity and sincerity, and because of their "belief that God can now, as well as of old, inspire men to speak and declare his word and will, and thus act as messengers of divine teaching to the world." In maintaining that there are false as well as true inspirations, and that it is necessary to discriminate between them in accordance with the scriptural saying, "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," they exemplified their wisdom, and laid the foundation of the orderly inspiration congregations, out of which came in later years the Amana Society.

Rock and Gruber traveled in Germany, Switzerland, Holland and other European countries, and gathered many small congregations. The earnestness with which they pleaded for a simple, devout Christian life, and the fearlessness with which they denounced religious forms and ceremonial worship, drew upon them and their disciples terrible persecutions. They were imprisoned, pilloried, tied to whipping-posts, lashed publicly through the streets, their meetings prohibited, and heavy fines imposed on those who attended them.

Gruber died in 1728, and after the death of Rock, in 1749, the gift of inspiration ceased for a time, and

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

the "True Inspirationists" declined during many years.

In 1817 there was a revival of interest in the "True Inspiration," as foretold by the prophets of the Society, and a new "Instrument" found in M. Kraussert of Strassburg; but, as he had not the requisite faith or courage to meet the persecutions which followed, the inspired mantle fell upon Barbara Heinemann and Christian Metz—the latter a carpenter; the former a poor, uneducated peasant girl, unable to read or write. She possessed great inspirational gifts, using well-chosen language, uneducated as she was, but in 1820 "was condemned to expulsion from the Society, and her earnest entreaties only sufficed to obtain consent that she should serve as a maid in the family of one of the congregation, and even then it was forbidden her to come to the meetings"—all "because she had too friendly an eye upon the young men."* Later, having been meantime restored to favor, she was tempted to marry George Landmann, and finally did so, falling from grace and honor in consequence and losing the power of inspiration for twenty-six years; but eventually she regained permanent credit as an Inspired Instrument, and came to the United States with her husband as a member of the Society, and was the assistant of Christian Metz, who till his death in 1867 was the leading Instrument and recognized leader of the Society, and is described as "an eloquent and forcible speaker with considerable executive ability." He wrote many of the hymns now sung in the Amana vil-

*Nordhoff's "Communitic Societies of the United States,"

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

lages. After his death Barbara was the sole oracle until her death in 1883, when nearly ninety years old. There has since been no recognized Inspired Instrument in the Amana Community; but the divine utterances of all their prophets having been recorded, they are read at their meetings as words of present application and power, along with the Scriptures, and will be continued to be so read until a new Instrument is given them.

Christian Metz was the organizer of the True Inspiration Societies. Soon after he received the gift of inspiration he visited the various places in Germany and other countries where Rock, Gruber, Nagel and other leaders had preached, and gathered together in congregations such of their disciples as would receive him as a prophet of the True Inspiration, and appointed elders to look after their spiritual and temporal interests.

He next interested himself in the formation of True Inspiration settlements or colonies at Marienborn, Herrnhag, Arnsburg, and Engelthal, where they could instruct their own children, and where they could better maintain their faith, and more fully care one for another; for though there were in these settlements rich and poor, educated and uneducated, professional men, merchants, manufacturers, artisans, farmers and laborers, and every family had its own property and sought to maintain itself, yet the spirit of Communism, without any formal recognition of common property, prevailed. The wealthier members assisted those less fortunate, and established

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

woolen mills and knitting-works, in order to give employment to those not able or willing to follow some individual business or trade.* A fund was also established, made up of voluntary contributions and legacies left by deceased members, out of which the needy could borrow without interest.

Although these good people were prosperous and happy in these semi-communistic settlements they were still subject to many annoyances and persecutions. They were fined for not sending their children to the public schools, where they would have been taught principles at variance with their faith; the priests caused their leaders to be arrested and imprisoned on charges of conspiracy against the established church by drawing away its members; there was alienation between them and the governmental authorities because they would not bear arms, nor serve in war, nor make oath every time a legal instrument required an acknowledgment; these and other things of like nature made them consider favorably the plan of emigration. Years previously word had come to them through Christian Metz, "that the Lord would lead them out of this land of adversity, and into one where they and their children could live in peace and religious liberty," though no intimation had been given of the time when this would happen; but now, August 13th, 1842, at a conference of the true believers held at Engelthal, they were directed through the same Instrument to send "several members to America to find a new and permanent home for the So-

* "Brief History of the Amana Society."

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

ciety." Accordingly Christian Metz, G. A. Weber, Wm. Noe, and G. Ackermann were selected for this purpose, and "given full power to act for all the members, and to purchase land where they deemed best."* They landed at New York Oct. 26th, 1842, and soon purchased five thousand acres of a large tract near Buffalo, N. Y., known as the "Seneca Indian Reservation," paying therefor \$50,000, and subsequently increased their domain to nine thousand acres.

When it was resolved to emigrate to this country the Society had "no intention of introducing Communism into its organization. The original plan was to hold the land and houses in common, each member's contribution to the purchase money being secured by a proportionate share in the real estate and also drawing a reasonable rate of interest. This was soon found to be impracticable, and absolute Communism was adopted, and to-day is one of the fundamental rules of the society.

"During the years 1843 to 1846 some eight hundred people came over from Germany, and the land which had heretofore been the home of Indians, covered with virgin forests and untilled plains, soon presented a widely different appearance. The place of the old Indian-huts and log-houses was taken by roomy and substantial, though plain, houses; the soil was broken and soon covered with waving grain; two woolen-mills, a flouring-mill, several stores, two tanneries, and a number of other manufactories were established to give employment to all, according to their talent and inclination. The Society was now fully or-

* "Brief History of the Amana Society."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ganized under the name of Ebenezer* Society, which title was used in all business transactions. The houses were not scattered over the entire territory, but arranged in four villages called Nieder Ebenezer, Mittel Ebenezer, Ober Ebenezer and Neu Ebenezer, the prefixes meaning lower, middle, upper and new respectively. Each village had its store, its meeting-house or place of worship, and its schools, and had its own local government, consisting of a board of elders. As the population increased more land was purchased, but of course at a much higher price than it could have been bought at the time of the original purchase.

"A number of people also joined the Society from Canada, and as they owned some land there, it was decided to locate two villages on it. One was at Caneborough, later changed to Kenneberg by the Society, about 45 miles northwest of Buffalo, and one near the Niagara river, 12 miles north of Buffalo, called Canada Ebenezer. These two Canadian villages were built on the same general plan as the others, each having a small store and some other business establishments, but their principal value to the Society was in the pine forests of the adjoining land.

"Thus the Society increased and prospered until the year 1854, when its growth had become such that it became apparent that more land would have to be acquired. As all the available land in the neighborhood was held at a high price, the elders saw the advantage of going West and obtaining a tract of land large enough for all time. Another reason for the desire to obtain another location was the close proximity of the rapidly-growing city of Buffalo, which had an injurious influence, especially on the younger

* "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." 1 Samuel vii., 12.

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

members of the Society, and it also interfered with the quiet and secluded life of which the colonists were so desirous.”*

Again there came to them what they regarded as the word of the Lord, through the same Instrument, saying “Appoint of your members four men to find a new home in the far West;” and they were accordingly appointed and went forth not knowing where to go, and after spending a month in Kansas, vainly searching for a suitable location, returned discouraged to Ebenezer. New explorers departed on the same mission, and after visiting many places in Iowa reported favorably of the land lying twenty miles west of Iowa City on both sides of Iowa river. Here were “fertile rolling prairies, with bluffs and woodlands along the water-courses; they saw that the river could be utilized in furnishing the water-power for factories, and that the rich prairie soil was ready for the plow, and would not have to be cleared of heavy timber, as had been the case at Ebenezer.”† And here it was resolved that the great and final settlement should be made. Three thousand acres of government land were bought (increased by successive purchases to 26,000), and their first village of Amana laid out north of the Iowa river, eleven miles east of Marengo, in 1855; two more villages were begun in 1856; one in 1857, one in 1860, one in 1861, and one in 1862. The transfer of the Society to Iowa was accomplished without loss, but it took nearly ten years.

* “Brief History of the Amana Society.”

† Ibid.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

In 1859 the Community was incorporated under the name of the "Amana Society." The articles of their constitution state :

That the foundation of their civil organization is and shall forever be the Lord and the faith he has wrought in them ;

That the land of the Society and all other property shall be a common estate and property ;

That agriculture, manufactures and trades shall form the means of sustenance, and the surplus shall be applied in improvements, in the erection of school- and meeting-houses, in the care of the aged and sick, in the founding of a business and safety fund, and in benevolent purposes in general ;

That the control and management of the Society, both as to business and religion, shall be vested in a board of thirteen trustees, to be elected annually out of the number of elders, by all the members of the Society entitled to vote ;

That the trustees shall annually elect out of their number a President, Vice-President and Secretary, who shall have power to sign all public and legal documents in the name of the Society ;

That every member on joining the Society shall give all his property to the trustees for the common fund, and release all claim for wages, interest, and increase, separate from the common stock ;

That each member is entitled to free board and dwelling, to support and care in old age and sickness and infirmity, and to an annual sum, to be fixed by the trustees, for clothing and other expenses ;

That all orphaned children and minors without relatives in the Society shall be under the special guardianship of the trustees during their minority ;

That seceding and expelled members shall receive whatever sums they contributed to the common fund,

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

without interest or allowance for service during the time of their membership.

These Inspirationists are careful to say, in the history of their Society, from which I have so freely quoted, that they do not practice communism for temporal or pecuniary purposes, nor for the purpose of solving great social problems, but that they may better lead the true Christian life; and that their communism is based on faith, and requires self-denial and the love of God and man.

The Amana villages are laid out generally in squares, with a main street extending perhaps half a mile. A few of the older houses are of stone; the greater number are of wood; some of those more recently erected are of brick.

The families live separately—one or more families in a house; but they eat in groups of thirty-five to fifty, in the so-called kitchen-houses, of which there are fourteen at the principal village. Certain articles of food are regularly distributed to them. The milkman, I noticed, rung his bell at every kitchen-house night and morning. Food is carried in baskets to those who are unable to go to the eating-houses. They have three regular meals, and in summer two lunches besides, as at Economy. Their food is substantial, but unmodified by modern dietetic philosophy.

Every house has a small patch of ground for garden purposes, in which you will generally observe, in addition to the common vegetables, flowers and grapevines, from the fruit of which the people keep themselves supplied with home-made wine.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

In their graded schools both the German and the English languages are taught, but German is almost exclusively used in their ordinary business and conversation, and all their religious exercises are conducted in the same language.

The Bible is read in their schools, which are attended the year round by children between the ages of five and fourteen years.

There is singing, but musical instruments are not permitted in the Society.

The women help in the harvest, doing of course the lighter work; and that women may have more time for public service there is a common nursery where two or three women take care of twenty-five small children, if there happen to be so many in a village, while the mothers of the little ones labor where their services are most needed.

Their working-force is directed by the superintendents as may be deemed best. For example, during harvest-time the shop- and factory-hands labor in the fields. Then they make long hours, but "take it easy" is the rule, at least for their own members.

There are shoe-shops, blacksmith-shops, harness-shops, tin-shops—all the common trades being represented.

The dress of the women is striking, but not pleasing to the eye of strangers. Most of those I met wore short gowns; and all, old and young, had on a black, close-fitting cap, tied under the chin and effectually hiding every ringlet; they also wore a kerchief spread over the shoulders and pinned across the breast. The

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

dress of the men has less to distinguish it from the ordinary styles.

Marriage is tolerated, but it is deemed best to remain single, as St. Paul advises. Formerly marriage was looked upon with a more unfriendly eye than at present; but a young man may not now marry until he is twenty-four, and he must still wait a year after he has announced his intention before he can lead his betrothed to the altar. By marriage the standing of the parties in the Society suffers for a time. If a man marries out of the Society he is excluded for awhile even though his wife might choose to become a member.

At table, at church, and at labor the sexes are separated.

There is some religious expression before and after every meal; there is a meeting for prayer every evening; there are two meetings on Sundays, and occasionally one on week-days.

They believe the word which comes to them through their Inspired Instruments "is the same sure word of God spoken by the Holy Ghost through the prophets and apostles, and cannot be influenced by the opinions and wishes of men." All their rules and modes of worship, they say, are given to them "through inspiration by our merciful God." The Instruments are greatly agitated before coming under the heavenly afflatus, sometimes shaking for an hour. The Separatists at Zoar gave me a most sensational account of the contortions and tremblings of Christian Metz while on a visit to their Society, illustrating the

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

manner of his inspiration. They were not favorably impressed by the scene.

It is not easy to fully understand the entire functions of the Inspired Instrument. Its utterances are in general exhortations to holier life—to more thorough consecration to God—and in condemnation of sin and worldliness. Occasionally it calls the entire Society to some great step, like the advance into Communism after they came to this country, or to sell out in one place and remove to another. Sometimes it reproves individuals for their faults.

Candidates for membership usually pass a probation of two years, but sometimes this term is shortened or even omitted by direction of the Inspired Instrument. Most of the new members come from Germany, and occasionally the Society pays the ocean passage of poor families who wish to become its members.

Most of their youth remain in the Society.

They are non-resistants; they furnished no volunteers in the civil war, but hired substitutes to fill their quota. They, however, contributed during the war nearly twenty thousand dollars to benevolent objects.

Though the women work in the field their status in the Society is not, they claim, a low one. They have a council for the management of household matters; the recognized head of the Community was for many years a woman; and all widows and unmarried women thirty years of age and over, who are not represented by male members, have a right to vote at the annual election of Trustees.

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

My inquiries, touching other matters of interest relating to the Amana Society, were answered by its Secretary :

“Are there any matters which can be determined only by the whole Society? And if so, what matters? And are there designated times when all the members meet for such deliberation?”

“In matters of great importance special meetings of the whole Society may be called, and the opinion of the majority of the members ascertained. There is no time specified for such meetings. The constitution also provides that for the sale of any land situated within Amana township the concurrence of two-thirds of the members is required.”

“What are the particular functions of the elders when they do not serve as trustees?”

“Besides their regular calling, they conduct religious services and assist in promoting the spiritual welfare of the members.”

“What offices, if any, are women permitted to hold in the Society?”

“Women do not hold offices, although not barred from doing so by the constitution.”

“What restrictions are placed on the use of tobacco, beer and intoxicants in the Society?”

“None, if used in moderation.”

“What expenses other than clothing are covered by the annual sum allowed for maintenance? Can it be used, for instance, in the purchase of books, or in traveling, etc., if the member does not require it for clothing?”

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

"The annual allowance can be used at the discretion of the members, and if not entirely used the balance remains as a credit on the books of the Society."

"Have the conditions of your Society been found especially favorable to longevity? Have you had any members live to be over 100 years of age? How many have you now who are over 90?"

"Yes. One member died recently at an age of over 100 years. There are now two members above 90, and about twenty-five between 80 and 90."

"How is the whole membership of Amana divided as to men, women and children?"

"Men 615, women 682, and 469 children under 15."

"Do your men vote at town, State, and national elections?"

"Not to any great extent, as it is not the desire of the Society to mingle in politics."

"Are there public libraries in your village, accessible to all, or has it been found best to restrict the reading of the members?"

"There are no public libraries, but members are free to purchase books with their annual allowance, and reading is not restricted."

"To what extent do you employ persons who are not members? And is such hireling service considered undesirable and unfavorable in its influence on the Society?"

"About 150 to 200 hired laborers are employed, but only from necessity, as it is not considered desirable to rely on outside labor."

"Have you large laundries in which advantage is

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

taken of labor-saving machinery? Or does each family do this kind of work for itself?"

"Each family does its own laundry work, but the work for the unmarried, infirm, and aged not cared for in families, is done in a laundry in connection with the woolen mills."

Amana is a great example of Communism. More than seventeen hundred people here live in comfort and happiness, each one sure of enough to eat and drink and wear so long as he lives—sure, too, of a home and friends—sure, also, of such discipline and instruction as shall keep him constantly reminded of the supreme importance of a temperate, virtuous, holy life. They live in such perpetual peace that no lawyer is found in their midst; in such habits of morality that no sheriff walks their streets; in such plenty that no beggars are seen save such as come from the outer world.

But with all its numbers and wealth, morality and religion, peace and plenty, Amana in many respects fails to realize the blessings which belong to Communism. Knowing full well that "if to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces," and every communistic experiment a grand success, I will yet mention some of the improvements in Amana's conditions that suggest themselves as within reach :

Every village should have a public library and

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

reading-room, where the best books of the outside world are accessible to all the members.

Every village should have a common laundry, with its washing-machines and wringers and mangler run by power.

Every village should have large houses in close juxtaposition, all heated by steam and furnished with every labor-saving convenience, instead of its present scores of widely-scattered dwellings. A single kitchen and dining-room for each village would then answer in place of the numerous eating-houses, and save much labor and expense.

Every village should have a public park, beautified with ornamental shade trees, winding paths, grottos and fountains, flower-gardens and play-grounds.

Every village should have its musical organization, and all harmless amusements should be encouraged.

The streets and roads and sidewalks should be greatly improved.

The love of the beautiful in nature and art should be encouraged. Now architectural monotony, the entire absence of paint, rough board fences, untidy sidewalks, and other similar features, are every-where conspicuous in the Amana villages.

The interior of the houses is scarcely more pleasing. There is no ornamentation by paint or paper, carpets or pictures. Every thing is plain. Their churches and assembly-rooms have only long wooden benches for seats.

Their worship, too, has in it little that is enlivening

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

—much, however, that savors of sincerity and earnest piety, and from which unquestionably the members derive inward comfort and strength. But the exercises contrast unfavorably with the spontaneity and freedom which characterize the meetings of some other communistic societies.

Far be it from me to speak disrespectfully of any thing in the outward or inward life of this God-fearing people. I fully realize that even such improvements as I have indicated above must be the work of years, and that it is for them to determine whether they can ever be safely and wisely made. Their present environments and mode of life are in accordance with their fundamental idea and justified by it, namely, that people are placed in this world for the one purpose of saving their souls, and that this requires the crucifixion of such desires and appetites as divert the attention from God. This doctrine is at the foundation of all forms of ascetic Communism; and it is easy to see how those who accept it should look with suspicion on amusements, pictures, and social enjoyments. The people of Amana say: "He who made heaven, earth, men and all creatures could easily have been in possession of all the riches of this world, but he preferred to come among us as a poor child, and live as the poorest of men. He did not even have a place where he might lay his head. We, therefore, in trying to follow his example, have to lead a life of humbleness and self-denial, and seek to avoid all luxury, elegance, pride, etc., in our clothing, houses and surroundings. Our meeting-houses are plain, as our

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Lord does not live in houses of stone nor magnificent churches; he wants us to prepare and cleanse our hearts—"the temples not made with hands"—so that he may dwell in them."

The following "Rules for Daily Life," left them by their honored Gruber, breathe the same spirit, and show how truly religious these people have always been:

"1. To obey without reasoning God, and through God our superiors.

"2. To study quiet, or serenity, within and without.

"3. Within, to rule and master your thoughts.

"4. Without, to avoid all unnecessary words, and still to study silence and quiet.

"5. To abandon self, with all its desires, knowledge and power.

"6. Do not criticise others, either for good or evil, neither to judge nor to imitate them; therefore contain yourself, remain at home, in the house and in your heart.

"7. Do not disturb your serenity or peace of mind—hence neither desire nor grieve.

"8. Live in love and pity toward your neighbor, and indulge neither anger nor impatience in your spirit.

"9. Be honest, sincere, and avoid all deceit.

"10. Count every word, thought and work as done in the immediate presence of God, in sleeping and waking, eating, drinking, etc., and give him at once an account of it, to see if all is done in his fear and love.

"11. Be in all things sober, without levity or laughter; and without vain and idle words, works, or thoughts.

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

"12. Never think or speak of God without the deepest reverence, fear and love, and therefore deal reverently with all spiritual things.

"13. Bear all inner and outward suffering in silence, complaining only to God; and accept all from him in deepest reverence and obedience.

"14. Notice carefully all that God permits to happen to you in your inner and outward life, in order that you may not fail to comprehend his will and be led by it.

"15. Have nothing to do with unholy, and particularly with needless business affairs.

"16. Have no intercourse with worldly-minded men; never seek their society; speak little with them, and never without need; and then not without fear and trembling.

"17. Therefore, what you have to do with such men do in haste; do not waste time in public places and worldly society, that you be not tempted and led away.

"18. Fly from the society of women-kind as much as possible, as a very highly dangerous magnet and magical fire.

"19. Avoid obeisance and fear of men; these are dangerous ways.

"20. Dinners, weddings, feasts, avoid entirely; at the best there is sin.

"21. Constantly practice abstinence and temperance, so that you may be as wakeful after eating as before."

The True Inspirationists believe in the whole Bible, in God the Father, in Christ the Son and Savior, in the Holy Spirit, which spoke through the prophets of old, and has spoken to them through their own Instruments; in Divine worship, of which prayer, the

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

communication of the heart with God, is the prime essential; in spiritual baptism, of which water baptism is but the outward form; in the Lord's Supper, which is observed biennially; in feet-washing after the example of Christ; in obedience to constituted government; in non-resistance, believing war to be against the will of God and the teachings of his Holy Son; in conforming to the Scriptural injunction, "Swear not at all;" in plain living, avoiding all extravagances in apparel and dwellings; in the disuse of all games and of all frivolous and worldly amusements; in loving God supremely and their neighbors as themselves.

The True Inspirationists do not court publicity. They prefer to go on their quiet way undisturbed. But the fact of their existence cannot be ignored, and ought not to be, in these days when the world is "in travail and pain" for better social conditions. If the seventeen hundred communists of Amana have found a way to live comfortably, peaceably, happily together, while the world around them is in comparative misery, it ought to be known and read of all men.

There is one feature of life at Amana which might with advantage be adopted by every Community and every church. From time to time there is a general examination—"untersuchung"—of the spiritual condition of all the inhabitants. Personal confessions of faults and sins are then in order; and it is expected that the Inspired Instrument will throw light on hidden things. Evidently, such a cleansing process as this can have but the best effect on all who sincerely engage in it. How much evil-thinking, condemna-

THE AMANA COMMUNITY

tion, and bad experience generally, such a periodical examination and purging might clear out of any organization or society!

When these people were scattered over Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and other countries of Europe, religion was their bond, and drew them together in semi-communistic settlements that they might serve God more acceptably, and better care for one another; it colonized them in America; it has held them together in the close relations of communal brotherhood for nearly sixty years; it has given them peace and prosperity; and, above all, it has made their hearts rich in that faith which comprehends the mysteries of the inner world. Better reasons they could not desire for consecrating themselves wholly to the service of religion. Some may think, as I do, that this is compatible with thorough educational drill, with giving much attention to music and art, with freedom in amusement and all that makes life joyous. Others will think religion itself can be dispensed with, and that all the Amana communists have accomplished in their practical life, even their unity, can be effected through enlightened self-interest. But these communists ask none of us to believe as they do, nor do they urge any to adopt their customs. And it remains for those who criticise them to show that equally precious fruits can be produced by other means than they employ.

It is often remarked that Communism may be applied on a limited scale with comparative safety, but that it will fail in a broader application. In the case

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

of the Amana Society there is entire communism of property, not only between the members of a single settlement, but between all the settlements. It makes no difference whether one village makes a profit or another, so that there is a gain in the whole Society; the people of all the villages are supplied exactly alike. If Communism can be applied with such beneficent results in the case of seven villages, why not over an entire county? Why not over a State? Why not over a nation?



DR. WM. KEIL.

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES.

The history of these Societies—apparently the most prosaic and matter-of-fact of all the larger Communities—is full of interest to the socialistic student. How with such beginnings, conditions and principles they could have existed so long and had so many elements of success is still unexplained if not unexplainable.

Their founder was Wm. Keil (or “Dr. Keil,” as he preferred to be called), a mystic, magnetic healer, and man-milliner from Nordhausen, Germany, who came to America in 1838, lived for a time in New York City; then worked as a tailor in Pittsburgh, Penn.; then became an agent of the German Tract Society; then assumed the role of independent preacher; and attracted crowds by his effective words and startling claims of a divine mission. He was doubtless fanatical, as his defamers assert, but it is none the less marvelous that, with limited education, without reputation, without new or well-defined religious or social principles, he should, after a residence in this country of only six years, gather about him a thousand souls ready to risk their all in a communistic experiment. I can only account for this by recalling, that when Dr. Keil began his independent career the people of the Eastern and Middle States had just passed through a series of religious and other excitements that made them eager for new social conditions, and so quick to follow those who offered to lead them where such

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

new conditions would prevail, and by supposing that Dr. Keil, however foolish his fanaticism and preposterous his claims, had yet wonderful powers of gaining and holding the attention and hearts of men.

BETHEL.

∩ This Community was begun in 1844. Its members included some seceders from the Rappite Community, and also some who had taken part with the bogus Count de Leon in forming the Community at Phillipsburg, Penn. The colony located on government land in Shelby County, Missouri, 48 miles from Hannibal, and called the place Bethel. Later they made smaller settlements in the same State, which they called Elim, Hebron and Nineveh, after other Bible names. Dr. Keil in beginning the Bethel Community had only two or three families, others joining them as they were able to sell their property; but the colony increased rapidly, too rapidly. In its first years the courage and faith of Dr. Keil and his faithful adherents must have been taxed to the uttermost; for there was insufficient food, clothing and shelter, and the colonists were weakened by disease, and decimated by death and desertion; and, perhaps hardest of all to bear, the founder's claim that he was heaven's special representative, "one of the two witnesses mentioned in the Book of Revelation," was openly derided by some living in the colony, including his own brother and other near-relatives. That he was able to carry the load of care, anxiety, and contumely that pressed upon him is evidence to me that he believed in his mission and was sustained by others who fully be-

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES

lieved in it. "His great aim," writes the former Deputy-President of Bethel to me in a recent letter, "was the good of the people, temporal and everlasting,"—principally the "everlasting" one is ready to say after visiting Dr. Keil's Communities, and observing the lack of culture, the paucity of adornment every-where, the few conveniences and economies that should be found in every Community that has acquired means for making improvements in its outward conditions.

Bethel was dissolved in 1880. I visited it four years previously, and found much that was unattractive in its externals. The outer walls of the old brick houses, once plastered, were badly scarred here and there where the mortar had fallen off in large patches. There was scarcely a pretense for a sidewalk in the place, though the soil is of that adhesive clay which renders sidewalks so indispensable to comfort in walking. Grunting pigs foraged every-where at will; and a big wood-pile, exposed to all the storms, encumbered the street opposite every house. When I called the attention of the Communists to these things, they acknowledged with the utmost frankness that they were far behind the true standard and needed many improvements; but they added that the present condition of things was mainly owing to the fact that for a number of years they had been watching for an opportunity to sell out their entire property in Bethel, that they might remove to Oregon, whither their leader, Dr. Keil, migrated many years ago to found the more prosperous Community of Aurora.

Still signs of comfort and substantial prosperity

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

were by no means wanting at Bethel. Every house had its garden, where the supply of vegetables for the family was raised, and where a few flowers gladdened the eye. Every family had its pigs and poultry, and one or more cows. It was a pleasant sight to witness the incoming drove of eighty cows late in the afternoon, and see them separate to their several homes for milking. A large new brick grist-mill, standing at the lower end of the village, supplied the members with flour and meal; doing also much grinding for outsiders. The Community store furnished them with clothing, sugar, coffee, and other articles. From the tower of their substantial brick church a grand view was had of their large domain of meadow, cultivated field and woodland. Some four thousand acres of rich fertile land they then had in a solid body, besides a thousand or more acres at Nineveh in an adjoining county, where half a dozen families lived and pursued, in addition to farming, some mechanical industries—indeed, the Nineveh property was originally purchased because of its supposed valuable water-power.

The Bethel Community were mainly Germans, and it follows that their tables were loaded with an abundance of well-cooked food.

The members took life easily—perhaps too easily. There were no signs of worry or overwork. Evidently no one was goaded by the fear of want nor the greed of riches. With their few wants and simple, economical habits no difficulty was experienced in “making the two ends meet.”

Agriculture was their main business, but tailoring,

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES

shoemaking, blacksmithing, carpentry, coopering, and I know not how many other trades, had their respective shops. Mechanics and farmers commanded a premium at Bethel; learned men were confessedly at a discount. The former they regarded as "pillars of strength;" of the latter "there is a superfluity," they said. They did not seek as members highly educated men, because they had "no need of them;" but they aimed to give all their children a good education in the common and necessary branches. They had no libraries and few books, but subscribed for such periodicals as seemed to them useful.

They impressed me as benevolent and humane people, who would not find it in their hearts to turn even a tramp from their doors unfed. It was indeed a fundamental rule of their lives that they "were bound to practice humanity, to assist one another in time of need, and to worship God rather than money." The Deputy-President's home was also the home of the unmarried, the aged and the infirm.

I was much impressed with the simplicity of the leaders. I found the Deputy-President at the saw-mill; and the members told how Dr. Keil, their founder, used to labor in the harvest-field, with coat and vest off, and sleeves rolled up. "Ah! he was a man," they exclaimed.

The governmental machinery of the Community was of the simplest kind. The Deputy-President and his assistant trustees (the latter chosen by the members and holding office during good behavior) man-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

aged every thing, striving to work in harmony with the wishes of the Society.

The Bethelites had few distinctive principles, but they were certainly of the sterling sort. They made little account of formalities and ceremonies, and much account of a practical Christian life. They meant to live, they said, as moral men ought to live, the elder members taking the lead of the younger in good example, as the founder of the Society had taken the lead of all. All strove to manifest their love one toward another; all willingly forgave injuries; all were esteemed according to their real character and not according to appearances; riches and poverty were abolished; the scriptural injunction which requires first of all obedience to God was respected by all. A man can be saved, they held, only by becoming a "new creature" in Christ Jesus; and then if he has lied he will lie no more; if he has stolen he will steal no more, and if possible will make double restitution; and in all things he will seek to do good rather than evil. A man's whole duty, in short, is to do right and live unselfishly. To my questions about their constitution and by-laws they replied, "The word of God is our constitution and by-laws."

Communism and individualism were strangely blended at Bethel. Passing along the streets you noted small houses and gardens, and you said, "This looks like individualism." You went into the shops and fields, and beheld the men working together in groups, and learned that no accounts were kept of their labor; and you said, "This is Communism." You stepped

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES

into the store, and were told that the members paid for some things from the surplus of their gardens and poultry-yards; and you said again, "This looks like individualism." But crossing the street you entered the grist-mill, and saw the members supplied without charge with whatever was needed for their households; and you said, "Here again is Communism."

One was also surprised that persons owned property and carried on business at Bethel who were not Community members. A small store in the heart of the village was thus owned and managed by an outsider. The explanation of this singular state of things is found in the fact that a few years after the founding of the Community, to satisfy the malcontents, a partition of the property was made among the members, and a few availed themselves of the opportunity to withdraw their share from the common interest, and have since managed it wholly for themselves, while the majority continued as before their common arrangements.

Bethel had at one time a thousand members, but there were many secessions at first, 250 or more leaving in a single year, and after the Aurora Community was started many members migrated thither. In 1876 there were only 175 members, and about the same number at the time of its dissolution, four years later.

A seceding member could take with him whatever he had contributed to the common treasury, and in case he put no money into the Community on joining he was given a small sum on his withdrawal.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

The Bethelites were strict monogamists, the only restriction being that members could not go outside of the Community for their mates, except at the risk of expulsion.

Religious services at Bethel were held in the church only every other Sunday, and consisted of congregational singing and prayer and preaching, by Mr. Miller, the Deputy-President. The sexes entered at separate doors, and sat apart from each other. There was a high pulpit at one end, and at the other a space was railed off for the accommodation of the band on special occasions. The Bethel band was at one time so excellent that visitors came long distances to hear its music.

AURORA.

This Community, as already mentioned, had the same founder as the Bethel Community of Missouri, who was President of both Societies as long as he lived. It was located in Marion County, Oregon, about thirty miles from Portland. Although founded twelve years after Bethel, it was the larger and more prosperous Community, having a membership of between three and four hundred, including minors, and a domain of nearly eighteen thousand acres. Dr. Keil, the President and founder, came here from Bethel in 1856, and it afterwards had the advantage of his personal superintendence.

The general characteristics of Aurora and Bethel were similar. They both resembled a common village in a newly-settled country.

Aurora had few accessions except from the parent

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES

Society at Bethel; but their children generally remained in the Community on growing up.

Applicants for membership were at first paid wages, and received on probation, as at the Zoar Community, that there might be opportunity for mutual acquaintance. There was no money condition in their terms of membership.

They had church services every alternate Sunday, Dr. Keil being their preacher. He was also their physician.

Their principles were few, and identical with those of the Bethel Community, and their creed was as simple as that of the apostles. Fear God, love one another, and do right in all things; thus they condensed the whole duty of life.

They had no written constitution, and but few regulations.

They were strict monogamists at Aurora as at Bethel, each family having a separate house, or separate accommodations in one of the larger houses.

Neither at Aurora nor at Bethel did the men or women have any peculiarities of costume.

The government, as at Bethel, was very simple. The President and his few assistants, selected by himself, managed every thing with little consultation except when very important matters had to be determined, and then the voice of the whole Community was taken.

They had few means of discipline, and little need of them. Nordhoff's report of a conversation with Dr. Keil shows that he was wise in his dealings with

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

disaffected members. "In the early days," said the Doctor, "we used sometimes to have trouble. Thus a man would say, 'I brought money into the Society, and this other man brought none; why should he have as much as I?' But my reply was, 'Here is your money—take it; it is not necessary; but while you remain remember that you are no better than he.' Again, another might say, 'My labor brings one thousand dollars a year to the Society; his only two hundred and fifty;' but my answer was, 'Thank God that he made you so much abler, stronger, to help your brother; but take care lest your poorer brother do not some day have to help you when you are crippled, or ill, or disabled?'"

They did not make great account of amusements at Aurora, but they had two good bands which went abroad as far as Portland to play; and they had a park of twelve acres for their own gatherings, and outside picnics and excursions.

While the property of the Aurora Community was managed for the common interest, it was at first all held in Dr. Keil's name; but in 1872 a title-deed of a part of it was given to each head of a family. A similar division, it will be remembered, was made at Bethel in the early years. That the property was carried on after the division as before, and no difference was made in their communism, shows how fully grounded the members were in communistic principles, and what power those principles possess even under unfavorable circumstances. And if

'Tis virtue makes the bliss where'er we dwell,

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES

then must Aurora have been the abode of happiness, for it could truly boast that "since its foundation it had not had a criminal among its members; it had sent no man to jail; it had had no lawsuit among its members nor with outside people."

The following letter from the former Deputy-President of Bethel contains interesting information concerning the dissolution of the two Communities and other matters:

Aurora, Oregon, May 28, 1900.

W. A. Hinds—

Dear Sir: I will try and answer your questions in the order you have asked them.

The date of the birth of the founder of the Bethel and Aurora Communities, Dr. William Keil, was March 6, 1812; of his death, December 30, 1877; cause of death, heart failure.

Bethel dissolved as a Community in 1880, and Aurora in 1881.

Their dissolution was not debated before their founder's death. I think they would yet continue if he were still alive. After his death nobody fully satisfactory to the members was found willing to take the responsibility and carry the burden as leader. I am positive that a number (certainly not all) would have continued the Communities if the right men would have been willing to take charge of them.

In Bethel the distribution of property (after each one had received what he or she had paid into the common treasury on joining the colony) was made according to the number of years each had worked in the Community. There was some difference made between the sexes in the distribution.

Of course, a few members left from time to time,

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

but for no special reason that I know except to try individualism. Some of the young people occasionally became discontented for various causes.

At Aurora the distribution was mostly made to the different family groups, and each of these divided its share among its members:

The former Community members nearly all now live on the property they received in the distribution; and I know of no one that would sell even at a good price.

At the time of dissolution the Bethel Community consisted of from 175 to 200 souls, and in the Aurora Community there were about 250 adults besides the minors.

The total value of the property, real and personal, at the time of dissolution of the two Societies, in excess of liabilities, was approximately about one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars.

The manufacturing carried on in the Communities was all in a small way.

The members were all German except two families of Americans, who eventually seceded.

The members came from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Iowa, Indiana, and some from Germany.

The relation between the sexes was either marriage or celibacy; a number chose the latter.

Quite a good many of the former members still adhere to the religious doctrines held by the Community, and some few have connected themselves with the common churches.

The opportunities at Aurora for a good common education were ample.

A few of the young men developed marked ability as writers, professors of music, physicians, etc.

Quite a number of the former members regret the dissolution of the Communities, and regard the years spent in them as the happiest of their lives,

THE BETHEL-AURORA COMMUNITIES

In Bethel in 1869 or 1870 we had trouble with a seceder who claimed wages for himself and the property of his parents, which resulted in litigation; but the courts did not sustain his claims. In Aurora we never had any litigation whatever.

We have no publications relating to Dr. Keil or his Communities.

Dr. Keil, I think, was fore-ordained by God to fulfill a certain mission. He was the most powerful preacher I ever heard or ever expect to hear. Some persons may speak evil of him, but I revere his memory.

Yours truly, Jacob G. Miller.

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES.

In 1834 Eric Janson, while plowing in the fields of his native province of Upland, Sweden, was subjected to an attack of rheumatism of such severity as to render him for a time unconscious. Recovering his powers he seemed to hear a voice saying: "It is writ that whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive; all things are possible to him that believeth. If ye shall ask any thing in my name I will do it, saith the Lord." "Recognizing in the voice a message from God, and falling upon his knees, he prayed long and fervently that his lack of faith might be forgiven him, and that his health might be restored. On arising, his pains had disappeared, never to return. From this time his whole being was turned into religious channels. He was seized with an insatiable thirst after spiritual knowledge. He read all the books of a devotional character he could get, but not finding in them the peace that he longed for he turned to the Bible as the sole source of spiritual comfort."*

In 1843 Janson visited the province of Helsingland, and made the acquaintance of Jonas Olson, a leader among the Devotionalists or Readers, as they were called, because they met together in private houses for devotional exercises, and read their Bibles on all occasions, their sole aim being to lead the dominant church of Sweden, the Lutheran, back to the simplicity, zeal and faith of the early Christians. Olson, after

* "Bishop Hill Colony," by M. A. Mikkelsen, A. M.

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

entertaining Janson on the Sabbath, and receiving his rebuke for not being a priest in his own house, recognized in his guest a man of God, and thereafter introduced him to the conventicles of the Devotionalists in every part of Helsingland, and every-where he created the greatest interest. At first he followed the lines of the Devotionalists, seeking only to recall the church to the purity and earnestness of the primitive Christians, and was not persecuted; but as the number of his adherents rapidly increased "the clergy became alarmed at the growth of a strong religious sentiment over which they had no control, and the import of which they did not understand, and soon regarded Janson and his disciples as a new sect holding doctrines subversive of the existing church organization. In order to regain their lost hold upon their congregations they denounced Janson from the pulpit as an impostor and false prophet, and appeared in the conventicles to warn their parishioners against him. As the influence of Janson increased, so also did the number and hostility of his enemies. His followers were subjected to the abuse and insult of the rabble. Their meetings were disturbed, their houses pelted with stones, and their persons assaulted. But they praised the Lord, and rejoiced even in their persecutions. They marched along the public highways at night and sang spiritual hymns, or gathered in front of the parsonages to pray for the conversion of the unregenerate pastors. When their conventicles were prohibited they assembled in the woods and in out-of-the-way places to partake of the holy communion. Faint

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

rumors of these midnight gatherings came to the church authorities, and the specter of a new peasant insurrection stalked abroad. Eric Janson was regarded as a second Thomas Munzer. He was charged with all sorts of atrocious crimes.”*

In September, 1844, he was arraigned for trial, and boldly defended himself. “The church,” he said, “had abused its trust; it had fallen from the true faith; its servants were mere worldlings; and he was sent by God to restore the faith, and show sinners the way of salvation. He was released and allowed a pass to his home.”

His disciples rejoiced greatly at his deliverance; multitudes attended him every-where; the churches were deserted; Jansonism was preached in all parts of the province; the excitement daily increased. All this incensed the clergy, and made them fully determined to destroy him and his influence. He was arrested six times. The king, to whose presence he was twice admitted, favored him; and it was by his orders that Janson was three times released; but even royal orders were powerless to stop the machinations of the clergy against him. He was hounded from place to place. A price was set upon his head; and when finally captured, his friends, fearing violence, forcibly took him from the officers (probably with their connivance) and conveyed him into Norway. There he was met by some of his disciples, who accompanied him to our land of civil and religious liberty. Meantime, he had not only been confirmed in views antagonistic to the

* Mikkelsen's "Bishop Hill Colony."

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

established church of his native country, but "had planned the emigration of his followers from Sweden, and the founding in America of a socialistic, theocratic Community;" and had indeed previously (in 1845) sent Olaf Olson here to select for it a suitable location.

It was to be patterned after the pentecostal community; and now, as of old, all sold their possessions, whether in land or personal property, whether much or little, and gave the money they received into the common fund. Most of Janson's disciples were of the poorer classes, but a few were persons of considerable property; and by uniting their means it was possible to pay the passage of such as were ready to leave fatherland and friends and go with Janson to a far-away country, there to build a new Jerusalem whence the glorious truths of Jansonism were to extend to all the world.

The first colonists arrived in New York in the summer of 1846, and were there met by Janson. Their means were nearly exhausted, and some of the men are said to have traveled most of the distance from New York on foot, but the larger number went to Chicago by canal and lake; and all, excepting the more weakly women and small children, made the journey on foot, from Chicago to Victoria, one hundred miles across an unbroken prairie; thence their journey was continued to Red Oak Grove, three miles distant from the chosen site of their future village in Henry County, Ill., called Bishop Hill, the name of Janson's birthplace.

A correspondent of the *Brook Farm Harbinger*

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

encountered the first column of these Swedish pilgrims in the city of Chicago, and thus speaks of them:

"I must write to you of an interesting band of immigrants, who have been encamped for the last three days under my windows. They are Swedes, in number about sixty-five, who have been obliged to leave their country by the most severe and constant persecution, on account of religious opinion. Their leader is Eric Eanson or Janson, an intelligent and strong-minded peasant, who has the most perfect confidence and control of the whole band. They look upon him as a sort of apostle, from a remarkable gift of second sight, which he certainly appears to possess.

"The law of Sweden does not tolerate dissenters from the established church; and when it was discovered that these people were in the habit of assembling in a lonely place to worship God after their manner, a violent persecution arose against them, headed by a Lutheran priest. They were attacked while quietly engaged in reading the Scriptures; their house was broken into; they were pelted with stones and cruelly beaten, till, as my informant says, 'the roof and walls were wet with their blood!'

"There was a look about these people which I have never seen among the masses of European immigrants who have passed through Chicago since I have lived here. It was an expression of patient, intelligent endurance; all had it except the young children. They were not bowed down with weakness and care, like the French and Italian immigrants, not stern and stolid like the newly-arrived Germans, not wild and vehement like many of the Irish,—they walked erect and firm, looking always hopeful and contented, though very serious."

Other colonists arrived from time to time under

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

the leadership of Jonas Olson, Andreas Berglund and others—the tenth and last party of seventy in 1854.

Excepting an improved farm of eighty acres, which Janson had previously bought, their chosen home was all unbroken land. There was but a single farm-house within miles. Hundreds of colonists of all ages and classes sheltered themselves literally in the “caves and dens of the earth.” They dug down the sides of narrow ravines, stretched poles across from bank to bank, and covered them with sods. Here they lived winter and summer till they were able to build more suitable dwellings.

Difficult would it be to find a parallel for the hardships and privations experienced by these Swedish pilgrims during their first years in this country. They subsisted on corn and pork; and often when the stream was too low to grind their daily rations of meal, they themselves turned the wheel which whirled the millstones they had rudely formed from the neighboring ledge. Their scanty fare and ill-ventilated apartments induced disease; fevers consumed their flesh; the ague shook their bones; and later that dread scourge, the cholera, brought hither by Norwegian immigrants, carried them off by scores—one hundred and fourteen dying in two weeks, including many of their best men. Families fled temporarily from the colony, but death followed them; and in one instance a wife, miles distant from any assistance, buried her husband with her own hands.

As with the English Puritans who landed at Plymouth, the first thought of these Swedish Puritans

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

was for a church in which to worship God, and a school for their children. For the former a large temporary structure was erected, mainly of logs, and capable of holding one thousand persons, and a mud-cave at first answered the purpose of a school-room.

Early, too, were efforts made to spread the glad gospel tidings which had been committed to them. Twelve young men were given a short drill in speaking English, and then sent forth by Janson as his apostles on their work of evangelization.

The colonists during the first year divided their waking hours between labor and worship, save the time spent at table. At five in winter, at four in summer, the bell summoned them to their morning devotions, which sometimes lasted for two hours. Often at noon they would listen to an hour's discourse on sacred themes. The evening meal was again followed by a meeting of prayer or exhortation. No amusement lightened their toil; no cultivated flowers shed perfume across their path. Such as were unmarried denied themselves during the first year or two all matrimonial joys. Never were people more earnest, never had they larger expectations or greater faith in their future, never were they more ready to endure privations and sufferings. Without money, without credit, without sufficient food, their caves and huts damp and unhealthy and over-crowded, and with disease and death stalking in their midst, they yet counted "all things as light afflictions" that "endure but for a moment," and went forward with undiminished courage, save the few whose hearts or physical powers of

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

endurance failed; save also the two hundred who left the Community in 1848 because they could not accept the extraordinary claims of Janson as a religious teacher and prophet.

But the Community, in spite of all difficulties, made progress. Bountiful harvests rewarded their untiring industry, and additional lands were purchased. In 1847 adobe houses were built, also one frame house. In 1848 the manufacture of kiln-dried brick was begun, and a brick house erected, four stories in height, 45 feet wide, 100 feet long, and also several frame houses and houses of adobe. Timber lands were bought and a saw-mill. And altogether the prospects of the Community greatly improved in this year of 1848, and most encouraging of all was the improvement in the health of the members, resulting from their changed conditions of food and shelter. But still it was in this otherwise fortunate year that a mistake was made that resulted two years later in a terrible calamity.

If there is one thing more than another in respect to which supernal wisdom is needed by the founders and managers of Communities it is in the selection of members; and in this particular Janson conspicuously failed when, in 1848, he accepted as a member of his Community John Root, an educated Swede, who had served as a United States soldier during the Mexican war, and consented to his marriage to his cousin on the stipulated written condition that if he ever desired to leave the Community he should not compel his wife to go away with him. Root quickly developed

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

qualities antagonistic to Community life, and proposed to his wife that they leave the Society. She refused. He then resorted to force, and twice succeeded in taking her away—once as far as Chicago. She was both times rescued, and in bringing her back from Chicago such relays of horses were provided that the entire distance of 150 miles was covered without a single stop.

The enraged husband, on learning of his wife's escape, lost no time in gathering a mob, which entered the Community village, but finding neither Janson nor any of those who had been engaged in removing Mrs. Root from Chicago, the mob dispersed, to be succeeded by a second mob larger than the first, which was only prevented from burning the village and destroying the property of the Community by the neighboring people, who, in appreciation of the industrious, honest, peaceable colonists who had settled in their midst, and brought prosperity to them and the county, armed themselves for their protection from mob violence.

Root pushed his legal proceedings against Janson, and the latter's trial came on the 13th of May, 1850. He was present, and during the noon-recess was standing near his counsel who was writing at a table. Root entered, called Janson by name, and as the latter turned a bullet from Root's pistol pierced his heart.

To appreciate the effect upon the Community of this horrible "taking off" of their leader one must realize that their hopes for this world and the world to come were centered in him. They believed that

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

they were the chosen people that were to restore primitive Christianity, and that Janson stood in the place of Christ to them, and through him God's present will was made known. He was to build the New Jerusalem, and he and his heirs were to be its perpetual sovereigns.

Call all this folly, fanaticism, utter madness; to the Bishop Hill colonists, numbering now more than a thousand souls, they were veritable realities. They were stunned by the astounding news of Janson's death, but might not the same power that raised Jesus from the grave raise up Janson also? They wept and prayed and waited three days for the manifestation of resurrection power.

In the midst of the funeral services that followed Janson's wife "stepped forward, and in the presence of the congregation placed her hand upon Andreas Berglund's bowed head, creating him guardian of the heir to the leadership of God's chosen people until the boy should have reached the age of majority."*

For a time Berglund and Mrs. Janson were the ruling spirits of the Community, but only for a time. Jonas Olson had antedated Janson as a leader among the Devotionalists of Helsingland, and had been Janson's chief adviser in Sweden and in America; he had induced King Oscar to order the passports issued for the departure of the first colonists; had himself taken personal charge of the second party of colonists; and at the time of Janson's assassination was, in obedience to his instructions, taking eight men to Califor-

*Mikkelsen's "Bishop Hill Colony."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

nia in quest of gold. Arriving there in August, 1850, and learning of Janson's death, he immediately returned to Bishop Hill, and forthwith set himself against the doctrine of inherited authority, claiming that Janson received a special commission that could not be transferred by natural heirship. His previous history, his strength of character, the dissatisfaction of many with woman-leadership, and the mild character of Berglund, all conspired to give Olson a large following; and it was not long before he was, without formal election, recognized as the virtual leader of the Community.

The Community now entered upon its period of greatest prosperity. It was cleared of debt. All its industries were conducted with enterprise. It owned thousands of acres of fertile land; had a hundred horses, sixty yoke of cattle, large droves of cows, abundance of food. They cultivated immense fields, having one year seven hundred acres of broom-corn. They erected large brick dwelling-houses, a church and hotel, a large flouring-mill, work-shops, school-houses, etc., many of which structures still stand, and will continue to stand as monuments of their prosperity. The 100 foot, four-story, brick building erected in 1848, now extended to 200 feet, was their grand phalanstery, though never known by that name, the lower story of the immense structure being used as a common kitchen, the second story as a common dining-room; and here the whole Community, numbering at one time over a thousand souls, ate their meat together "in gladness and singleness of heart." The

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

upper stories were occupied as dormitories. Other brick and wooden buildings were near, the common bakery being only a few rods from the kitchen and dining-room. Their streets were laid out with regularity, surrounding a central square or park, shaded with trees. Besides the great central farm there were eight outlying farms; and though the central buildings were ample enough to accommodate all, the inconveniences of carrying on the immense acreage from a common center were found to be so great that several houses were erected here and there over the domain, where dwelt during the summer months many members, including labor superintendents, who led forth their small armies into the cultivated field and meadow. It was not uncommon to see a hundred persons working in one field, and occasionally several hundred; nearly the whole colony, in fact, would at times be engaged in some common industry. The women worked in the harvest as well as the men, the girls as well as the boys. They had little trouble with lazy ones. In aggregation there was enthusiasm; and so long as there was mutual confidence contentment and happiness prevailed in the colony.

A charter was secured from the State Legislature in 1853, providing for a board of seven trustees, who were to hold office "during good behavior," subject to removal by a majority-vote of the male members of the Community, and who were given, subject to such by-laws as might be adopted, full power over all its business affairs. The first by-laws adopted gave the trustees the additional power of determining whether

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

applicants for membership possessed the proper moral character and should be admitted; and they also provided that there should be held annually on the second Monday of January a meeting of the adult male members of the Community for the general transaction of business, at which time it was made the duty of the trustees to present a full report of the financial condition and affairs of the Society for the preceding year. The by-laws further provided that a special meeting should convene whenever a majority of the adult male members required such meeting; otherwise the power of the trustees was unrestricted, which the Community afterwards had cause to regret, as will later appear.

Janson had taught, as previously mentioned, that the supreme spiritual and temporal power of the Community was to be hereditary in his family. Neither the charter nor by-laws mention the spiritual function, but the temporal power was definitely vested in the seven trustees, and practically all other power; and thus an end was made of the question of hereditary leadership.

The following paragraph descriptive of the Community at this time (1853) was written by a visitor:

“We had occasion to visit Bishop Hill Colony, and were received with great kindness and hospitality. Every thing, seemingly, was on the top of prosperity. The people lived in large, substantial brick houses. We had never before seen so large a farm nor one so well cultivated. One of the trustees took us to an adjacent hill, from which we had a view of the colony’s cultivated fields, stretching away for miles. In one

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

place we noticed fifty young men, with the same number of horses and plows, cultivating a corn-field where every furrow was two miles in length. In another place was a field of a thousand acres in broom-corn, the product of which, when baled, was to be delivered at Peoria for shipment to consignees in Boston, and was expected to yield an income of fifty thousand dollars. All the live stock was exceptionally fine, and apparently given the best of care. There was one stable of more than one hundred horses, the equals of which it would be hard to find. One morning I was brought to an enclosure on the prairie where the cows were being milked. There must have been two hundred of them, and the milkmaids numbered forty or fifty. There was a large wagon, in which an immense tub was suspended, and into this each girl, ascending by means of a step-ladder, emptied her pail. The whole process was over in half an hour. On Sunday I attended service. There was singing and praying, and the sermon, by one of the leaders, contained nothing that a member of any Christian denomination might not hear in his own church. Altogether I retain the most agreeable remembrance of this visit."

In 1856 *The Practical Christian* contained an interesting account of the Bishop Hill Community, from which the following paragraphs are taken. It appears to have been at that time in a prosperous condition, although its membership had diminished:

"There is at the present time a population of seven hundred and eighty in the Community. They possess 8,500 acres of land, of which 3,250 are under cultivation. About 500 acres of their land is timbered. The property is held by seven trustees for the Community. They own some of the largest and best buildings in the county. They have two large unitary dwellings, one a

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

4-story brick building, 200 feet long, and 45 feet wide; the other a 3-story brick, 55 by 65 feet. They have also three or four more unitary dwellings, not so large; also a good mill, a tavern, some extensive shops and stores, one at the Community, and one at Galva, four miles off on the railroad. They own also a brick ware-house at Galva, 40 feet by 100, and likewise a large number of town-lots. They have over 200 milk-cows, with as many calves, 150 head of horses and mules, 50 yoke of work oxen, and a stock of 600 additional head of cattle. They made about \$36,000 out of their crop of broom-corn alone in 1854. It is said they intend taking stock in the Rock Island and Peoria Railroad to the amount of \$150,000 or \$200,000, if it runs near their village. The fact is they are rich.

“They keep up an English school about nine months in the year. They have also a large church in the center of their village, where they hold religious meetings about five times a week, and better order is nowhere seen than there. They take the Bible as their only rule of faith and practice. They mean to be practical Christians in every respect. They live apparently in great unity and harmony, seem to enjoy life very much, and are no doubt truly happy in most respects. There is perfect equality practiced in the use and enjoyment of their riches. All are required to labor according to ability and qualification. Families have separate rooms, beds, clothing, etc. Members leaving the Community can have as much property as they brought, and reasonable wages for their services while there. No injustice is aimed at by them, and no advantage is taken of any one. Positive honesty is practiced by them in every thing that is manufactured by them, or that passes through their hands.”

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

This experiment certainly possessed many of the elements of permanent success. It had good material in the religious character of its members. It had the qualities which Owen vainly sought, such as economy, industry, honesty and good morals. Why then did it come to such an untimely end?

I asked this question many times of the men who came with Janson and Olson from Sweden filled with enthusiasm—of Olson himself—of Berglund, the chosen successor of Janson—of seceders from the colony at different stages of its career—of the children of the early colonists then mature in years.

The death of Eric Janson, its leader and founder, doubtless shortened its career. It is believed that the majority of the original members never would have forsaken him. He was a strong leader, having personal qualities which made him generally beloved and revered. His claims would not have commanded the respect of intelligent Americans, and probably would have been rejected by the second and third generations of even his most devoted followers, but while he lived few of his Swedish disciples questioned them. He believed himself, and was believed by them, to have a divine mission—to be inspired—to have very intimate personal acquaintance with God—to be a kind of personified Second Advent. He had unlimited control over the temporal as well as spiritual interests of the colony, and allowed no one to question his wisdom. "It is according to the will of God," silenced all controversy. He believed that he alone had

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

the whole truth, and that all people who had not received his views were in darkness.

Such fanaticism admits of no justification. If it be offered in extenuation that other Community founders have been equally fanatical, and that their position of absolute, unquestioned authority in matters temporal and spiritual, naturally engenders spiritual pride and fanaticism in them, and flattery and idolatry in their followers, it only follows that thus far the position is a false one, and detrimental to the best interests of all classes affected by it. But while we condemn the fanaticism of Janson, let it ever be remembered to his credit that he led his people out of the formalities of the Lutheran Church, through much persecution, into views of salvation that were to them "glad tidings," and into the land of freedom, and held them, a thousand strong, in bonds of love, faith and Communism, until taken away by the bullet of an assassin.

Janson's place was never really filled. Jacobi, writing from Bishop Hill in 1858, eight years after the death of Janson, says, "They have no head; the people select their preachers and trustees, who are kept in office as long as the majority think proper." They endeavored to make a leader of Berglund, but he soon fell into a secondary position, and Olson had the greater power. The latter made no such claims as Janson did, and never so fully gained the hearts of the people, but he had for years very great influence in the colony, and during those years the Community reached the high water-mark of its prosperity. Many

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

thought, however, that Olson was deceived by Olaf Janson (not a relative of the founder), and led into ways that were dark and contrary to the best interests of the colony; and the enforced introduction of celibacy in the later years, for which Olson was chiefly responsible, was unquestionably one cause of its death.

Theoretically the seven trustees had full charge of the Community's interests, and it was their duty as a body to understand how every thing was going, and to make sure that nothing was done detrimental to the general welfare of the Society; but because this duty on the part of the trustees was neglected, or for other cause, the hustling, impetuous, rash, speculative Olaf Janson soon came to have full control of the financial affairs of the Community. Whether he was intentionally dishonest was a disputed question in Bishop Hill; but that he engaged in unwise speculations was not doubted. Only increased riches came to the colony from its farming and manufacturing industries; but Olaf led them into foreign enterprises—invested their surplus capital in a bank and store and produce-buying agency in the neighboring town of Galva, bought and sold bonds and stocks, operated a coal mine, dealt in city real estate, and took railroad contracts. In many of these ventures he lost money; his bank failed; \$34,000, earned by the sturdy working members on the Air-Line railroad, was a dead loss. In order to cover his losses and continue his speculations he borrowed large sums and mortgaged the real estate of the colony. These things, of course, produced discontent; and yet so implicitly had the mem-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

bers been taught to trust their leaders, that it was long before any one was bold enough to openly call in question the proceedings of Olaf Janson. Such an act on the part of a subordinate member would have been regarded as sinful by the more devout, and rewarded with their disfellowship—a penalty more severe than can be imagined by one who has never lived in a large religious Community, where the members are taught the supreme importance of obeying implicitly the leaders. Finally, when Olson and others of influence were fully convinced that all was not going as it should under Olaf's management, they found he had got beyond their power, and could do as he chose in spite of them. Resolutions were passed by the Community at its annual meeting, and new by-laws were adopted, all in the interest of more conservative management; but Olaf Janson was too shrewd or too unscrupulous for the others; and even after he was deposed from office, in 1860, he managed to secure the appointment of himself and friends as receivers to close up the affairs of the Society, which was finally accomplished in 1862.

But had the financial interests of the Community been rightly managed it could not have existed much longer, in the opinion of many intelligent members, on account of the increasing difficulties experienced with their young people, who, as they grew up and learned something of the world around them, demanded greater freedom in amusement, more varied development, more liberty of thought and action, and more to do with the management of the colony's af-

A COMMUNITY OF SWEDES

fairs. These very aspirations were to the older members evidences of the working of evil influences; and they met them, we will charitably believe, with all the wisdom and grace at their command; but still they failed—failed on the one hand to inspire their youth with their own religious fervor, and on the other hand to give them legitimate freedom and scope. Large numbers of them left the colony for the outside world. This wrung the hearts of the fathers and mothers. It was torture for them to see their children go out without means, and without their own religious faith—besides their going drained the colony of its most vigorous life. “We saw it could not go on so,” the venerable Berglund said to me.

Religious dissensions in the later years became so rampant as to destroy the peace of the Community, and for a time make an end of religious worship. Few persons adhered to Jansonism in its strict sense. Many connected themselves with the Methodist church; others accepted Adventist views; and a few of the older members joined the Shaker Society at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, resolved never to abandon Community life.

These things were more than sufficient to make an end of the Community.

In the final settlement, before distributing shares to the individual members, sufficient property was set aside, as was supposed, to more than cancel all obligations against the colony. The remainder was divided among the members on principles of equality, if not of strict justice. Each adult male and female re-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ceived twenty acres of land or its equivalent value, and the children a less amount proportionate to their ages. No discrimination was made in favor of those who had contributed most to the original fund, or who had been most efficient members of the colony.

This division left all in moderately good circumstances; but, alas! the sins of the trustees, and especially the sins of Olaf Janson in using the common capital in reckless speculation, followed the members. Much of the land in and around Bishop Hill was heavily mortgaged in consequence, and lawsuits against Janson and the other trustees were pending for many years—in fact, were not finally ended till 1879.

It will surprise no one to learn that Communism is at a fearful discount at Bishop Hill; and yet I found those among the inhabitants who still believed it to be the best form of society ever seen in this lower world.

Nordhoff, in his "History of the Communistic Societies," devoted seven pages to the Bishop Hill Community. A chapter on this Society is also contained in the History of Henry County, Ill., published in 1877; and the son of its founder, an editor in Holdrege, Neb., prepared a chapter on the Society which was published in *Svenskarne i Illinois* in 1880; but the "Bishop Hill Colony," by Michael A. Mikkelsen, A. M., published by the Johns Hopkins press of Baltimore, Md., is the most complete history yet published on this interesting social and religious experiment.



ETIENNE CABET.

THE ICARIANS.

"The story of Icaria," writes a scientific student of socialistic experiments, "is indeed a wonderful story, and in one respect it seems to me more wonderful than that of any similar colony, namely, that it endured so long without any dogmatic basis."

Albert Shaw, editor of the *Review of Reviews*, in his interesting work on the Icarian Community, affirms that it is the most typical experiment in rational democratic Communism, and that its history is as superior to that of the great Amana Community in the same State, "for the student of social science, as the history of Greece is superior to that of China for the student of political science." Those who have insisted that Communism is not dependent for success upon religion, nor upon exceptionally able leaders, have instanced Icaria in confirmation of their position. Thirty-three years ago Alcander Longley (who has since broken the record in starting non-religious Communities), after a four-weeks' sojourn at Icaria, wrote exultingly: "Here is proof that neither religion, nor divine inspiration and leadership, nor free criticism, nor the abolition of marriage, are necessary to hold a Community together." And judging from appearances at that time and for many subsequent years, Mr. Longley was right. The Icarians had not only given the world a long-continued experiment in practical Communism, but in doing so they had confronted and overcome obstacles that would have utterly

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

discouraged other than brave hearts devoted to the realization of a glorious ideal. This can be said, however, only of the Spartan band that remained true to principle out of the many thousands that at first were enrolled in the Icarian ranks.

In the beginnings of their socialistic careers there are many points of resemblance between Robert Owen of England and Etienne Cabet of France, the Icarian leader. Both achieved fame before they crossed the Atlantic; both had thousands of followers, and the grandest schemes of social amelioration. Owen pictured the terrestrial paradise he could make if a million dollars were placed at his command; Cabet described the wonders he could accomplish "*wenn ich \$500,000 hatte*" (if he had half a million dollars), with which to erect dwellings and factories on the largest scale; purchase large farms and give them the best culture; establish schools, colleges and universities; build theaters and other places of amusement, surrounding all with elegantly-kept pleasure-grounds, etc., etc. Owen appealed to kings and congresses, world conventions, and "to the industrious and well-disposed of all nations," to aid him in accomplishing the "greatest revolution ever yet made in human society;" Cabet by his great Utopian work "*Le Voyage en Icarie*," his journal *Le Populaire*, and his numerous addresses, attracted the attention of vast multitudes; both selected the new world for their great experiments; both succeeded in founding Communities with a large membership; both failed in practical leadership. But if both achieved fame before they crossed

the Atlantic there was this difference: Owen's celebrity was based on his undoubted success in the practical management of the New Lanark cotton mills; Cabet's on his success as a radical politician and socialist writer.

Born in 1788, Cabet began his political career, when 37 years of age, as a director of a secret political society, called the "Carbonari." In 1830 he was enrolled as a member of an insurrectional committee, and risked his head by signing a proclamation to the people. About the same time he was appointed Attorney-General of Corsica, but lost the position because of his radicalism. In 1831 he was elected to the French Assembly, but, because of his philippics against the French king and ministry, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment or five years' exile. Choosing exile and going to Brussels, he was expelled the country and took refuge in England, where he gave himself to historical studies, and wrote a "Universal History," a "History of England," and a "History of the French Revolution."

"As history at every page reveals disorder and calamity, he sought the cause and the remedy. He saw that the cause was an unsound social organization, and that the remedy must be in a new and better one; and he soon found that such an organization can not contain both opulence and poverty; and hence that it is impossible to establish a true society without community of goods; and he moreover saw that Communism solves perfectly all the social problems; that it is realizable and even easy if the world desires it; that it would result in immense economies; vastly

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

augment production; insure abundance, comfort and happiness to all men. Then he examined all the philosophic works of the immense libraries of London, and discovered with joy and surprise that all the great philosophers of ancient and modern times, with Jesus Christ at their head, admitted Communism to be the most perfect social system.

"It was in this conviction that, on returning to France after five years' absence, he published in 1840 '*Le Voyage en Icarie*,' a work descriptive of an ideal society living in peace and plenty, and in which equality has been substituted for all class distinctions.

"There soon rallied around him the most earnest and devoted citizens in the ranks of the social reformers, to whom the traditions of Communism had been transmitted, and by them ardently preserved. But when later, in *Le Populaire* and numerous pamphlets, Cabet propounded and defended the principles of Communism against all the capitalistic journals of the times, a veritable fire spread over democratic France. History offers no example of a school which so quickly won its place."*

Persecution followed. The Icarian cause encountered the opposition of the government, the priesthood, the courts, the police, that part of the press representing capital and aristocratic privileges.

"These persecutions only increased the number of the Icarian communists. In 1847 there were hundreds of thousands in France, Switzerland, Spain, Germany, England, and other countries.

"Cabet had often said to his friends that the people should be prepared for a communistic life by a long course of education; that its premature and partial realization would be more dangerous than useful.

*E. Peron, in "Brief History of Icarla."

THE ICARIANS

But hunted on all sides, a hundred times challenged to prove the practicability of his system, he resolved to silence his adversaries by the establishment of a vast experimental colony; and in May, 1847, called on his disciples to aid him in this great undertaking.

"The effect of this call was indescribable. Thousands of congratulations came to him from all parts. His scheme was the topic of all the journals. Some supported it, others denounced or ridiculed it, but the greater number favored it."*

Cabet announced that the responses to his call had been so spontaneous and so general that he had "*no doubt of being able to unite more than a million of co-operators.*"

Before deciding on a location for his great enterprise he crossed the English Channel to London and took counsel of Robert Owen, the founder of New Harmony, Indiana. Twenty years previous Owen had planned for a great communistic colony in Texas, and had negotiated with the Mexican government for a tract of land of vast dimensions. Whether he advised Cabet to found his colony in Texas can not be stated, but it seems probable. Texas having been admitted into the Union in 1846 was offering large inducements to immigrants, and many individuals and companies were making the most of the opportunities for speculative purposes. Cabet fell into the hands of the Peters Company of Cincinnati, with whom a most unwise arrangement was made, and on Jan. 17, 1848, announced in *Le Populaire* that after examining different places, northeastern Texas had

*"Brief History of Icaria."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

been selected as having the most advantages as to health, climate and fertility of soil, and that "more than a million acres of land had been secured along the Red River, a beautiful stream, navigable up to our very settlement."

"Thousands of Icarians claimed the honor of being the first colonists. Assisted by a committee appointed by the Paris Icarians, Cabet took all the necessary measures, made all the preparations, selected sixty-nine of his most devoted disciples, all young and vigorous men, able to stand the fatigues and privations which awaited them; and on the 3d of February, 1848, this first vanguard left France for the United States, carrying with them the best wishes and encouragements of hundreds of thousands of Communists. Cabet wrote of this event as follows: 'On Thursday, Feb. 3, 1848, at nine o'clock in the morning, there was accomplished one of the grandest acts in the history of the human race—the advance-guard left Havre to enter the ocean and voyage toward Icaria. These courageous Icarians, standing on the stern-deck of the ship, intoned in unison the farewell chant, '*Partous pour Icarie*,' to which the spectators responded in a thousand cries of '*Au revoir!*'"

"How strange is destiny! Three weeks later the departure of the first Icarians for America would probably not have taken place, and the realization of Icaria might yet be in the distant future, for in those twenty-one days the Republic was proclaimed in Paris! The Icarian school, hitherto united, became divided. Some were in favor of recalling the first colonists, of giving up the idea of emigration, and wholly devoting themselves to the success of the new republic. Others, with a better appreciation of the events, favored Icarian colonization, foreseeing that

THE ICARIANS

no great benefit to the people could be expected from a revolution at the head of which were such men as Lamartine, Ledru Rollin, Marie, Marrast, and other like republicans, whose hostility to all social reforms was notorious. Cabet himself, having been named for the presidency of the new republic, momentarily hesitated as to his course of action. It was for him a terrible ordeal. Meanwhile the advance-guard of Icarians, on arriving at New Orleans toward the end of March, learned that a republic had been proclaimed in France. The most bitter regrets found utterance. The proposition to return to France was made, but did not prevail, and the Icarian pioneers proceeded toward the place selected for their settlement.”*

But instead of reaching it as anticipated, by boat from New Orleans, they had to make a journey of 250 miles from Shreveport through forests, swamps and streams, only aided by three ox-teams for 150 miles. Impeded by sickness, insufficient food, horrible roads, it was nearly two months from the time they reached New Orleans before they set foot in Icaria.

Here they found that, instead of a million acres having been absolutely secured for the colony, only a half section or 320 acres could be had by each man, and then only by building a house upon the same before July 1st. They succeeded in erecting thirty-two log-huts before that day, and therefore could claim possession of thirty-two half-sections, or 10,240 acres instead of one million! Moreover, even this land was not in a solid body, each adjoining half-section and alternate whole section being held by the Peters Land Company.

*A. Sauva in the American Socialist.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Having erected their huts the colonists began to plan for crops that should sustain them for the coming year; but they were utterly ignorant of farming on unbroken prairie sod, and before any crops were planted every man was stricken with malarial fever, of which four men died; another was killed by lightning; and their only physician, Dr. Roveira, became insane.

Under such circumstances what could they do but abandon the settlement, and make their way back to Shreveport and New Orleans?

The second advance-guard of nineteen (it was to have been 1,000 or 1,500) arrived at the colony in the last days of August, and their leader, Favard, wrote to Cabet: "I have not hesitated an instant in favoring the abandonment of the camp, which also seems best to all; many have only awaited our arrival in order to have the assistance which would enable them to get away." This backward march "was one of the most saddening events in Icarian history. For fear of not finding on a single route the necessary supplies for their whole number, they divided into three equal companies, and dragged themselves toward their rendezvous over three different routes. These companies disbanded on the road; sickness prevented several from continuing the march; four of their number died from exertions and privations. The remnants of the first and second vanguard arrived finally at New Orleans toward the end of 1848."*

Here they met fresh comrades from France, four hundred Icarians reaching New Orleans about this

*A. Sauva, in the *American Socialist*.

THE ICARIANS

time, and Cabet himself arriving on the 15th of January, 1849; and here they remained for three months—months of unhappy suspense to all, of discouragements to many, of disaffection to the two hundred who withdrew to fight their individual battles in this country or to return to France. The Texas scheme was abandoned; explorers were sent out to find a new and better location; and it having been learned through them or otherwise that the town of Nauvoo, Ill., had been deserted by the Mormons, 280 followed their leader thither, but not without a loss of twenty by cholera on the Mississippi River while *en route*. By the Mormon exodus the population of Nauvoo had been reduced from fifteen or twenty thousand inhabitants to three or four thousand. Hence houses were in abundance, and the Icarians were soon comfortably established there.

THE NAUVOO COMMUNITY.

At Nauvoo the Icarians prospered. They cultivated a thousand acres of rented land; they established work-shops and mills. They started schools for their children. They printed a newspaper and several pamphlets. They had a central office in Paris, and correspondents in many parts of the world. Their numbers increased to five hundred. They had a theater with Icarian actors; a musical organization with fifty instruments.

The years first succeeding the founding of a Community are generally those of severest trial, and of greatest privation and hardship, but they are also often the years of greatest happiness to the members.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Their novel circumstances, their new and warm friendships, their common aspirations, their zeal for an improved order of society that shall be a blessing, not only to themselves, but to the world, all conspire to make the first beginnings of community life joyous, in spite of the many unfavorable conditions; and this must be emphatically true of the founders of Communities. Their supremest joy is felt, not when their experiment has become a great financial success, and is able to command all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, but in the very midst of its early struggles, when they feel the first thrills of success and of assurance that their new-born will live! Such joy was Cabet's during the first years succeeding the establishment of his followers at Nauvoo. He then saw his Community apparently on the road to pecuniary prosperity, the members harmonious, full of zeal for their new life, and loyally devoted to him as their leader and father. In 1852 he had returned from France fully acquitted by the French courts of the charge of diverting to personal uses funds contributed to the Icarian cause, brought against him by malcontents who left him at New Orleans, and which he had crossed the ocean to confute. In London, while absent on this journey, he was an invited guest at a birthday celebration in honor of Robert Owen, and responded to the toast, "The distinguished Social Reformers from abroad," and he had scarcely landed in New York when, July 8, 1852, he was given a banquet by his American friends and admirers, and delivered an eloquent address, to which I had the pleasure

THE ICARIANS

of listening. Macdonald describes in his manuscript collection the enthusiasm with which Cabet, in an interview then graciously accorded to him, portrayed, in language truly beautiful, his conception of the future of Communism: "The earth would be a fairy-land; the habitations palaces; the labors of the people mere pastimes; and their whole lives pleasant dreams." And it was with such dreams of the future of his own Community, and of his own happiness in connection with it, that he was returning to his Nauvoo home and to the ovation of welcome there awaiting him. To crown his future prospects, a domain of over three thousand acres was soon purchased in Iowa, and pioneers established thereon to prepare it for the great Icarian home of the future, that was to be the wonder and admiration of the world.

Gladly would I be excused from describing the deplorable events that soon ensued, and culminated in 1856 in the expulsion, exile and death of the Icarian leader.

The Icarian colonists on leaving France had willingly agreed to accept Cabet as dictator for ten years, and had renewed this agreement at New Orleans, and again at Nauvoo; but encouraged by their good conduct, and believing that they could be safely entrusted with the full exercise of the elective franchise, in 1850 Cabet voluntarily surrendered his dictatorial powers, and proposed a constitution and a board of six directors, called the "Committee of Gerance," three of whom were to be chosen every six months, and hold

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

office for one year. It was further provided that one of the six directors should be elected separately as president of the Community. Cabet continued to be elected president annually until 1855; in December of which year he proposed that the constitution should be immediately revised so as to permit a four years' presidency, with power to name and remove all the subordinate officers of the Community, claiming that this change was "indispensable for the good government of Icaria, and also to bring back to the observance and practice of its principles those who had departed from them." As the constitution expressly provided for its revision in March of each alternate year, and the next date for its revision was March, 1857, Cabet's proposition for immediate revision was illegal. Nevertheless he insisted upon it, and would hearken to no alternative until after the annual election in February, 1856, had resulted in the choice of J. B. Gerard as president for the ensuing year. Then a compromise was effected, involving the immediate resignation of Gerard, the unanimous election of Cabet, and the postponement of the consideration of his plan of constitutional revision until the next legally-designated time of revision. But the underlying causes of dissension remained, and the struggle was soon renewed with increased animosity.

For the first six months after Cabet's election to the presidency in 1856 a majority of the directors supported him, while a majority of the General Assembly of the Community, to whom the directors were subordinate, opposed him; and when, after the elec-

THE ICARIANS

tion of three directors in August, Cabet had no longer on his side a majority of the directors, there was dire anarchy in Icaria. Cabet and his followers refused to accept the results of the election, and the newly-chosen directors were forcibly installed in office. The conditions of Icaria during the three following months are thus described:

“The whole Cabet party ceased to work at their places in shops, fields and mills. For months the party lines had been drawn every-where. In the assembly the opposing factions had occupied opposite sides of the hall; at meals they had taken separate tables; the little children at school had become partisans. Now the majority decided that those who would not work should not eat. The new Gerance assigned every individual his work, and gave notice that those who absented themselves from labor would be cut off from rations after August 13th.”*

Finally, Cabet and his minority followers petitioned the State legislature to repeal the act by which the Community was incorporated, seemingly determined to ruin if they could not rule. Then formal charges were preferred against Cabet, which, the record says, “were sustained by unanimous vote (that is, of the majority acting separately), and he was expelled from membership.”† Expelled from the Community he had founded, to which he had consecrated all his powers; yea, his very life, and by the vote of all, save the faithful 170 who adhered to him through every trial and departed with him from Nauvoo to

*“Icaria, A Chapter in the History of Communism,” by Albert Shaw, Ph.D.

†Ibid.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

found another Community! What is there more tragic in the history of Communism? Four weeks from his expulsion he and his loyal disciples arrived in St. Louis, and a week thereafter he was dead.

Even those who most bitterly opposed Cabet at Nauvoo were afterwards ready to excuse what they were unable to justify in his course. "The most sensible members of the two parties," says the author of "Brief History of Icaria," "recognize to-day that there were faults on both sides." Cabet's endeavor to illegally set aside the constitution he had given his people, and the measures to which he resorted to re-invest himself with dictatorial powers, cannot be defended; but we may charitably suppose that he had fully persuaded himself that the changes he sought were essential to Icaria's best interests. He was a reformer as well as a socialist, and sought improvement in the habits and character of his community members. I read his paper published at Nauvoo, and recall his earnest appeals to them to emancipate themselves from tobacco thralldom and other debasing habits; and it is quite probable that the resistance he met in such efforts convinced him that his people were not yet prepared for the democracy he had given them, and that he was justified in the use of extreme measures to regain the power he had voluntarily relinquished.

THE CHELTENHAM COMMUNITY.

The faithful minority who followed their leader to St. Louis after his expulsion from Nauvoo were overwhelmed with sorrow at his death (one of their num-

THE ICARIANS

ber even committing suicide in his extremity of grief), and resolved to honor his memory and principles by devoting themselves with renewed zeal to the work of Communism. They arrived in St. Louis with very limited means, and without definite plans, but expecting to eventually locate on some large estate. Meanwhile they made themselves comfortable in three large houses. Many of their mechanics found employment in the city, and ere long they were able to publish the *Revue Icarienne*. In one of its early issues is found these interesting statements: that their children were sent to the public school; that adult classes of the community members met semi-weekly for the study of the English language; that a meeting for Christian instruction was held on Sundays; that they had musical and theatrical entertainments; that their large *Salle de Reunion* was furnished with French, American and German papers; and that they had excluded tobacco in all its forms from their midst. "Those," it says, "in whom the habit has been long standing, the elderly people even, have sacrificed it to the common cause. We have taken the resolution to break with such a factitious appetite, and we have kept it."

Their efforts to secure a suitable domain for the Community were unsuccessful; and in the spring of 1858 they purchased for \$25,000 twenty-eight acres of land six miles from St. Louis, known as the Cheltenham estate, on which there were half a dozen log-huts and one stone-house of such dimensions that it would shelter nearly all the members. Being so near

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

St. Louis, their mechanics could work at their trades in the city, when their services were not required on the estate, but the place proved to be unhealthy, and had other serious drawbacks. Still the Community made the best of their circumstances, and was soon comparatively prosperous. Its press was busy in printing its paper, pamphlets and books. In France it was regarded as the true Icarian Community, and from there received both men and means. It had its own schools, including a kindergarten for the little ones, its musical organization, its theater, and its assembly meetings for select readings, lectures, and other exercises, and made some progress in paying its indebtedness.

But, alas, scarcely had a year elapsed after they had taken possession of their Cheltenham home before the demon of division asserted itself. In discussions over their constitution two parties were developed, the larger number favoring the concentration of power in one person, after the example of their revered Cabot, while a smaller number insisted strenuously on a more democratic form of government; and the resulting strife was so intense that forty-two of the minority left Cheltenham; and according to a paper prepared for Mr. Shaw by A. Sauva (who was president of the Community at the time of its dissolution) this proved the death-blow to Cheltenham:

“From the date of this withdrawal the Community declined in every way. Many of the most intelligent members, many of the most skillful craftsmen, were among those who withdrew, and the loss was irreparable. The depleted Society struggled heroically for

THE ICARIANS

five years longer, in spite of a series of untoward events which seemed to be in conspiracy to crush it down; and in 1864 there remained only eight men, seven women and some children. The mortgagee pressed for payment, and threatened to take the property. Funds were exhausted, and there were no available sources of revenue. The propaganda had ceased, and no aid came from France. A last effort was still made. Two members were sent to Nebraska to find an eligible location on the public lands; but on their return the *morale* was so weakened, and the funds requisite to accomplish the removal were so completely lacking, that the undertaking had to be abandoned."

Then came the end.

THE FIRST IOWA COMMUNITY.

The Nauvoo majority of about 250 members had experiences hardly more favorable than the Cheltenham Community. Their numbers were rapidly diminished by secessions; their businesses became less prosperous; their debts increased; and their affairs were soon in such a plight that in 1857 they concluded to place all their Nauvoo property in the hands of assignees for the benefit of their creditors, and concentrate their members in the Iowa colony. This was not fully accomplished until 1860, and then their prospects were extremely discouraging. They were in a new and almost uninhabited region; their land was heavily encumbered, the mortgage drawing interest at ten per cent.; their accommodations were most primitive; their numbers reduced in 1863 to thirty-five, whose labors were exhausting and unremunerative; and from all accounts the Iowa settlement would

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

have ended like the Texas, the Cheltenham and Nauvoo Communities had not the civil war supervened. This enhanced the value of land and its products. The Icarians had the good luck and wisdom to sell 2,000 acres for \$10,000, and paid off their land-debt save \$5,500. Thenceforth their material conditions gradually and surely improved. Their members increased, their farm was better stocked; they bought back part of the land they had sold; they erected new houses, planted orchards and vineyards, and otherwise prepared for a future of greater comfort than had been their lot hitherto; and for several years they enjoyed a good degree of internal harmony—the first serious interruption of it occurring early in 1876, which had, however, terminated amicably. When the author visited Icaria in August of that year and wrote the following letter concord reigned, although strong differences of opinion as to matters of practical policy occasionally found expression among the members:

“To the *American Socialist*:

“A dozen small white cottages arranged on the sides of a parallelogram; a larger central building, containing a unitary kitchen and a common dining-hall, which is also used as an assembly-room and for community amusements, including an occasional dance or theatrical presentation; a unitary bake-room and laundry near at hand; numerous log-cabins, also within easy reach of the central building—forcible reminders of the early poverty and hardships of this people; a small dairy-house near the thatched stable to the south; barns for the horses and sheep to the north; all these buildings on the bluff rising from the valley of the Nodaway river, and surrounded by the

THE ICARIANS

community domain of over two thousand acres of fertile land, of which seven hundred have been cultivated, and including, with some timber-land, extensive meadows and pastures, over which range 600 sheep and 140 head of cattle—the cultivated part having the present season 5 acres of potatoes, 5 acres of sorghum, 100 of wheat, 250 of corn, 1½ of strawberries, besides vineyards, orchards, etc.; behold the present external aspects of Icaria.

“At the sound of the bell all direct their footsteps to the central building; and should you enter at meal-time you would see the entire Community, now numbering seventy-five, seated at the oblong and circular tables, as lively and sociable as French people know how to be. Over the entrance-door you would notice in large letters the word ‘Equality,’ and directly opposite the word ‘Liberty,’ and at one end of the room the suggestive ‘1776-1876.’ You would notice also that upon the table there is a great abundance of substantial food, but that every thing is plain.

“Should you enter the same building at evening you might find most of the members assembled, some to dance, some to converse, some to sing their songs of equality and fraternity. Or should your call be on a Sunday afternoon, as was my good fortune, you might hear selections from the writings of their great apostle, Etienne Cabet, or recitals by the young, or songs, perchance, which would stir your socialistic enthusiasm. One of those I heard had this refrain:

*Travailleurs de la grande cause,
Soyons fiers de notre destin;
L'egoïste seul se repose,
Travaillons pour le genre humain.*

“A recital by a maiden of fifteen was very effective. She put great expression into the words:

*Mes freres, Il est temps que les haïnes s'oublient;
Que sous un seul drapeau les peuples se rallient;
Le chemin du salut va pour nous s'aplanir.*

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

*La grande liberte que l'Humanite reve,
Comme un nouveau soleil, radieuse, se leve,
Sur l'horizon de l'avenir.*

"It is indeed time that hatreds were forgotten and that all people rallied under a single flag. Shall that flag be Communism? The Icarians will enthusiastically answer, 'Yes;' and yet should one inquire whether all hatreds are forgotten in Icaria itself, would the reply be also 'Yes?'"

"Icaria has existed for more than a quarter of a century. It has overcome the hardships and endured the privations inseparably connected with the upbuilding of a Community in a new country and without capital. It commenced in poverty. It now has \$60,000 in real and personal property, encumbered only with a debt of about \$4,000. Its numbers are more than double what they were eight or ten years ago. It is building every year additional houses for the better accommodation of its members. It is setting out orchards and vineyards, and beginning the cultivation of small fruits. It is talking about radical improvements as though it expected to realize them in the near future. It is anticipating an increase in numbers, and lately received four families; and although at present it offers but limited inducements to enlarged membership, having no facilities for a higher education or esthetic culture, and being destitute of some of the comforts and many of the conveniences of communal life, yet Icaria presents great attractions for those whose watchwords are Equality, Liberty, Fraternity.

"The experiment here is an attempt to form a prosperous Community without religion, or perhaps I should express the Icarian idea better by saying without Christ and theological dogmas. If it succeeds the Icarians will be entitled to the plaudits of the world. Building a Community is like building a house of brick or stone—the better the mortar the

THE ICARIANS

stronger the walls. It has been demonstrated that with a strong religious afflatus a Community may be constructed that will endure for more than a century. The Icarians are confident that the principles of equality, liberty and fraternity properly combined will form a mortar suitable for use in erecting socialistic structures of the most colossal proportions.

Nous verrons.

“One of the most vital questions involved in successful communism is this: How should individual liberty and subordination to the central power of a Community stand related to each other? The principle of subordination may be so magnified as to seriously interfere with the proper development of the individual members, and, on the other hand, individualism may assert its claims so strongly as to endanger the governmental power of the Community. If the Inspirationists, Harmonists, Shakers and other religious Communists stand at one extreme in this, the Icarians are at the other. The true mean will be discovered when a way is found to secure obedience to the central principle of the organization, and at the same time make the individual free to develop, fully and naturally, all the powers with which he is created.

“One cannot withhold his admiration from the little band at Icaria—a mere remnant of the army assembled at Nauvoo under Cabet; and yet they are apparently as full of courage and as enthusiastically devoted to Communism as they would have been had their pathway been strewn with roses instead of beset with thorns.”

Additional information respecting the conditions and regulations of the Icarian Community, prior to its severance into two distinct organizations, will be

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

found in the following answers to questions addressed to President Sauva in 1877:

“The present population of Icaria is eighty-three.”

“We have on hand fifty applications for membership.”

“The past year seventeen members have been definitely received, and three provisionally.”

“An applicant must first pass a novitiate of six months, and may then be definitely admitted on the concurrent vote of three-fourths of the members entitled to vote.”

“It is both our duty and our interest to desire a large increase of members, but our accommodations and the difficulty of finding suitable material for membership have prevented a rapid growth.”

“Besides a saw- and grist-mill run by steam-power, we rely upon the cultivation of our land and the increase of our herds and flocks for our income.”

“We have 2,150 acres of land, of which 700 are now under cultivation; 400 are covered with timber; the rest is prairie pasture.”

“We have between 30 and 40 horses, 140 head of cattle, and 600 sheep.”

“Our system, as you say, contemplates entire communism of goods, which we have thus far only imperfectly realized; but whatever departure there may be from principle in our practice is constantly tending to disappear. No money is furnished to members for their private use.”

“Our system is a pure democracy, and we experience no difficulty in its application.”

“Our officers are elected to execute the decisions of the General Assembly or legislative body, and have no other power.”

“The officers of the Icarian Community are: a Director of Agriculture, a Director of Industry, a Di-

THE ICARIANS

rector of Clothing and of Lodging; a Secretary, Treasurer and President. They are elected annually on the 3d of February, by the simple majority of members, and hold their positions always subject to the pleasure of the Community."

"Marriage is obligatory here; that is to say, celibacy is considered an anomalous condition, contrary to nature, to be tolerated only when the number of members is so limited as to prevent the celibates, men and women, from readily finding suitable mates."

"Transgressions of the principles, laws and regulations of the Community are punished by public censure, by deprivation of civil rights, or by the exclusion of the transgressors, according to the gravity of the offenses."

"The occupations of members are determined by individual preferences and by the requirements of labor."

"Women take part in the deliberations of the assembly; they are at liberty to make propositions, and to discuss those made by others; they can offer their opinion and counsel, but are not permitted to vote."

"You are perfectly right in supposing that we elevate the principle of Communism, and especially the principle of fraternity, into the place of religion; but Christianity in its primitive purity is held with us in great esteem; and of personal opinion in matters of religion there is in Icaria the greatest tolerance, provided its expression does not result in trouble and disorder to the Community."

The statement of President Sauva, that there had been no difficulty in the practical application of the Icarian system of pure democracy, conveys an idea of harmony that is not easily reconciled with the facts. At the time his statement was given, and for

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

sometime previously, there had been a growing tendency toward the formation of two antagonistic parties in Icaria. The harmony resulting from the compromise measures adopted in 1876 was superficial and illusory; and an irreparable breach was soon formed between the two parties; one of which was cautious, prudent, and averse to radical changes, preferring to "hasten slowly" as in the past; while the other considered that the time had arrived for making many improvements in the practical life of the Community, for multiplying its industries, improving its educational conditions, giving the ballot to *les Icarieuses*, etc. The first included mainly the older members of the Community, the second many of the young men and women who had grown up in the Community, recently-received members and others; and though the latter party comprised a numerical majority of the members it only included a minority of voters; the Icarian constitution prescribing that only males above twenty years of age should be permitted to cast the ballot.

The party of reform, having made several propositions to amend the constitution which were rejected by the General Assembly, finally proposed terms of separation, in which they asked that a division of the land and other property be made, giving an equal share to each man, woman and child, and that thenceforth the Community be carried on in two distinct branches, each managing its affairs in its own way.

This proposition was also rejected, and the struggle went on with increasing bitterness on both sides. This internecine strife was all the more deplorable be-

THE ICARIANS

cause both parties were zealous for Communism. The irreconcilable differences were over questions of practical policy. Should Icaria be rent in twain, each part would become a separate Community under the Icarian banner.

The friends of Icaria every-where deplored the difficulties threatening its very existence, and expressions of sympathy and counsel were abundant; but nothing availed to restore harmony. The so-called "Young Party" were fully persuaded that they could "no longer live in peace and harmony with the old people"—the fathers and founders of the Community, who had given their lives and labors of mind and body to its welfare—and so the matter was taken to the Adams County Court of Iowa, which, "at the request of the minority (or 'Young Party') declared on the 17th of August, 1878, the forfeiture of the charter of the Icarian Community," on the ground that, having been incorporated as an agricultural institution, it had exceeded its chartered privileges in engaging in manufacturing businesses. Three trustees were appointed by the court to settle up the affairs of the Community, who, by consent of the Court and all interested parties, were a few months later replaced by three arbitrators selected by the Icarians themselves from among their neighbors.

The work of the arbitrators was lightened by their wisely adopting the following basis of division, suggested by the members of the "Young Party" and accepted by all as satisfactory and just, viz., that "the years of service in the corporation should be taken as

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

a basis for the division of the estate"—such service to be reckoned from the age of sixteen years, and no discrimination to be made in this regard between the sexes. The arbitrators concluded their labors Feb. 25th, 1879, and thus ended the third Icarian Community.

Two new Communities were at once founded by the members of the old organization—the so-called "Young Party" or Separatists taking the old name, "Icarian Community," and occupying the old site, for which they paid a bonus of \$1,500; while the remaining and mostly older members, calling themselves the "New Icarian Community," located on grounds one mile southeast and near the Nodaway river.

Tracing separately the fortunes of these two organizations, we find that

THE COMMUNITY OF THE YOUNG PARTY

began their independent career with words and deeds exciting widespread interest and expectation. Its charter of incorporation, granted on the 16th of April, 1879, authorized a capital stock of \$100,000, which might be increased from time to time until it amounted to \$1,000,000; and it provided for the carrying on of "all kinds of agriculture, horticulture, stock-raising, mechanical arts of every kind and nature, milling, manufacturing in all its departments, and the establishing and building of towns, villages, colonies, schools and colleges, also the developing of the fine arts, and all kinds of commerce."

On the 28th of the same month they executed and placed on record in the county clerk's office an "Act

THE ICARIANS

of Donation" to their Community of all the property awarded to them by the arbitrators, "the same to be held by the said corporation and their successors forever, never to be divided between the individual members of said corporation under any circumstances whatever;" . . . and in case of the dissolution of said corporation "shall go to any number of Icarians who may re-organize" to carry out the objects of the said donation.

On the following 8th of October they adopted an elaborate constitution, extending the right of suffrage to women, abolishing the presidency, and placing the executive government of the Community in the hands of four trustees, the legislative power being held and exercised by the General Assembly which included all incorporated members twenty years of age; approving of monogamic marriage, and disapproving of celibacy as a transgression of natural laws; affirming the relation of Icarianism to general socialism in all nations; formulating the Icarian creed according to rationalism—in other words, rejecting all belief in an overruling Providence; and affirming it to be a primal object of the Community to extend its principles, and to this end setting aside a certain proportion of the income and instituting a committee of propagandism. This committee immediately began active operations. It published a paper, *La Jeune Icarie*, a pamphlet giving a "Brief History of Icaria," and the "Constitution, Laws and Regulations of the Icarian Community." The membership of the Community was nearly doubled in a few months, and it was announced that it would shortly reach 200 if it were practicable to ad-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

mit all applicants. Nor was the enterprise of the Community limited to propagandism. New industries were established; improved methods of agriculture and stock-raising adopted; new zeal enthused the laborers; and all things for a time had an encouraging aspect. But it soon became evident that the centrifugal power of the new organization was stronger than the centripetal, and hence ensued disintegration. Some returned to individualism; some talked of founding an Icarian colony in Florida; and several members went to California, including Adam Dehay and Pierre and Jules Leroux (sons of Jules Leroux, a French exile of 1848, and editor and publisher of *L'Etoile des Pauvres et des Suffrants*), and in September, 1881, purchased the Bluxome Ranch of 885 acres in Cloverdale, Sonoma County, eighteen miles from San Francisco, described as "naturally an earthly Eden," "transcendent in its quiet, peaceful beauty." Dehay having been the largest contributor to the purchase-fund, and having the full confidence of his associates, held the title-deed to the property, and for three years it was carried on without definite organization among the owners of the ranch and their families, though they were called the Cloverdale Community. At the end of that time the negotiations with the Icarian Separatists at Corning, Iowa, having been meantime completed, a formal, definite partnership was entered into between the latter and the Cloverdale members, thus forming the Icaria-Speranza* Community. Its objects, princi-

*"Speranza" was joined to "Icaria" in the name of the new Community at the instance of Pierre and Jules Leroux, and in honor of their uncle, Pierre Leroux, author of a Utopian romance, entitled "Esperanza."

THE ICARIANS

ples, and regulations were elaborately set forth in sixty-two articles; and it was announced in *The Altruist* that the new Community had "52 members, all French, 855 acres of land, and \$54,000 of net capital." Shaw's "Icaria," published in 1884, said: "The material prospects of Icaria-Speranza are decidedly good. The Community begins with an aggregate capital of about \$60,000. Besides its fruit-culture and wine business, it will engage in the breeding of blooded livestock, and will have good expectations of a bountiful income after a season or two of preparation. The combined membership at present is fifty-two."

Still the combination of the two Communities was never perfected. No property was transferred by the Iowa Community to the Community at Cloverdale, and besides Alexis Marchand only a single family—the head of which later returned to Iowa, and with others brought suit against Peron and Fugier, who held the property there as trustees for the Community, with instructions to sell it and transfer men and means to California as per agreement, and who, it was believed, were using the same for speculative, personal purposes. The trustees were eventually dispossessed, the property sold at a great sacrifice, and the net proceeds, after paying the expenses of litigation and other claims, divided among the Iowa members (the agreement between them and the Cloverdale people having meanwhile been annulled), and thus ended in 1887 the fourth Icarian Community.

As soon as the Cloverdale members of the Icaria-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

Speranza Community were convinced that neither members nor property were likely to come to them from the Iowa branch of the Community they became disheartened, and concluded to divide their property among the resident members. This was effected without litigation or loss. But had the union been perfected between the two branches of the Icaria-Speranza Community, the chances of an early death would have been favorable, since its constitution permitted personal ownership of property, and provided for its increase by dividing the annual profits of the Community into two equal parts—one of which increased the common property, and the other the individual property of the members, subject to its withdrawal in case of their subsequent departure from the Community. It further provided for the payment of a labor premium, the amount to be proportioned to the hours of labor given the Community. As no government can long exist half-slave and half-free, so no Community can long exist which is half communistic and half individualistic in its property-holding. Its communism will increase and sweep away its individualism, or its individualism, as is the more likely, will override and obliterate its communism. If there must be individual holding of property in a Community, it is better to reorganize into a joint-stock or co-operative society, and give up the attempt to drive such an ill-matched pair as Communism and personal ownership.

Having thus briefly traced the fortunes of the Icarian Separatists or Young Party in their Iowa and

THE ICARIANS

California colonies till they disappeared in the vortex of individualism, it remains to speak of the more conservative Icarians, who after the great division of 1879 reorganized as a partnership* under the name of the

NEW ICARIAN COMMUNITY,

and receiving, as already mentioned, a bonus of \$1,500 for the old Community site, selected a new one near the Nodaway river. "There," says Shaw, "with a patience and courage which enemies could but respect, they took up the broken threads of community life, and quietly restored the order of their social economy." Their village was arranged very much like the old one—the large new building, used as a dining-hall and also as an assembly-room, being centrally located, and four cottages on either side of the same, which were removed from the old village. The new village was soon surrounded with orchards, vineyards and gardens. Its share of the combined library was a thousand volumes, including many valuable historical, scientific and literary works, mainly in the French language. In 1883 it had thirty-four members—a small number, and yet a little world of peace, comfort and prosperity; but their numbers being reduced, and their ablest men averse to carrying the responsibilities of office, at the end of sixteen years they concluded to divide their common property and disband as a Community. The following letters describe the last hours:

From Mrs. E. F. Bettannier in The Altruist.

Corning, Iowa, Apr., 1895.

Yes, the Icarian Community is dissolved. I must

*Partnership was preferred by this and the Icaria-Speranza Community, because it was thought to leave them freer from State supervision than other forms of organization.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

say that I regret very much that we have given up the communistic life, but there were so few of us left it was not much different from the selfish world surrounding us. The Community was dissolved Feb. 16th, by a unanimous vote of the members. The whole property is in the hands of a receiver, and every thing will be sold as soon as possible, and an equitable settlement will be made to all parties interested.

From Ex-President A. A. Marchand.

Columbus, Ga., Mar. 23, 1897.

WM. A. HINDS:

Dear Sir: Your letter is received. Since you visited Icaria our Community has had great changes. The Separatists remained at the old place where you visited us, and we were obliged to move on to new grounds one mile southeast, and began with every thing new. We succeeded well enough materially, and brought every thing into good condition. We admitted some new members, but part of our number withdrew; and in 1895, after our election of directors, the one chosen president (E. F. Bettannier) declined to serve. It was proposed that there should be a new election, and that I should be president. I declined to serve on account of my age, being then 81 years old; and no other one being proposed the election failed. Then followed several meetings, in which the situation was fully discussed, and it was finally unanimously concluded that the New Icarian Community should be dissolved, and all its property be divided among the members according to our contract. On application to the Court of Adams County, Iowa, E. F. Bettannier was appointed Receiver. I came here in March of the same year, 1895, hoping to spend my remaining days in peace in the family of near and dear friends. Yours very truly, A. A. Marchand.*

*Secretary and Treasurer of the Icarian advance-guard of 1848, for many years editor of the Icarian paper, many times elected President of the Icarian Community, and ever prominent in Icarian affairs.



THE LAST ICARIAN GROUP.

THE ICARIANS

Under date of March 10, 1901, receiver Bettanier wrote to the author that all matters placed in his hands as receiver for Icaria had been adjusted to the general satisfaction of the interested parties, to whom he had been able to make a larger distribution than was at first expected.

There were at the time of the dissolution of this branch of the Icarian Community twenty-one members, and sufficient property, the receiver informs me, to place all the older members in comfortable circumstances, and, best of all, harmony and good-will and appreciation of Communism prevailed to the last hour. The division of the property was made as provided in the contract of May 1st, 1878, viz., after all debts and claims of outside parties were adjusted and paid, the founders and all who signed the contract at the time of its adoption, and all who subsequently joined the Community and contributed to its property, were to be paid in money or its equivalent the amount shown by the records to have been so contributed by them; the balance of the property was to be divided among all the members *pro-rata* according to their time of service, reckoning from their signing of the contract—the time of children born in the Community, and all those who entered as minors, to be reckoned from the day when they attained their majority; but minor orphans, whatever their age, were to be reckoned as having given ten years of service in making the division of property.

Thus terminated, after 47 years of propagandism and effort, the fifth (or, if we include the Texas and

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

California colonies, the seventh) and last of the Icarian Communities.

If the story of Icaria is, as affirmed by the scientific student quoted at the beginning of this sketch, "more wonderful than that of any similar colony, in that it endured so long without any dogmatic basis," and if, as affirmed by the editor of the *Review of Reviews*, "it is the most typical experiment in rational democratic Communism," it must be admitted, on the other hand, that the story is one of great suffering and hardship, of internecine struggles, of almost fruitless labors, of annihilated hopes; and that the results of the Icarian experiments, while not proving the impracticability of rational democratic Communism, yet leave the *onus probandi* still resting on those who claim that it is practicable. And it yet remains to be shown that other things than religion (meaning thereby a life with power to bind fast in unity) can supply the harmony and permanency requisite to successful communism. In the words with which Mr. Noyes so appropriately closes his *History of American Socialisms*: "The lists are open. We promise all things to agreement, let it come as it may. If paganism or infidelity or nothingarianism can produce the required agreement, it will win the prize; but, on the other hand, if it shall turn out, in this great olympic of the 19th century, that Christianity alone has the harmonizing power necessary to successful association, then Christianity will at last win its crown."

SECOND ADVENTIST COMMUNITIES.

CELESTA.

It would be interesting to know how many communistic Societies have been based upon the doctrine of Christ's Second Advent. That was the foundation principle of Shakerism, Ann Lee believing herself to be the personification of Christ in his second appearance; and Eric Janson, founder of the Bishop Hill Community, had a similar idea regarding himself. That, too, was the basic idea of the Harmonists, their founder, George Rapp, believing that he would live to present his disciples to the Lord at his coming. Jemima Wilkinson also believed that she was commissioned of God to build a church "which should share with her the blessings of the first resurrection," and that she "was invested with the power of Jesus Christ till he should come the second time." The founder of the Adonai-Shomo Community was a Second Adventist; and Peter Armstrong's Celesta was in the fullest sense a Second-Adventist Community. Its founder was a Second-Adventist preacher and writer; the actual and prospective members were Second Adventists; the appeals sent forth in its behalf were based on Second-Adventist doctrines, and the responses came from Second-Adventist believers. These appeals, published in the Second-Adventist *World's Crisis*, assumed that the prophetic periods relating to Christ's Second Coming ended in 1843, and that any succeeding years were but the tarrying of the vision, that the Lord's people might separate from the world, "gather together in the wilderness, unite in a body of

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

common interest, raise the gathering standard of love on the mountain"—in short, prepare themselves for the Lord's coming; for he only waited for their preparation; he might surprise them at any moment, and he might delay his coming for forty years or any part thereof; but in any case it was the supreme duty of all who would be "with Christ at his appearing" to separate themselves from the world with all its affections and lusts, and live godly lives. Thus, and thus only, could they fill their lamps with oil, and be in readiness for the word, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him!" Armstrong appears also to have convinced himself that the 144,000 were to be literally gathered together by themselves to await the Lord's coming; and having reached this conclusion he soon persuaded himself that it was his mission to select a place for this grand gathering of the saints.

In giving the preference to a secluded vale near the top of the Alleghany mountains in Sullivan County, Penn., he was forbidden, he says, by "an unaccountable impression of some great result to seek a more eligible situation." "If it were necessary," says one who lived for some months at Celesta, "for God's people to hide from the world to prepare for heaven, I know of no more secret place than the one chosen by Armstrong. The pathway to it was through the roughest, stoniest, woodiest country that I ever saw. The last ten miles had no habitation of man to relieve the wildness and desolation of the scene. Here Armstrong bought 2,500 acres of land for his Celesta; and

CELESTA COMMUNITY

here the incessant toil for eleven years of himself and family had cleared and tilled a hundred acres, and erected four frame dwelling-houses, two barns, a saw-mill, and several minor buildings. It cost about forty dollars an acre to clear the land; and it was worth about five dollars an acre after it was cleared."

But such drawbacks produced no discouragement in the heart of our Adventist pioneer. Acknowledging that he could not realize the taxes on his property by renting it, and could not sell it for a tenth of its cost, yet "the wealth of the world," he declared, "could not purchase our interest here. God," he continued, "can supply our wants in the mountain wilderness as well as in the fat valleys; and we have no doubt our bread will be certain, and our water sure, even should our number reach 144,000."

The land purchased in this "forbidden spot" was subsequently deeded by Armstrong and wife to Almighty God, that it might "be subjected to bargain and sale by man's cupidity no more forever."* Armstrong also, "as representing God's people worshipping at Celesta," addressed a petition to the Pennsylvania legislature, setting forth that they "had resolved to peaceably retire from the entanglements of the outside world, and had, in the name of the omnipotent Jehovah, renounced all allegiance to earthly governments," and purposed, "in the face of an unbelieving

*In 1893 there appeared in the *Manhattan Bulletin* a paragraph saying that this deed was placed on record at the county seat of Sullivan county Aug. 4, 1864, that for many years no taxes were paid on the land, which was finally sold to satisfy the claims of the county and commonwealth, and that Harry Armstrong, son of the couple who originally executed this remarkable deed, was the purchaser.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

world, to gather and make a wilderness preparation for the true Canaan and everlasting rest, which shall be brought to us at the revelation of our glorified King," and asking "that the people of Celesta, now and henceforth, be considered peaceable aliens and religious wilderness-exiles from the rest of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and fit subjects for exemption from the war service." One of the Celestans, having been drafted into the United States service in 1863, a memorial addressed to President Lincoln, setting forth their conscientious scruples against engaging in war, caused his release upon parole, "until directed to appear by the War Department," which direction never came.

Armstrong made his purchase and original settlement in 1852. For nine years he and wife and seven children labored alone in clearing the land and making habitations. At the end of that time there came a Mr. Russell, and in 1863 and '4 several others joined the colony, now a recognized Community, all the members having a common interest in every thing on the place. From those living at Celesta at this later period it is learned that the actual number of members did not much exceed twenty; but had the experiment continued, many scores, perhaps hundreds, would have found their way to this Zion in the wilderness. Three thousand copies of Armstrong's paper, *The Day-Star of Zion*, were printed at Celesta, and the letters it contains from its subscribers and readers, and from the Celestans themselves, show how great and wide-spread was the interest in this colony on the mountains. One of the Celestan letters says,

CELESTA COMMUNITY

“a hundred letters a week are coming from every point of the compass, bringing testimony from Maine to Oregon, that the day of Zion’s deliverance is dawning; many pilgrims are coming, and some have arrived.” In another letter, dating from Celesta, the writer entreats all his outside friends who would “escape God’s judgments to forsake the world and flee to the mountains; neither look back, but remember Lot’s wife. The objection against the feasibility of 144,000 subsisting here (the writer affirms) is a libel on God’s power, and an ignoring of past examples. If this be God’s work there need be no fear; if it is not it will soon fall of its own weight.”

And soon it did fall. The writer of the passage last quoted thus records it: “We had been at Celesta but a few weeks when we began to see things in Mr. Armstrong that seemed fanatical. Still we shut our eyes to imperfections as long as possible. Finally his fanaticism so forced itself upon us that we were compelled to abandon the place. First one left, and then another; but I waited four months before my last hope left me. All had then either left or were preparing to leave except several new arrivals, who of course had to learn for themselves the facts in the case. Hundreds of persons were preparing to sell their homes at a sacrifice and come to Celesta; and as a matter of humanity some of the dissatisfied members wrote articles describing the true state of things, which were published in Boston, New York and Battle Creek Adventist papers, and resulted in effectually deterring the rush into the wilderness; and finally Mr. Arm-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

strong had to abandon the place, and with his family went to Philadelphia. This was purely an Adventist movement; and I know from the large number of letters I read, that the infection was very general among all the Adventist sects. Its history adds another fact to prove that there is in every religious movement that which draws the heart to Communism."

Were my object to present Communism only in its most favorable aspects, I would not refer to such experiments as Celesta, which are destitute of nearly every thing belonging to a well-organized and successful Community. The only beneficial use their records can serve is as danger-signals to warn future socialistic travelers and experimenters.

I learn nothing to the discredit of Armstrong's moral character. Those who took part in his experiment, and had good opportunities of acquainting themselves with his motives and purposes, speak of him as a sincere, earnest, well-meaning man, who fully believed in his mission to gather together the elect at Celesta. Such men are found in general society, and especially in religious organizations, and are worthy of our respect; but when the mission idea strikes one of them, and like Theudas of old he "gives himself out to be somebody," then "Beware of this man!" should be written in conspicuous letters across his back. The chances are that, however prudent and level-headed he may have been previously, fanaticism in a mild or virulent form will hereafter rule him, and render him an unsafe leader; but however unsafe, fanatical, wild and foolish the conduct and

CELESTA COMMUNITY

principles of such a "somebody" may become, there are always to be found those who will follow and sustain him, and often, as at Celesta, intelligent, educated people of good character. There doubtless have been scores of such would-be leaders in this country since Conrad Beissel founded his Community, and a considerable number, to my personal knowledge, within the last half century. Little harm would result if these mission-crankers would content themselves with words, and not disturb the life-careers of others; but as a rule they are fully persuaded that it is a part of their divinely-appointed work to found Communities, and so jeopardize the life-interests of others. "Blind guides" are they; and only the pit of failure awaits them and their victims.

ADONAI-SHOMO.

Taking the cars at Boston, and riding westward eighty-two miles over the Hoosac Tunnel Route, you reach the thrifty city of Athol; thence going four miles in a southerly direction you find yourself in the borders of Petersham, and at the highest point of cultivated land in Massachusetts, near and in full view of a large, handsome Mansard-roofed dwelling, once the home of the Adonai-Shomo* Community, whose origin was thus succinctly given in the *American Socialist* of 1877 by H. F. Hager:

"At the time of the Millerite excitement in 1843, among many other believers in the immediate appear-

*Hebrew words signifying "The Lord, the Spirit, is there."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ing of Christ, was a remarkable Quaker from New Bedford, Mass., named Frederick T. Howland. He embraced with joy and ardor the new faith, and for six years traveled the country, declaring, after the time set by Miller was past, that there was a dispensation of the Holy Spirit preparing the world for the Second Advent of Christ. Finally he became acquainted with some people at Worcester who were like-minded with himself. In 1855, attending a camp-meeting at Groton, the Holy Ghost descended upon him, as he believed, and he was enabled to speak with tongues and prophesy. In 1861, having been joined in the meantime by eight or ten others, and being 'moved by the Spirit' to form an association for living together, Howland and his followers settled at Leonard Fuller's residence in Athol. In 1864 they removed to the adjoining town of Petersham."

A letter written a year later by Asa F. Richards, then President of the Adonai-Shomo, contained the following statement of principles and reference to its corporate charter :

"The distinguishing principles of our Community are: the Jesus, the mystery of Christ, and belief in the times of restitution of all things, of which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began, and that the elect by grace through said faith will attain to the Melchisedec priesthood, which is after the power of an endless life. All goods and possessions are held in common on the apostolic basis. The seventh day is sacredly observed as the Sabbath of the Lord our God. The Lord's prayer, which he taught his disciples, is the pure offering presented as the evening and morning sacrifice while waiting before him.

"The charter of the Adonai-Shomo was obtained Jan. 1st, 1876, the object being protection by the laws

THE ADONAI-SHOMO COMMUNITY.

of the State, and the promotion of a more perfect union for the maintenance of the faith of Jesus and the worship of God according to the dictates of conscience; also the establishing of a school for the education of children and youth that may be placed in our care; also of a home to be used in common by its members and said children and youth, and any other persons of like faith and practice who may become members."

This Community had a life of about thirty-five years, but, like Peter Armstrong's Celesta in the Alleghany Mountains, it is worthy of record only as a warning to such well-meaning persons as, desiring to realize the blessings of Communism, are yet anxious to avoid its dangers and perils; and of these it is not easy to say which is greater—rank atheism or stark fanaticism. Of the latter the Adonai-Shomo during a part of its career furnished a notable example.

These communists were at first called Fullerites, because they lived, as mentioned above, on premises owned by one Leonard Fuller, and that is the name by which the Society is now most generally known in Athol and vicinity. Fuller himself, I concluded from the replies given to my inquiries, commanded the respect of his neighbors, and is still remembered as an honest and earnest religious man of moderate abilities. But Frederick T. Howland, the founder, so long as he lived, was the leader, manager, preacher and theologian of the Society; and had the full confidence of the members as an inspired, heaven-sent man. One of his special doctrines was that the true

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

followers of Christ had begun the immortal life, and therefore death had lost its power over them. His own terrible death in 1871, by being thrown against a roadside rock while driving a team that had become unmanageable from fright, only momentarily discouraged his followers. Indeed, their fanaticism reached its highest point some years later, after receiving two or three new members, including one man named Cook, whose astounding claim that he was Christ's viceregent was accepted by Fuller (who was made leader of the Community after the death of Howland) and by nearly all the members. Cook instituted such revolting practices as led to his indictment by the grand-jury, and subsequent imprisonment, which it was afterwards learned was not his first experience of the kind. Never were people more thoroughly duped.

Let it be remembered to the credit of Asa F. Richards that he stoutly resisted the claims of Cook. He himself became the acknowledged leader after that rascal's overthrow. Financially the Society prospered for a time under Richards' management. Adjoining lands were purchased until the estate comprised 840 acres; the large unitary dwelling mentioned above was built, and measures taken for increasing the membership of the Society. Richards had practiced law in a small way, while in the outside world, and it was not easy for those who had known him familiarly to think of him as a veritable saint, and to this day there are those in and around Athol who persist in regarding him as a long-headed schemer, intent on personal

THE ADONAI-SHOMO COMMUNITY

aggrandizement—people who, while saying a good word for Howland and Fuller, or only mildly censuring them for their delusions, will shake their heads vigorously when the name of Richards is mentioned.

The Adonai-Shomo at one time had 25 or 30 members, but for many years had only about half that number. It could not hold its younger members, and as the older ones left or died the Society diminished till Richards remained the sole surviving member, and he died in 1896; but before his death the Supreme Court was petitioned "to declare the charter forfeited, on the ground that the corporation had for many years wholly abandoned and ceased to exercise any of the powers and franchises which were granted to it by its charter, and had misused its corporate powers; and that all the powers and franchises of the corporation were then usurped by Asa F. Richards, in violation of the object and intent of the charter and for his own personal advantage."

The petition was granted, and the property of the Community sold at auction April 15, 1897, for \$4,390, which was sufficient to pay all obligations against it, and leave something to the heirs of the estate. D. Ambrose Leonard, of Boston, was the purchaser, and has since made it his summer-home; but he has little use for such ample accommodations, and it is to be hoped that the property will ultimately be utilized for a Masonic Home, State Hospital, or other like purpose, for which it is well adapted with its large dwelling, ample domain and grand scenery.

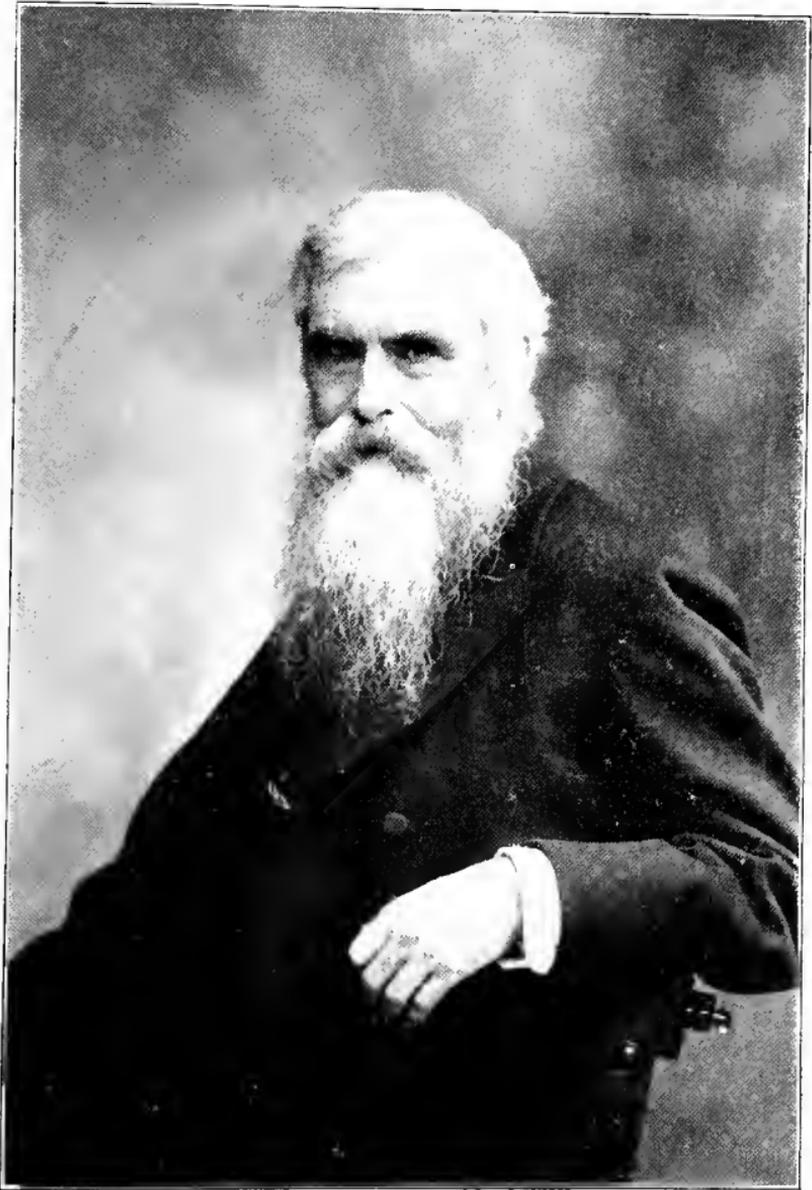
BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE.

This is the preferred name of a considerable number of people in this and other countries who have chosen Thomas Lake Harris as their leader, and attracted much attention because of the peculiarity of their principles and the notability of some of their members; they are also called Respirationists, because of their doctrine of internal respiration; and Communists, because they at one time were gathered in Communities, and have at all times had communistic features in theory and practice, though claiming to have years ago evolved into a superior social condition.

Fenny Stratford, Buckinghamshire, England, was the birthplace of Mr. Harris, and its date May 15, 1823. When five years of age he removed with his parents to Utica, N. Y. Of his mother he was soon bereft, but ever cherished her memory with the deepest reverence and affection:

*"If I have toiled for the planet's joy,
To God the mother brought forth her boy."*

From the age of nine years young Harris supported and educated himself, and when only twenty-one was made minister of the Fourth Universalist Church in New York City—later widely known as Dr. E. H. Chapin's Church. His parents were strict Calvinist Baptists, and his spirit, he says, "was poisoned by the abhorrent doctrine of election" in early childhood, so that he wished he had never been born; but the poison, if so it should be called, was soon elim-



THOMAS L. HARRIS.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE

inated; for at seventeen he accepted God as "the loving parent of the wide-spread family of man;" and this acceptance was confirmed by a vision of his departed mother, in which he claims that she "laid her hand upon his brow, drew his spirit into communion with hers, and conversed with him;" and to this great event Mr. Harris traces the beginning of his remarkable series of evolutionary growths.

In 1848 he became minister of the Independent Christian Congregation of New York; and while in this pastorate wrote mediumistically one Saturday evening a sermon that built one of New York's noted charitable institutions. Its text was, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven;" and such was the effect of its delivery on the following Sunday morning that as the services ended, and the large congregation arose to leave the church, Horace Greeley asked the people to remain, and measures were then and there taken which speedily resulted in the erection of the New York Juvenile Asylum.

Mr. Harris soon became conspicuous as a speaker, writer and poet on spiritualistic themes, and in 1851, with the aid of Rev. J. L. Scott, founded the Mountain Cove Community of Spiritualists in Virginia—one of the most singular institutions which ever existed in any land. Ira S. Hitchcock, one of the leaders, claimed that they had found the garden of Eden, the identical spot where our parents first sinned, and on which no human foot had trod since Adam and Eve were driven out. There, as revealed to Scott in

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

words printed in space, the chosen were to "escape the vales of death;" there "a city of refuge was to be builded as a hiding-place and a shelter, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." There angels were to ascend and descend. "In that mountain the Lord of hosts was to make unto all people a feast of fat things, and to destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations."

It is scarcely necessary to state that this Community was short-lived. The serpent again made trouble in the garden of Eden; there were quarrels about property, and rebellion against leaders; and in two years the city of refuge became a city of discord and confusion; and those who had fled to the mountain now fled to their former homes.

Fourteen years intervened between the collapse of the Mountain Cove experiment and the founding of the Community at Salem-on-Erie—years of trial and battle and growth for Mr. Harris. During this period he became a leader of Christian spiritualism against infidel spiritualism; spent several years in England preaching a modified form of Swedenborgianism, and publishing several books and *The Herald of Light*; lived five or six years at Amenia, Dutchess County, New York, where he established a bank, a flouring-mill, and a large grapery; and where he gathered about him a circle of devoted disciples, who followed him later to his

BROCTON OR SALEM-ON-ERIE COMMUNITY,

in the town of Portland, N. Y., nine miles from Dun-

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE

kirk. Here in 1869 there were reported to be, besides a number of children, sixty adult Community members, including five ministers, a number of Japanese, several American women of culture and high social position, Lady Oliphant of England and her son Lawrence Oliphant, of literary fame.

The following paragraphs in further description of this Community were written by its founder in 1873 and published in Dr. Taylor's "History of Portland:"

"The purchase made by myself and friends in the town of Portland consists of something less than two thousand acres, principally of farm and vineyard lands, but inclusive of the plat at the junction of the Lake Shore and Alleghany Valley railroad, where we are laying out a village which we have named Salem-on-Erie, designing to make it an industrial and business center. These properties were secured mainly in the month of October, 1867; about one-half as a personal investment, and the moiety in behalf of the gentlemen interested with me in the enterprise. These lands in part comprise what is known on the old town maps as 'the Diamond,' and extend in length two miles on the shore of Lake Erie, being nearly contiguous to each other.

"Besides the usual operations in agriculture and vine-culture, we are engaged, first, in the wholesale pressing and shipping of hay; second, in the general nursery business; third, in the manufacture and sale of pure native wines, more especially for medicinal use. Our product of wines is from fifteen thousand to twenty-three thousand gallons annually. Our principal cellar is of stone, arched and fire-proof, 110 feet in length, and affording, with the one adjoining, storage for about 65,000 gallons of wine. At the village

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

we also carry on a hotel and restaurant, and have just enlarged our operations by erecting a steam grist-mill and opening an exchange for transactions in produce and general merchandise. We are at present laying out and planting a public park and gardens, and draining and improving, as well as from time to time adding to, the freehold estate."

It is sad to chronicle that the evidences of progress thus set forth by the founder of the Salem-on-Erie Community were soon conspicuous by their absence. In a few years their hotel and store were closed; their restaurant had burnt down; the large profits expected from their vineyards were not realized; they had sold off their wines, and were letting their vineyards go without careful culture; a part of the members had followed Mr. Harris to his California home; and many signs of unthrift prevailed.

But to return to Mr. Harris' letter published in Dr. Taylor's "History;" he further said:

"The one object of the Brotherhood is the realization of the noble Christian ideal in social service. It is simply an effort to demonstrate that the ethical creed of the Gospel is susceptible of service as a working system, adapted to the complex and cultured nineteenth century, and containing the practical solution of the social problems of the age. In one sense the Brotherhood are Spiritualists: in the fervid and intense conviction that the individual man has no real life in himself; that all life, and with it the virtues and energies of life, are the result of a divine inflowing. Considering, first, that all real life is the continuous outgift of God, and, second, that our Lord is that one pure and living God (whether right or wrong in their opinion), there is among them a practical faith in him

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE

as the sole ruler, actuator and director. They are monarchists, who recognize the Divine Man for their Sovereign.

“In another sense the Brotherhood are Socialists. They consider that the practical fulfillment of the Gospel is in what may be termed ‘Divine-natural Society.’ From the present civilization, the aggregation of self-interests, they would evolve a noble form, ‘one pure and perfect chrysolite’—the association of noble and cultured souls in every industrial and human service. They hold most fully and most vitally that the ‘worship of God is the service of humanity.’ If they revere in Christ the Lord they also accept in him the Artisan.

“While they do not reject the sacred observance of accustomed religion, they believe in uplifting every avocation of life into a permanent religious ministration. Cherishing the faith of Scripture in individual regeneration, they hold that it is the function of regenerate man to regenerate society; that this work must be initiated and carried out by the entrance of the cultured, the prosperous, the gifted, as well as those of humbler state, into those employments which have been counted menial; and that those labors should be done from the inspiration of the divine love which have heretofore been performed from selfish greed or at the mere spur of material necessity. ‘See,’ said the ancient pagans, ‘how these Christians love one another.’ It is the aim of the Brotherhood, in all its many fields of action, to re-instate that antique and eternal principle, not in demonstrative preachment, but in a most unobtrusive yet demonstrated social fact.”

Dr. Taylor adds few particulars of interest. He mentions that sixty-five or seventy are engaged upon the Portland purchase, and that “they live by them-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

selves as far as possible, and are exceedingly reticent with reference to the association and its inner workings when approached by those outside, and will hold no converse with the simply curious. The fact of their being difficult of access excites curiosity, and is the occasion of much impertinent inquiry. The air and the charm of mystery hang over and about them." And he concludes his chapter with the following testimonial in their favor :

"It is but just to say of the Brotherhood in Portland, that in all respects they seem to be living out the principles of their order in their every-day life, and regard their religion as something to be put on and worn as a garment. Their deportment is most discreet and gentlemanly, and although their interests seem to center, to a large extent, in their association, they are excellent citizens."

Desirous, in preparing the first edition of "American Communities," to give only trustworthy information respecting Mr. Harris and his Communities, I applied directly to him, and received a most interesting letter in reply, tracing the steps by which the Brocton and Santa Rosa Families or Societies had passed through the evolutionary phases of Communism (in which he took no part, though aiding it financially), and modified socialism, in which each series constituted a family partnership, and which was found to develop a large force of individual character, more strict business habit and aptitude, and a passable ledger balance; but the spirit, he says, was not fully satisfied, and gradually the family partnerships ceased without a struggle, and all entered into

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE

the order established by himself, which was both fraternal and patriarchal:

“I entertained my friends as guests, brethren and children in their father’s house; and this satisfied. They labor for me, and I for them: their services, recreations and expenses are regulated among themselves. I put limits on their labors, but not on their recreations or expenses. There is no espionage: honor rules: love is supreme. In serving me these tender hearts believe that they are also serving God, working for a kingdom of universal righteousness. They do not think that I possess any thing, except as representatively; nor that I rule them, except as aiding to lift and direct them into a larger freedom, wisdom and purity. I consider the family at Salem-on-Erie and that at Fountain Grove as one: the germ of a solar family in the midst of a planetary family system. We believe it to be a germ of the Kingdom of Heaven, dropped from upper space and implanted in the bosom of the earthly humanity:—in fine, the seed of a new order; the initial point for a loftier and sweeter evolution of man.”

Speaking particularly of the Salem-on-Erie colony, Mr. Harris said: “Never so united, never so effective in unity, it maintains a waiting attitude.” This was written in 1877. Three years later he might have written: “Never so disunited, never so ineffective in its disunity, it awaits the final catastrophe.” For meantime Harris had published his “Holy City and the Light Thereof,” in which he had set forth his claims to the primacy of the new dispensation, and Lawrence Oliphant, his most conspicuous follower and the one who had aided him most liberally in his various enterprises, had dared to question these claims, yea, to

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

contest them, setting up counter-claims for himself, as the one now specially favored by the angels, who had named him as regent in place of Harris, whom they had deposed. Thenceforth there was a battle-royal of pantarchs, with the details of which we need not further concern ourselves in this account of the Brotherhood, referring those specially interested to McCully's work* and the "Life of Lawrence Oliphant," while the few who revel in mysteries profound may like to read Oliphant's three-volume novel, "Masollan," published by Wm. Blackwood & Sons, London, 1886—a work too full of mysteries and divinations for the ordinary mind. Whether, as it represents, the disciple had outgrown his master, and the latter had in some degree lost his intuitional and inspirational power; or, as Mr. Harris' party claims, and as seems equally probable, Oliphant was duped and slightly crazed by "juggling fiends," of the invisible world, it is for others to determine. The results of the deplorable struggle are known: Salem-on-Erie by it received its death-blow; Oliphant became absorbed in plans for promoting Jewish colonization in Palestine and other enterprises in the far East, where he died in 1888; Lady Oliphant, his mother, having died in 1881 at Cloverdale, California, while preparing for a pilgrimage to Palestine with her son; and his wife, the wonderful Alice, having died at Haifa on Jan. 2, 1886. Harris and his friends, being deprived of all

*"Brotherhood of the New Life and Thomas Lake Harris," by Richard McCully—a work very highly commended by Mr. Harris in a letter to the author.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE

pecuniary interest in Salem-on-Erie * concentrated at Santa Rosa; where they had a large estate; where Harris wrote many works, including his largest one, "The Wisdom of the Adepts, or, Esoteric Science in Human Destiny;" and where he tried to solve the question of the renewal of youth, and indeed claimed to have done so for himself, so that "he was no more an old man of seventy-eight, but renewed in more than the physical and mental powers of the early prime."

Santa Rosa was for many years a haven of peace for Harris and his friends; but finally a woman, whose application for membership had been rejected, having been permitted upon the request of a friend to reside for a few months in one of the mountain cottages belonging to the colony, published in the newspapers a string of accusations against Harris and his associates that shocked the surrounding population and unleashed the barking, yelping hounds of persecution, and drove Mr. Harris from Santa Rosa, and practically made an end of his California colony. The fury of the storm was augmented by the fact that Mr. Harris, notwithstanding his claim to have passed beyond the sphere of sexual influence, before his departure from Santa Rosa married Miss Warring, a prominent member of the colony and his disciple of many years.

The latest information concerning the Brother-

* It is stated in Richard McCully's work that, in the interests of peace, "the whole of the Brocton (or Salem-on-Erie) property, with all its belongings, costing originally \$150,000, was turned over to Ollphant, whose investment was only \$90,000.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

hood's California settlement was communicated to a San Francisco paper, and dated at Santa Rosa, Dec. 17, 1900:

"By the terms of a deed filed for record here today Thomas Lake Harris and wife of New York transfer to Kanal Nagasawa, Miss Nicholas and Miss Margaret Parting of this city, and Robert Morris Hart and Mary Elizabeth Hart of New York, their entire remaining interest in the beautiful property known as Fountain Grove, a short distance north of Santa Rosa. The consideration named is \$40,000, and a peculiar clause of the conveyance provides that the grantees shall hold a life-tenure, and the property is finally to revert to the one who lives longest, and to his heirs and assigns. In other words, as the parties die their interests go to the surviving parties till only one remains. Fountain Grove is the former home of the celebrated Community founded there twenty-five years ago by Thomas L. Harris, the mystic. It is one of the finest and most productive properties in Sonoma County. Its several thousand acres of rolling hill lands are planted mainly in vineyards, and it has one of the most complete wineries in the State. The place has been conducted wholly as a wine-making property for several years. The entire property is regarded as worth at least a quarter of a million dollars."

And a letter to the author, dated at Santa Rosa Jan. 3, 1901, says: "There is now no such institution in existence as the Fountain Grove Community, as it is now a corporation working under the laws of the State of California, and Mr. T. L. Harris has withdrawn entirely from the corporation."

Of the Brotherhood of the New Life Mr. Harris wrote from his New York home, under date of May

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NEW LIFE

10, 1899: "It grows, it multiplies, but its members make no demonstration; they avoid publicity, which generates controversy; they try to avoid the 'too over-haste that breeds delay.' "

Whether the Brotherhood of the New Life, which Mr. Harris affirms "grows" and "multiplies," whose membership scattered over the world is given in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as two thousand, and whose existence, influence and power it may claim are independent of any local Communities or colonies, shall in the future more forcibly than in the past arrest the world's thought and attention, or shall decrease and disappear with its founder as a factor in the world's progressive march, time will show; but it will not be questioned that Thomas Lake Harris is one of the world's remarkable men, and his society one of the most peculiar of which there is any record.

SHALAM, OR THE CHILDREN'S LAND.

“Go, seek and bring out of Uz orphan babes and cast-away infants and foundlings; and these shall be thy colony, which shall be my new kingdom on earth.” This command from the new Bible, Oahspee, type-written in 1882 by Dr. J. B. Newbrough, while his hands were guided by unseen spirits, founded Shalam, the Children's Land, and peopled it with the abandoned children of Uz (the world), and built for them their own Children's House of brick, their Fraternum of adobe, and their brick Temple, and gathered around them nurses, care-takers and teachers of such “as desire to be neither fathers nor mothers, nor seek in any way things that belong on the earth, nor have passions that belong only to earth.”*

“In Shalam we shall raise from two to three thousand foundlings and orphans. We shall not only educate them in books equal to the highest places of learning in the United States, but we shall also teach them how to work at all kinds of trades and occupations. We shall raise them vegetarians; never feed them on fish nor flesh, nor beer nor wine nor whiskey, nor even to see these things consumed by other people. Neither shall they see people use tobacco nor opium, nor hear profane language. When they have grown to be men and women, they can, if they choose, remain here as long as they live. This will be one fraternity. The Faithists will multiply these fraternities until they stretch all over the country; until they ultimately carry away the foundlings and orphans from the great Christian cities, where up to this time thou-

*“Oahspee.”

SHALAM, OR THE CHILDREN'S LAND

sands of these little creatures die every year from neglect, and where even the few who are now saved grow up to be paupers and criminals."*

The children thus secured were to be reared in all right ways of living, and to be taught—

“Not only as to diet, but as to clothing, and as to comfort and cleanliness; and to avoid disease; and as to strength and suppleness and swiftness; and as to virtue and modesty; and as to education, practical and theoretical; and as to industry and quick perception, and as to willingness to work for one another; and as to trades and occupations; and as to pastimes, amusements and recreations, singing, dancing and playing with great joy and delight; and as to worship, rites and ceremonies; and as to acquiring seership and prophecy and signs and miracles; as to communing with angels, and as to the value of angels as teachers and instructors by tangible presence and audible voices.”†

At six years the children worked half an hour a day; at eight, one hour; at twelve, two hours; at fourteen, three hours.

That these children might realize that there were those who stood in the relation of fathers and mothers to them, the legislature of New Mexico was induced to pass a law by which they became legally by adoption the children of the Shalam Community.

When the children thus reared and educated reached the age of fourteen years, they were to be first taken in groups to a large city, that they might behold its beautiful palaces, splendid churches, the luxurious abodes of the rich, the great and fashion-

*“Faithists’ Calendar,” p. 29.

†“Shalam,” p. 6.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

able; and also the abodes of poverty, filth, shame and wickedness; and then given the option of remaining in the outer world or of returning to Shalam, and making a covenant with its brotherhood, to be united to it in all things, and to remain in Shalam or one of the sister colonies.

All the land of the Faithists (about 1,000 acres in a bend of the Rio Grande, known as the Masilla Valley, near Dona Ana Station, in New Mexico, on the A., T. & S. F. R. R., surrounded with high mountain ranges) is called "Children's Land," but it was planned to establish on it another colony called Levitica, intended for adults, but tributary to Shalam. This colony was to be "for those who would flee from the world and its evils, do good unto others, slander not nor practice the evil word, nor engage in war; but not for those who eat fish or flesh, or drink or use stimulants or narcotics for exhilarating effects, nor for those unwilling to support themselves, nor for the lawyers, doctors, preachers and politicians, who desire to live by their wits."* The people of Levitica might be communal, or co-operative, or even isolated, as they chose; only they could not own the land and houses which they used, and had to contribute one-tenth of all they earned for the benefit of orphans, foundlings and other little children who were yet to be brought into Shalam and the affiliated colonies.

Shalam was founded by Dr. Newbrough in 1884, the means therefor being largely supplied by A. M. Howland, a former resident of Boston, who, after the

*"The Book of Gratiyus," p. 7.

SHALAM, OR THE CHILDREN'S LAND

death of the founder in April, 1890, was the principal manager of the Oahspan colonies.

Without calling in question the motives underlying this attempt to establish the Kingdom of the All-Father, and develop a superior race of human beings, the fact that it was based on principles at variance with Christianity and ignoring the fundamental principles of race-culture, gave substantial ground for doubt of its success. It was therefore not surprising to receive a letter from Mr. Howland dated April 24, 1901, saying, "Shalam is no more, and will be sold and pass into other hands for other purposes." In a letter dated still later Mr. Howland writes: "The real cause of the failure of Shalam was that we were ahead of the time for such a work, and that we came to a country where no amount of money could make the work self-sustaining. I put in about \$300,000, and have little to show for it except buildings, etc., which are not easily salable. People did not come to sustain the work, and most who came were on the look-out for something for themselves and not for others."

WOODCLIFF COMMUNITY.

This small organization, located at Woodcliff, New Jersey, and sometimes called "The Lord's Farm," is interesting as showing that a very limited number of persons may unite their interests, and realize some of the advantages of combination.* Here Garry Storms and his sister, Mary Storms, thirteen years ago agreed to live and work together in a common interest, striving to realize apart from the world the plain, simple life of the early Christians. Occasionally others have joined them, but probably their number never exceeded 12 or 15. They carry on their own small place of eighteen acres and 150 acres additional of leased land. Their distinctive principles, as stated by Chauncey Roe (who may be addressed for further information), are: celibacy, common ownership of all things, religious freedom, non-resistance, and the disuse of animal flesh and animal products in their diet. That with such peculiar principles, so few members and such limited means, they should have survived so many years, increased their property and otherwise improved their material conditions, is at least noteworthy. "What a grand thing it would be," writes Mr. Roe, "if more farms were worked on the principle of "live and let live."

*The Co-operative Colony of Martha's Vineyard, Mass., is another example, showing that a few persons can advantageously combine if they can agree.

THE KORESHANS.

In the *Flaming Sword* of Nov. 8, 1901, published by the Koreshans, there is a report copied from *The Florida Times Union*, of an interview with the Koreshan founder, from which are gathered the following statistics:

There are ten thousand Koreshans.

They have three Communities—one at Washington Heights, Chicago; one at Englewood, Chicago, where a printing-plant gives employment to forty or fifty persons; and one at Estero, Lee County, Florida.

Estero has been selected as their great gathering-place—their New Jerusalem*—the Koreshans now owning there about two thousand acres, and proposing to add thereto till they possess a domain of thirty square miles—in the center of which, surrounded by a circular area 1,600 feet in diameter, is to be erected the Koreshan temple, from which streets will radiate to the outer bounds of the square.

There are now at Estero about sixty persons, and this number will be soon increased—in fact, the founder when interviewed was returning to Chicago after personally conducting a chartered car of Koreshans to Estero.

The Estero Community have comfortable cottages and one large house, 70 feet long, 50 feet wide and three stories high, and are thriving, having no sick-

*We are elsewhere told that "the site of the New Jerusalem of the golden age has been scientifically located at the vitellus of the great cosmogonic egg."

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ness and their labor on the land being well rewarded with abundant crops of vegetables and fruits.

Prof. L'Amoreaux, one of the Koreshan leaders, writing from Estero to *The Farmer and Fruit-Grower*, says:

"The next to invade these solitudes were the Koreshan Community, coming from Chicago, where is still their central body and large publishing and printing-house. The date of their first arrival was January 20, 1894. Their aim is not mainly agriculture, nor to make money, but educational—to bring about a state of affairs in which there can be something like human brotherhood again. There are no drones in their hive, but all are workers, both in fields intellectual and physical. When their system is complete it will have at its head a great university, whose location will be here.

"There are now about forty persons here, old and young, who live, as did the early Christians, in all respects as one family. They have about thirty acres under cultivation, with a station on Mound Key, the first island reached after leaving the mouth of the river, five miles away to the northwest, and also one on the south end of Estero Island, where they owned a sawmill until it burned down. They also own the Hickory islands on the other side of Carlos Pass, as fine a location for fisheries as Florida contains. They purpose soon to establish commercial fisheries there.

"They have recently gone into the Belgian hare industry, and have some fine imported stock. Their orange and grape fruit trees are beginning to bear, and their pineapples have been bearing about four years. Guavas are abundant, with some lemons and limes. Sugar cane is a success here, and the syrup manufactured here is getting a wide reputation."

The following paragraphs in exposition of the

THE KORESHANS

Koreshan system, its principles and objects, are taken from "A Glance at Koreshanity" in *The Flaming Sword*:

"Koreshanity is the antithesis of all modern theories, of all schools of thought. It is the climax of all mental progress, the ultimate and absolute truth of being and existence; it is the revelation of all mystery, the uncovering of the occult; the true explanation of all phenomena, the scientific interpretation of Nature and the Bible."

Koreshanity teaches that "the universe is a cell, a hollow globe, the physical body of which is the earth; the sun is at the center. We live on the inside of the cell; and the sun, moon, planets, and stars are all within the globe.* The universe is eternal, a great battery, and perpetually renews itself through inherent functions, by virtue of which it involves and evolves itself."

That "the science of alchemy is the philosopher's stone, the key to the mystery of life; chemistry is false; alchemy is true."

That "God is personal and biune, with a trinity of specific attributes;" that "Jesus the Christ was God Almighty."

That "the coming of the Messiah is as inevitable as the reproduction of the seed. The divine Seed was sown nineteen hundred years ago; the first-fruit is another Messianic personality. The Messiah is now in the world, declaring the scientific Gospel."

That "reincarnation is the central law of life—the law of the resurrection; reincarnation and resurrection are identical. Resurrection is reached through a succession of re-embodiments."

That "heaven and hell are in humanity, and con-

*This theory, upon which the Koreshans largely base their system, is very fully explained and defended in "Cellular Cosmogony," a work of 194 pp.

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

stitute the spiritual world; the spiritual domain is mental, and is in the natural humanity,—not in the sky."

That "origin and destiny are one and the same. The origin of man is God, and God is man's destiny."

That it is possible to attain immortality "in the natural world—the first step being the recognition of the Messiah and the application of his truth."

That "to become immortal one must cease to propagate life on the plane of mortality. The standard of Koreshan purity is the virgin life of Jesus the Messiah. The Central Order of the Koreshan Unity is celibate and communistic. Celibacy obtains in the central nucleus, never in the world at large."

That "the Bible is the best written expression of the human mind."

That there should be "communism, not only of the goods of life, but of life itself;" and that "the bond of the true communism is the true religion, and the central personality of the divine communism is the Messiah."

That its "social system is patterned after the form of the natural cosmos." We "demonstrate the fallacy of competism; advocate the destruction of the money-power; the control of the products of industry by the government, and the equitable distribution of the goods of life. Koreshanity will abolish wage-slavery, and make it impossible for men to accumulate wealth and impoverish the people."

"The government of the universe is imperialistic; and humanity will constitute a unit only when every class is emplaced at rest and liberty as are the strata, stars, and spheres of the physical cosmos."

To complete this presentation it must be added that the "new Messiah now in the world" is Koresh, the Persian word for Cyrus; and that Cyrus R. Teed,

THE KORESHANS

born in Utica, N. Y., in 1839, and for a number of years one of its practicing physicians, is that Cyrus, the founder of Koreshanity, the Messiah of to-day. By his disciples he is spoken of as "The Master," and his associate, Annie G. Ordway, as Victoria Gratia, "Pre-Eminent of the Koreshan Unity."

The Florida Times-Union describes Dr. Teed, or Koresh, as a "clean-shaven, clerically-looking and clerically-dressed man of about 60, wide between the eyes, below medium stature, wearing a white cravat, and withal a modest person of quiet voice, and frank, engaging demeanor." I will add that he impressed me as being well prepared to meet any and all comers and to "put up a good argument," even physically if it should become necessary, for his saintliness is of the type allowing ample physical nourishment and a full and free coursing of blood in his veins.

The Koreshans indignantly repel the charge of social immorality brought against them, and assert that they have no sympathy with any form of free-lovism; that the central order of Koreshanity is celibate, having priestly functions; that Koresh, the founder, is a celibate; that the external order is marital, and those belonging to it live as in ordinary family life; and that Koreshanity's mission is not to abolish marriage, but to purify it.

Startling as were the claims of Ann Lee, Rapp, Janson, Harris, and other community founders, they are not to be named with those of the Koreshan founder, which outrival those of any human being since time began. If Koreshanity be true, the world has long been traveling backward, and all else called science and religion is unworthy of credence.

THE ALTRUIST COMMUNITY.

This Community (founded by Alcander Longley) publishes *The Altruist* at its St. Louis office, and owns a small place at Sulphur Springs, a town on the Mississippi river, 23 miles from St. Louis. Its membership and means are very limited, and it is mentioned in this work because of its founder's persevering efforts in behalf of Communism rather than for any facts of particular interest in its own history.

Forty-nine years ago Mr. Longley was a member of the North American Phalanx, and his subsequent life has been spent in communistic experimentation and labor, and with a zeal meriting better success than has thus far attended his efforts. His paper, published monthly, advocates only Communism. His book, "What Is Communism?" sets forth his conception of the practical working of the principles of common property, united labor and equal rights in a successful Community.

The prospectus of the Altruist Community says it "is a benevolent society, whose members hold all their property in common, work according to their ability, are supplied according to their wants, and live together in a united home for their mutual enjoyment, assistance and support."

THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL.

This colony, located at Adullam, Texas, was founded Nov. 15, 1899, by James D. Tracy and J. W. Fairchild.

It is wholly co-operative and communistic, and contemplates the erection of unitary dwellings, workshops, laundries, kitchens, etc.

It is not a Jewish settlement, as might be inferred from its name, which was selected because it signifies a common ownership of property, such as existed among the pentecostal Christians.

It hopes to give the world an example of social brotherhood, based on the common ownership of all public utilities.

No applicant will be admitted as a member unless he has a good moral character, and is willing to donate a part or all of his property to the Commonwealth, and then only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members.

A letter from one of the founders, dated Dec. 5th, 1901, and signed "Jas. B. Tracy, Governor," reports that on Nov. 1st this Commonwealth had forty-two members, 450 acres of land, a store, blacksmith-shop, dairy, other farm stock and farming implements, all valued at \$3,500, and no debt.

•

THE CO-OPERATIVE BROTHERHOOD COLONY, OF BURLEY, WASHINGTON.

This colony is to some extent representative of a number of socialistic settlements that have in the last few years been projected and established in different parts of the country; and though none of them call themselves Communities, most of them are at least semi-communistic in providing, as Burley does, for the collective ownership of the means of production.

The Co-operative Brotherhood is indebted to the Social Democracy for its organization—that party having originally proposed to work by colonization and political agitation, and later dropped the colonization part, which was then taken up by Cyrus F. Willard, J. G. Ingalls, J. B. Fowler, Wilfred P. Borland, Jerome C. DeArmond and others, with a purpose to carry it forward to assured success.

The articles of incorporation of the Co-operative Brotherhood were dated Sept. 20th, 1898, and filed in King County, State of Washington. The purposes of the Brotherhood are succinctly stated in the "Deed of Trust" of the incorporators as follows:

"To organize persons for the co-operative production of wealth; to secure the equitable distribution thereof among those producing it, thereby dispensing with the wage-system within the organization; to provide for the collective ownership of the means of production and distribution by persons so organized, and to make it possible for them to recognize in a practical way the brotherhood of humanity."

BURLEY COLONY

The Co-operative Brotherhood claims to be national, even international, in scope, having members in 26 States of the Union and all the provinces of Canada.

“The members are divided into two classes, resident members or co-operators, who are actively engaged in the industries of the company, and non-resident members, who are co-operating with the resident members by the payment of monthly dues of one dollar each, thus furnishing the necessary working capital to purchase tools and machinery, build factories and workshops, and expand the industries of the company for their own future benefit.

“Every non-resident member who pays dues for ten years—amounting to \$120—is entitled to be admitted as a co-operator at any time thereafter, together with such dependents as were named in his application and accepted by the Board of Directors.”

It may be arranged by special contract that this period of ten years may be abridged by the applicant paying a sum that will enable the colony to sooner provide him with a home and employment.

“As often as the number of resident members can be increased with advantage, and the means are available for such purpose, the directors are required to select from the non-resident members such person or persons as to them shall seem most suitable for the service then required. In calling members under this regulation preference will be given to those who have been longest members, other things being equal.”

There is also this beneficent provision:

“Should a non-resident member, while in good standing and after at least twelve months' dues have

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

been paid, be totally and permanently disabled, either by sickness or accident, he is entitled to become a resident member, together with his dependents above specified. Or should he die under similar circumstances his dependents will in like manner be received as resident members."

The methods of government and practical management of the colony are thus set forth:

"Before becoming a co-operator each applicant must sign a contract in which he or she agrees to accept such assignment of service as may be made under the rules, and faithfully perform the services required.

"In case any co-operator fails or refuses to observe the terms and conditions of the contract he or she may be suspended or expelled, but before such suspension or expulsion can be made permanent the facts must be determined by a Board of Arbitration consisting of nine members, who are elected annually by the resident members.

"All the funds of the company are used in establishing and extending its co-operative industries, building homes for its members and furnishing them with employment.

"There are no salaried officers to eat up the resources of the company.

"The officers and directors receive no other or greater compensation than other co-operators.

"The secretary and treasurer are required to give good and sufficient bonds with a responsible surety company as guarantor."

"The wealth produced in the company's industries is distributed as follows:

"1. Provision is made for the maintenance of the young, the aged, the sick and the infirm, so that no

BURLEY COLONY

one will suffer by reason of inability to perform service.

"2. A percentage will be set aside to provide for contingencies, liabilities and for the expansion of the company's industries.

"3. The balance of the wealth created is distributed, without discrimination as to sex, among those engaged in the service of the company, on the basis of the days employed.

"The company does not undertake to interfere in any manner with the domestic arrangement of families. Each family may regulate its domestic affairs as fully as can be done anywhere."

The Brotherhood is especially prohibited by its Deed of Trust from adopting any rules or regulations establishing any system of religion or standard of belief.

On the 23d of September, 1900, the Brotherhood celebrated its second anniversary, and hence has scarcely passed the threshold of its career; but it is claimed that the results already accomplished fully demonstrate the power of co-operative labor:

"Beginning without a member and without a dollar in money, the company had a total of 1,120 members on Oct. 1st, 1900, including 109 resident members, and assets of \$33,912 on June 30. Its first industrial settlement is located at its own town of Burley, at the head of Henderson Bay, on the west side of Puget Sound, only 14 miles from Tacoma and 18 from Seattle, Wash. The land comprises 300 acres of first-class alder bottom land, located on both sides of Burley Creek, a fine stream of water from which ample power can be developed for manufacturing purposes. Good judges say the land is one of the finest agricultural tracts in the State. It contains an abundance

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

of the finest cedar and alder timber, but only a limited amount of fir.

"A first-class saw and shingle-mill, costing over \$5,000, are in operation. The former is used mainly to manufacture such lumber as the company itself needs in its building operations.

"The shingle-mill is already a source of considerable revenue to the company.

"About sixty acres of land have been slashed, and about thirty acres have been planted on the company's ground this year.

"Twenty neat and substantial dwelling-houses have already been built for the individual use of families, and others are being built as rapidly as resources permit and needs demand. Besides these individual dwellings the company has a large hotel building, school-house, barn, blacksmith-shop, cigar factory, laundry and other necessary buildings.

"A printing-plant costing upwards of \$1,000 has been installed, and is used for the publication of the official paper (*The Co-operator*) as well as all kinds of job-printing. This plant is on a self-supporting basis, and is entirely paid for.

"The company's land was purchased at a contract price of \$6,000 in round numbers. Of this sum \$3,400 has already been paid, and the balance is being paid at the rate of \$200 per month, as it becomes due, with no interest on deferred payments.

"The land-debt is the only obligation the company has on its fixed capital."

The following interesting description of the colony's location, is taken from the anniversary number of *The Co-operator*:

"Located in a valley of surpassing richness, through which meanders a delightful stream of water, abounding in pools filled at all seasons with trout, it is

BURLEY COLONY

an ideal place for a home. To the east and west of the valley rise bold hills, crowned with the eternal green of firs, and far away to the west beyond the hills rise the snow-capped Olympics, while to the east rise the Cascades, with old Rainier standing as a giant sentinel over all. To the south stretches away the waters of the sound, that inland sea which has been aptly termed the Mediterranean of America, and which good judges have called the most beautiful body of water on the globe. Here, amid the beauties of unsurpassed natural scenery, we have laid the foundation for the new civilization. We are working out our destiny as the pioneers of a new industrial system, and our children are growing up close to nature, leading simple, natural lives, and learning that lesson which is so essential for them to know—that the welfare of the individual is inseparably bound up in that of the community.”

And from the same paper is taken the following paragraphs descriptive of the colony's existing conditions, and showing that at Burley as at all other similar colonies, it is the earnest, plodding, enduring worker, whose life is dominated by principle, that commands the premium:

“Our ranks have been thinned at times by the departure of discontented members who failed to understand that we would have a couple of years of rough pioneer life before we could begin to live as they do in great cities. Again we lost those who found us not living up to their ideal, and seeing no hope of attaining it within a year or two have concluded to leave us alone until later, and then come in to enjoy the fruits of our labor. But a better lot of earnest workers than our true and tried co-operators never lived, and most of them are here to stay. The first four members on

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

the grounds are still here, and are contented, happy workers. They have seen the forest transformed into fields and gardens; have seen mills, factories, workshops and dwellings spring up as the woodman's ax cleared the land of its dense growth of forest, and schools and places of amusement where but a short time ago were the primeval wilds. The children, happy at their light tasks, sing and laugh as if all was sunshine in their hearts; the young men and women are in the full enjoyment of life; while the older persons and heads of families are not oppressed by the fear that their situations are insecure. All work together for the common good, all enjoy the same blessings and endure the same hardships; and if there is as great a proportionate advance in the next two years as there has been in the two just passed Burley will then be the happiest and most prosperous community in America!"

The preceding sketch of the first colony of the Co-operative Brotherhood is mainly in the words of its own publications. Those desiring to learn more of its principles, regulations and conditions should apply to its Secretary at Burley. Being less than four years old it is still in the pioneer stage. The Brotherhood are evidently taking the wise course in insuring its success before establishing other colonies of a like character; but it is stated in *The Co-Operator* of May 11, 1901, that "Burley has reached the point where it is safe to plan for new settlements."

EQUALITY COLONY.

The following sketch of this colony was prepared by its Secretary, A. K. Hanson, and appeared in *The Coming Nation* of Aug. 4th, 1900. Substantially the same matter was published by the colony under date of Oct. 1, 1900, in a small folder, entitled, "Prospectus Equality Colony: a Collectivist Village, Equality, Skagit Co., Washington:"

"Equality Colony was organized November 1, 1897, and to-day, as the crystallization of the Brotherhood Co-operative Commonwealth movement, has a population of 120. Its distinguishing features may be set down as communistic in the owning of wealth and sharing of earnings; co-operative in organization of labor, and democratic in government, all legislative and executive matters being subject to a vote of the people in general assembly, weekly meetings being held.

"The admission fee of \$160 admits all members properly constituting one family, no one being required to subscribe to any pledge other than a faith in associated effort and a willingness to perform his part in such work as may be assigned.

"Various nationalities are in evidence, the largest percentage being Americans. We have no peculiarities of dress or sex relation, and no recognized religion, there being no intention of curtailing the liberties of members in any way. Most of us might be described by the term agnostic.

"The colony controls 620 acres of land, only some 35 acres being under cultivation, the rest being pretty well covered with stumps, brush and culled logs. Our chief source of maintenance is the agricultural opera-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

tions, next in order being saw and shingle-mill. We also have a number of small shops and industries that supply our wants in a general way. We also publish a weekly newspaper, *Industrial Freedom*, devoted to socialist propaganda and a record of events in our colony-life and progress.

"We are located one mile from the waters of Puget Sound; climate is equable and healthful, though moist; transportation facilities are poor. We are about five miles by road from Belfast, our nearest railroad station, on the Great Western railway, and 16 miles south of New Whatcom, our deep-water landing, though we make shipments of shingles from our landing about a mile from Colony, by taking advantage of high tides."

A letter from Equality to the author describes conditions at the Colony Mar. 6th, 1891, as follows:

"We have an industrious and energetic people, though it may be that our business management and executive ability are not at all times the very best. We had pioneer conditions here at first, and still have to some extent, but expect this year's operations will put us on our own feet in very good shape. Our resident membership is 125, old and young. Our resources amount to about \$75,000; our liabilities to about \$1,000. We have ten dwelling-houses, two apartment-houses, a printing and store building, bakery, public kitchen, root-house, barn, laundry, mill, and other smaller buildings. There is but little difference between our methods and those at Burley."

Equality has had its full share of trouble with malcontents and seceders. Within the first eighteen months of its existence 300 people left the colony for various reasons, chiefly because they found conditions there less favorable than they expected. This is not

EQUALITY COLONY

greatly surprising. It may be doubted whether a like colony was ever started that did not pass through similar experiences. Sometimes the colony organizers are at fault in not making it sufficiently clear that incoming members must expect to find only the rudest accommodations; more often the latter throw prudence to the winds, and rush with untimely haste into conditions for which they are wholly unprepared. There is some question whether if the following warning-notes had accompanied the original prospectus of the Equality Colony, instead of being published in its official organ (*Industrial Freedom*) nearly two years later, the rush of the unqualified to Equality would have been much impeded:

Wanted!

“Men and women who are willing to work, and are not jealous for fear they will do more than their associates; who are willing to go ahead and set a good example, instead of waiting for the other fellow to do it; who believe thoroughly in co-operation whether they are working inside or outside of the colony; who have bulldog tenacity sufficient to bear the hard knocks and disagreeable experiences of this experimental proposition with equanimity—such men and women will do to come to Equality, but it is better that there should be no rush, for it is not easy to assimilate too many different natures all at once off the reel. For the thousandth time we tell the world that we are ‘pioneering,’ and expect to be for two or three years yet. We want it well understood, so that we will not get thronged with a class of people who will serve only as a dead weight, dishearten us with their childish complaints, and so keep us pioneering that much longer.”

THE RUSKIN COMMONWEALTH

J. A. Wayland, whilom editor of *The Coming Nation*, now editor of *Appeal to Reason*, was chiefly instrumental in founding the first Ruskin Colony in Tennessee in 1894. Its numbers and property increased, and it commanded much public interest until it became known that internal dissensions had arisen. These became so serious as to involve nearly all the members, and ultimated in suits, injunctions, the appointment of a receiver, the sale at auction of the property, and the consequent disruption of the Commonwealth in the fall of 1899.*

A majority of the members immediately resolved to reorganize, and accepting the proposition of the American Settlers' Co-operative Association at Duke, Ga., to combine with them and form a new Ruskin Commonwealth, 249 men, women and children, with their household goods, machines, tools, the press, type and all belongings of *The Coming Nation*—a veritable "town on wheels"—were soon *en route* for their new home, a train of eleven cars having been chartered for the journey of 613 miles at an expense of \$3,500.

The Co-operative Settlers' Association brought into the new Ruskin Commonwealth 35 members, nearly 800 acres of land, part of it cleared, an abundance of timber, over 50 houses that could be made habitable, and still others which could be used for

*The colony did not fail financially; though its property was sold at great reduction from its value, the debts of the colony were paid in full, and a surplus divided among the stockholders.

THE RUSKIN COMMONWEALTH.

manufacturing purposes. The combined colony soon boasted of a post-office, store, railroad-station and side-tracks. A mild climate afforded garden products almost the year round. New houses and other buildings were erected; more than a hundred additional acres cleared; the publication of *The Coming Nation* resumed; various businesses started, including that of a general store, general repair-shops, fruit-growing, poultry raising, and the manufacture of cereal coffee, leather suspenders, brooms, shingles, etc., for the general trade. It soon had a school with eight teachers, a kindergarten, a library of over 1,500 volumes, a Woman's Club, a lyceum, a Young People's Progress League, theatrical entertainments, a brass band and other musical organizations.

The new covenant was an admirable instrument in spirit and language; and under its provisions, so far as the reader could discover from a faithful perusal of its paper, the colony was for many months happy, harmonious, and in a degree prosperous, and its many outside friends rejoiced, and were encouraged in the hope of its success and permanency. But, alas! the demon of strife again entered Ruskin, and there was clapper-clawing without end; for in such colonies

"Dissensions, like small streams, are first begun,
Scarce seen they rise, but gather as they run."

Many left Ruskin discouraged as to the practicability of harmonious, successful colony life; some joined the Fairhope Single-Tax Association; some made Kinder Lou, Ga., their headquarters; some proposed to return to Tennessee; and some resolved to continue the ex-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

periment at Ruskin. *The Coming Nation* of April 6th, 1901, in a 17½ column article on the "Secret History of Ruskin," disclosed the demoralized conditions of the colony; its paucity of numbers, because of secessions; its financial weakness, because of alleged bad management; and recited the causes which had rent in twain both the old and the new Ruskin. It was not therefore surprising to learn a few months later that the property of the New Ruskin Commonwealth was to be sold at auction and the proceeds of the sale applied on its indebtedness.

I shall inflict upon the reader no part of the mass of materials at command respecting Ruskin's internal party struggles, believing it will be neither interesting nor profitable; besides a work on the "Last Days of Ruskin," written by Prof. Isaac Broome, who was a member of the colony for four years preceding its dissolution, is announced by its publishers, Charles H. Kerr & Co., of Chicago.

In the quick formation of the Ruskin Commonwealths, their rapid growth, their first enthusiasm, their glowing reports to the public, their later dissensions and consequent collapse, there is repeated the history and experiences of many an experiment of half a century ago.

HOME EMPLOYMENT CO-OPERATIVE COMPANY.

Location: Long Lane, Dallas County, Mo.

Membership: about twenty.

Property: 180 acres of land on Michigan River, dwelling-houses, store, shingle-mill, and other buildings.

One of the founders of this company writes that starting eight years ago with three members, \$35 in money and an old broom-machine (in all about \$100), it has made slow but steady progress till its net worth is now about \$3,000; that its shops are well supplied with tools; that it owns the best town-lots, including a corner-lot and building; that its climate is the best for all northern-born people; that the land of that part of Missouri is good, and yet cheap; that there is no better fruit-growing section in the United States; that nearly all kinds of grains, vegetables and fruits can be raised; that it is a good grazing country—in short, that there is only lacking more members of the right kind, and more capital to improve their economic, educational and other conditions, in order to insure a grand success.

“Our system,” says the same authority, “is a good deal on the plan of the Ruskin Commonwealth. All the real estate, tools, machinery, and, in fact, every thing except household goods and such personal property as clothing, etc., are to be owned by the company and used for the benefit of all its members. A co-op-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

erative kitchen, laundry, school, etc., will be added as soon as practicable."

On September 1st, 1901, the company issued a prospectus setting forth its plans, objects and regulations as to membership, labor, and other things. From this it appears that four men and five women, regarded as the founders, have recently entered into a mutual compact. A letter from one of them dated Dec. 6th, 1901, says these nine founders are to have full control of the company for the term of five years.

The membership-fee is \$100 for male or female, and the same for probationers, \$50 payable when their application is approved, and \$50 when they are admitted; but upon the withdrawal or expulsion of a member or probationer whatever he or she may have invested will be refunded in equal monthly installments during the following year.

The prospectus states that the company proposes to build a model co-operative home, and that one thousand good members are wanted, but no great rush need be anticipated if circulation is given to its announcement in *Industrial Freedom*, that while the company "will welcome those who are ready to roll up their sleeves and work," there are "no berths for kid-glove gentry, or those who want to live off other people's labors." "We are not in this enterprise for whims of any kind, but down to solid business."

The company's regulations beneficently provide that "members over 65 years of age, who shall have been working-members for five years consecutively, or such members as may be totally disabled through

HOME EMPLOYMENT COMPANY

accident while engaged at work in the industries and in the interests of the company, shall be retired on three-quarters' compulsory work rates, and for all voluntary, acceptable work shall be paid half overtime rates, receiving the usual dividends on shares held and owned by them.

Men are required to work eight hours a day, women six hours, but may voluntarily work two hours additional. All work is paid for by the hour and in scrip or checks, redeemable in necessary articles of maintenance, and may be redeemed in cash at the convenience of the company.

The profits of the company are to be divided among the stockholders proportionately to their several shares of stock, but the profits of the first year after the making of the new agreement are to be used in improving its industrial conditions, and in meeting unprovided-for contingencies.

COLORADO CO-OPERATIVE COMPANY.

This company was organized and incorporated under the laws of Colorado, February 16, 1894, with a nominal capital stock of \$100,000, divided into one thousand shares of \$100 each.

The original objects of the founders are thus summarized: "To own and operate manufactories, to acquire land, to build homes for its members, to insure protection against want or the fear of want, to provide educational and recreative facilities, and to promote and maintain harmonious social relations on the basis of co-operation."

Tabeguache Park, in the southwestern part of Montrose County, Colorado, was selected in the fall of 1894 as the site of the company's operations, its present post-office address being Pinon in the same county.

The Park is fifteen miles long, and from two to four miles wide, 300 feet above the bed of San Miguel river, and at an altitude above the sea-level of 4,800 to 5,400 feet. The scenery is described "as all that the artist's eye could picture or that his heart could desire," being surrounded with mountains some of whose snow-capped summits are from 10,000 to 14,480 feet high. The soil, we are told, is especially adapted to produce fruit of the choicest variety and quality; and the climate is a happy medium between the hot south and the cold north and east. Still Tabeguache Park would be uninhabitable without irrigation; and

COLORADO CO-OPERATIVE COMPANY

hence the first important enterprise of the company (on which a large expenditure has already been made), was the construction of an irrigation-ditch from a point on the San Miguel river, fifteen miles above the Park.

This Co-operative Company would gladly receive more members of suitable character, and offer the following inducements: Soil of unrivalled quality; unexcelled climate; abundant water; timber in unlimited quantities; coal and building stone easily accessible; magnificent scenery; the best grazing lands; the choicest fruits and other products; enormous yields; near-by markets; an opportunity to acquire at small cost a good home in a delightful climate; an opportunity to work out the water-right on the irrigation ditch at 25 cents an hour, and to secure government land at \$1.25 per acre.

A pamphlet published by this company gives the number of members as 300, which figures include the non-residents who have purchased a share of stock. The same authority says "the company employs its members in constructing the ditch, at the saw-mill, planing-mill, box-factory, at its dairy, in its garden, at freighting and other necessary work; and that it owns 320 acres of fine timber land, 27 milch cows, 14 head of young stock, 14 teams of horses and mules, and has the best equipped saw-mill and planing-mill in southern Colorado."

The Co-operative features of the enterprise, as embodied in its first constitution, provided that all land and franchises owned by the company should be held

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

for the use of its members, and should never be mortgaged nor incumbered; that the company should control all ditches, canals and public utilities; that special franchises should never be granted to any individual association or corporation; and that it should be the object of the company to provide employment for its members; and it was stipulated in the by-laws that all workers, including the officers, should receive the same wages, and that none should enjoy special privileges.

The funds at the command of the company, however, proved inadequate for the completion of the irrigation ditch, and the enterprise was beset with other difficulties that have to be encountered in the first years of all like colonies; and for these and doubtless other reasons, at their 8th annual meeting, held Jan. 15, 1901, the stockholders voted to increase the capital stock of the company to \$150,000; to discontinue its paper, *The Altrurian*; to engage in no business except on the profit plan; discarded its constitution, and made important changes in its articles of incorporation and by-laws—all being evidently done in the interests of more efficient prosecution of the business of the company, but apparently eliminating some of its principal co-operative features.

FAIRHOPE INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION.

The objects, principles location, property, and conditions of membership of this Association are thus given by its Secretary, E. B. Gaston in *The Fairhope Courier*, of Dec. 1, 1901 :

“Organized and incorporated at Des Moines, Iowa, February, 1894.

“Established at Fairhope, Baldwin County, Alabama, January, 1895.

“Fairhope Industrial Association was organized to make good theories work. Its basic principle is the Law of Equal Freedom, ‘That every man has freedom to do all that he wills, provided he infringes not on the equal freedom of any other man.’ This law is applied by it :

“In Government, by personal vote, initiative, referendum and imperative mandate.

“In Land Holding and Use, by the principle of the Single Tax, the association holding the title to all lands and leasing to individuals in quantities to suit, at a rental ‘which shall equalize the varying advantages of location and natural qualities of all tracts.’ The association, out of the sum thus received, pays all taxes levied by the civil authorities on improvements and personal property held upon its lands, thus making the rent of land the only charge against individuals.

“In Natural Monopolies—transportation, telephones, water, light, power, etc.,—by association-control and operation at cost, as fast as practicable.

“In a Medium for Effecting Local Exchanges, by the issuance of its non-interest-bearing notes for ser-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

vices rendered it, redeemable in equivalent services and land rent.

"The above simple program has been in practical operation at Fairhope for more than five years, and its advantages are constantly becoming more apparent.

"The association has a most beautiful, healthful and attractive location on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, within sight of the important sea-coast city of Mobile, its lands having a frontage on the bay shore of about three-fourths of a mile, and extending back—not wholly connected—three miles. They comprise 1,100 acres, owned free of incumbrance; and a very favorable option is held on nearly 2,500 acres more. The land is especially adapted to truck and fruit growing for northern markets, as well as general farming and stock raising.

"The fine, new, propeller steamer Fairhope, built at Fairhope by Fairhope labor, and chiefly out of Fairhope material and manned by a Fairhope crew, gives direct daily service between Fairhope and Mobile, with a 25-cent passenger fare and low rates on freight. The association owns the wharf, 1,800 feet long, at which its boat lands.

"There are forty-nine dwellings on the ground, four stores, a bakery, butcher-shop, a hotel, saw and planing mill, rice-mill, post-office, printing office, blacksmith-shop, livery stable, a public hall, used also for school purposes, a free public library of nearly 1,500 volumes, and a fine new church.

"A twelve foot Aermotor, on a tower fifty-two feet high, pumps water of unsurpassed purity, from a well 152 feet deep, into a 7,500 gallon tank, whence it will be piped about the village.

"The cost of membership in the association is \$100, which may be paid in installments; but membership, though desired, is not requisite to the occupancy of

FAIRHOPE INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION

land and the enjoyment of the economic advantages afforded by the association.

“Beautiful bay-view building lots and desirable lands for farming are open for settlement by desirable parties, with no financial requirement further than the payment of the annual rent based on the value of the unimproved land, all of which will be expended in the interest of those paying it.

Fairhope Association pays no dividends, interest or bonuses to any one, and has but one salaried officer (receiving \$10 a month). It was organized and exists solely to apply correct principles, for the benefit of those who participate and for a practical, visible example to the world. Its resources are all expended to that end; and to that end it invites the membership and moral and financial support of right-thinking men and women.

“The following list of industries which would probably prove profitable at Fairhope is offered for the benefit of inquirers: Truck farming, fruit growing, general farming, stock raising, poultry raising, nursery, cotton gin, cane mill, cannery, ice factory, laundry, pottery, tannery (using probably canaigre roots), water toboggan and other devices of like character for amusement of excursionists from Mobile and elsewhere, light manufacturing of almost any kind, mail-order business, etc.”

THE MUTUAL HOME ASSOCIATION

at Home, Pierce Co., Wash., was founded Jan. 17, 1898. The following statement concerning its location, membership and conditions, was published in their weekly paper, *Discontent*:

"The land owned by the Mutual Home Association is located on an arm of Henderson bay known locally as Joes Bay, and is 13 miles west from Tacoma on an air line, but the steamer route is about 20 miles.

"The Association is simply a land-holding institution, and can take no part in the starting of an industry. All industries are inaugurated by the members interested and those willing to help them. Streets are not opened yet, and we have no sidewalks. Those thinking of coming here must expect to work, as it is not an easy task to clear this land and get it in condition for cultivation. There are 70 people here—20 men, 18 women and 32 children. We are not living communistically, but there is nothing in our articles of incorporation and agreement to prohibit any number of persons from living in that manner if they desire to do so."

The articles of incorporation of this association state the objects of the organization to be "to assist its members in obtaining and building homes for themselves, and to aid in establishing better social and moral conditions," and provide that "any person may become a member by paying into the treasury a sum equal to the cost of the land he or she may select, and one dollar for a certificate and subscribing to the agreement." They also provide that

"The affairs of the Association shall be conducted

THE MUTUAL HOME ASSOCIATION

by a board of trustees, elected as may be provided for by the by-laws.

“A certificate of membership shall entitle the legal holder to the use and occupancy of not less than one acre of land nor more than two (less all public streets) upon payment annually into the treasury of the Association a sum equal to the taxes assessed against the tract of land he or she may hold.

“All money received from memberships shall be used only for the purpose of purchasing land. The real estate of this Association shall never be sold, mortgaged, or disposed of. A unanimous vote of all members of this Association shall be required to change these articles of incorporation.

“No officer, or other person, shall ever be empowered to contract any debt in the name of this Association.”

I am unable to speak of this experiment from personal observation, and so gladly avail myself of notes supplied me by an intelligent observer who spent some days at the Association last year. He writes:

“The Mutual Home Association of Washington falls under the title of socialistic colonies in being organized as a land company, and in engaging to hold the land as a common trust, never selling any portion of it, but giving a title to occupancy and use of one, and not more than two, acres to any person applying and paying ten dollars an acre—the cost price of the property. There is a provision, however, that improvements can be sold. There is no condition for membership but the payment of ten dollars for a lot. Nevertheless they have contrived to get together a set of people much of the same ideas and habits, and who live as neighbors very harmoniously. Indeed, they are the most contented company I have met in all my ex-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

perience among people attempting new forms of holding land. Though they call themselves anarchists, they are of the peaceful kind, and much such characters as you would have met at the North American Phalanx forty years ago, only not so well educated, and having the newer ideas of freedom. They are very industrious, each on his or her own lot and in their own way. Their lands are covered with a jungle of enormous trees and fallen logs, and cost immensely to clear, and then will not raise a garden without fertilizing. They plant their potatoes and corn on starfish, which they get from the bay. Fruit trees do well, however, without fertilizing. There are several good mechanics among them. Every family has a good garden. Their members are an odd lot, but quite happy in their own social life. They built their own rough school-house, and use it for a hall and for dancing. Two of their women act as teachers. Most of them have to go out to work in factories and mills for a few months in the year to earn the money for supplies and to make improvements. One of the members is a good violinist, and one lady a pianist, and they have very good musical entertainments. Most of the houses are poor affairs, but there are two very good ones. At high tide the little bay where they are is very pretty. I have never seen lovelier views than that from the President's house, on the hillside. It is, indeed, quite a little Arcadia."

Because of its exceedingly radical principles the future of this Association will be noted with much interest and some foreboding.

FREEDOM COLONY.

Location on Little Osage river, 4 miles west of Fulton, Bourbon Co., Kansas.

Post-office address: Fulton, same County and State.

Membership limited, but growing.

Property: town-site of 60 acres, coal shaft, etc., value estimated at \$2,400—indebtedness—\$1,000.

Business: farming, coal-mining, lumber-sawing.

The colony was organized in 1897 as Branch 199 of the General Labor Exchange organization, incorporated in the State of Missouri, with headquarters at Independence, Mo., and only members of this organization will be admitted to colony membership, and then only by unanimous vote and the applicant making a permanent deposit of property in amount satisfactory to the existing members.

Colony members may buy a life-lease on an acre city-lot for \$40, or on four lots for \$140, payable if desired in installments.

The objects sought in the establishment of this colony are thus stated in its constitution:

“To alleviate the sufferings and avert the dangers arising from a constantly increasing class of unemployed, by establishing industries to provide employment for the idle, and by saving the wealth thus produced for the benefit of the actual producers and their families; to facilitate the equitable exchange of services and products among the members of the association; to lighten the burdens of charitable institu-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

tions by establishing one that will be self-sustaining; to establish industrial schools for the benefit of those who cannot afford to attend high-priced colleges and academies; and to conduct any other industrial, educational and humanitarian work within the scope of the association."

The colony paper, *Progressive Thought*, published at Olathe, Kans., says in the number for February, 1901: "The Freedom Colony is no longer an untried project; it is already an actual fact, with a number of true settlers on the ground and at work. Our people are well pleased with the fine location, productive soil, delightful climate, natural advantages, social neighbors, and general surroundings."

A letter written by a member of the colony, and containing the following paragraphs, was printed in a Chicago paper Aug. 24, 1901:

"We have representatives of various nationalities, coming from many different States of the union; coming together as strangers, but full of courage and brotherly love, all animated by the hope that here, at last, we shall have freedom indeed,—freedom from the oppressive yoke of the money lords; freedom from all that dwarfs and distorts and blights the lives of men, women and children in the great world about us, freedom even to follow the dictates of our own consciences, to worship God or not to worship, to work on Sunday or not to work (Sunday or any other day), to marry and be in fashion, or not to marry, etc.

"While we are now leading a rather 'strenuous life' *a la Teddy*, the lion-tamer, this life has its compensations. We are proving the practicability of our principles: viz., 'Voluntary Industrial Co-operation,' 'Mind your own business,' 'Don't do to others what

FREEDOM COLONY

you would not have them do to you,' and 'Equal rights and principles for all.'

"We enjoy pure air, out-door exercise, have plenty of good food, have cool nights to rest in, and good prospects in general."

Another member, after six months' sojourn at Freedom, wrote of the Labor Exchange system as illustrated in this colony :

"It does not make a machine of one. It does not compel any one to be a soldier. It does not compel one to rise at the tap of the bell, nor to dine, nor encourage hypocrisy by being 'sick' in order to take a 'holiday.' The Labor Exchange, while it gives absolute freedom to man, woman and child, also provides the way to attain and perpetuate that freedom by first putting man (in accordance with God's original purpose) in contact with the soil. It gives him a chance to produce. It gives him a home and absolute ownership of all he and his family produce on that home place, and all succeeding generations of his family. And, while it does this to him individually, it provides him an opportunity to participate in all public utilities. It gives him a place to deposit the surplus of his toil for a Labor Exchange cheque, which may be exchanged for the surplus toil of his neighbor in any thing he wishes and does not produce but that his neighbor does. He can work or play and no one can criticise. He can rise at sun-up or sleep till noon if he chooses. When he works he gets Labor Exchange cheques for his products or the actual labor performed. If he loafs he gets nothing. In fact, the Labor Exchange is the best plan for harmonious colony life ever devised. No room for chafing, back-biting, envy or all those prenatal influences which have wrecked so many colonies."

FREELAND ASSOCIATION.

This Association is located at Holmes' Harbor, Whidby Island, Washington—its post-office address being Newell, Island County, same State.

Its organizer and present Manager and Treasurer is Geo. W. Daniels, who, under date of March 1st, 1901, wrote as follows to the author :

"We are incorporated under the laws of the State to do collectively all that can be done by an individual. Our businesses are all run on capitalistic principles. We make what we can legitimately in our various enterprises, and divide the profits. All members being stockholders they all have an equal interest in the profits and dividends. Our store is run on the Rochdale plan of a division of profits. Our machinery is run for dividends.

"We have about 2,000 acres of land, and will secure more as required.

"We have some 25 men, besides women and children—about 40 members all told.

"A member can sell out his interest at any time, and go on his way rejoicing.

"We will soon have room for about 200 families, and will get them, too.

"One can pay for his land at once, and secure a deed of it, or pay for it in four years, the unpaid balance drawing seven per cent. interest."

The by-laws also provide that one may pay 20 per cent. of the purchase-price of the land in cash, and the balance in profits accruing to him as a member of the Association.

The Association as a corporation is first-owner of

FREELAND ASSOCIATION

all the land, and is allowed by its charter to own and carry on a very great variety of businesses, the profits of which are pooled for the benefit of the stockholders, and divided among them after reserving five per cent. for the expansion of the industries of the Association.

This experiment is not communistic, and is but partially co-operative. It is a joint-stock company in having a capital stock of \$10,000 divided into 1,000 shares of \$10 each, but differs from common joint-stock enterprises in providing by its by-laws that "no one person shall acquire or hold, directly or indirectly, more than four shares of stock," and in subjecting the actions of its Board of Trustees (consisting of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditor, who are elected annually) to a referendum vote upon demand of five per cent. of the members. In this latter respect it is socialistic, and also in its purpose to improve the conditions of its members, by giving them steady remunerative employment, and making them equal profit-sharers in all the operations of the company.

AMERICAN CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

This is the last grand scheme for effecting a radical change in the present economic conditions of society. It calls itself the great twentieth century movement; and proposes to achieve its victories, not by "going up stream against the opposition of capitalistic legislation, but by getting into the middle of the current, and going full blast down the stream, assisted, rather than hindered, by the laws which monopoly has secured"—in short, by following the very methods which have created the vast trust-monopolies with their wealth accumulations, and creating a *people's trust*—a trust for the exclusive interest of its co-workers—a trust of such character and magnitude that all other trusts shall be powerless to destroy or swallow it—a trust that will ultimately "produce every conceivable thing which the co-workers may desire to consume;" and for this reason will be independent of all other trusts—in a word, its aim is to "unite as one great World's Department Store every part of our social and individual life, eliminating the wasted energies, providing employments so that all may be given work, and share in the full fruits of all the products of this great co-operative movement."

Bradford Peck, author of "The World's Department Store," and head of the largest department store in Maine, is President of this Association.

The Co-Workers' Fraternity is an affiliated organi-

AMERICAN CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATION

zation of Boston, Mass., of which Rev. Hiram Vrooman is President, and which proposes to establish a Workingman's College.

The Workers' Co-operative Association, a Boston enterprise for giving work to the unemployed, is another affiliated organization, with Rev. Hiram Vrooman as President.

The Co-operative Association of America announces that, under its supervision, farming, manufacturing and other business enterprises will soon be developed; that a town-site is to be laid out in the center of the farm land of the Association, on which is to be erected the Workingman's College; that a thousand acres of land have been secured by the Association in Florida near Apalachicola, on the Gulf of Mexico, for co-workers who prefer a southern climate to that of Maine, where it is expected a winter-school will be started; that agricultural land has also been secured by the Association at Martha's Vineyard, Mass., which will be made a working center another year; and the official organ of this Association of America, *The Co-operator*, published at its main office in Lewiston, Me., contains in its Nov., 1901, number an account of the opening of its first store in a new \$10,000 building erected for the purpose in the last-named city, which was an event of great interest to its stockholders and the surrounding population. Able addresses were made by eminent co-operators, and great enthusiasm prevailed. Rev. Chas. E. Lund, Secretary of the Association, said:

"The object of this Association, while one of util-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ity in the saving of money to the people, has a scope of far grander and nobler proportions. It stands for the unity of the masses instead of the individualism of the few. It stands for the brotherhood of man against the antagonism of man, the savage doctrine of the survival of the fittest, and the spirit of jealousy which began with Cain against his brother Abel. It is the spirit of Jesus Christ among men exemplified by the Golden Rule, which this association desires to bring about in our business life. We are endeavoring to bring about a truer Christian civilization, and the principles involved in co-operation, demonstrated and exemplified to us in the methods announced by this store, are the principles which are illimitable in their measure and certain to be successful because they embody justice. It is the gospel of religion, not for the Sabbath alone, but for every detail of man's life."

Pres. Bradford Peck said:

"We have associated with us members from every State in the Union, who are looking with eager eyes to this far distant State, where to-night in this place is fired the first gun which will open the great industrial battle between the Trust for the People and the private monopolistic Trust, whose designs are to absorb the wealth of our Nation for self-aggrandizement. I personally feel as did Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Phillips and all those noble patriots when they saw their dream about to be realized."

All the enterprises of the Association, it is stated, will be conducted on strict business principles, and in the direct interest of the co-workers. It will sell goods for cash only.

It is communistic in that the people composing the Association will own the properties; it is co-opera-

PROJECTED COLONIES

tive in that all will work for common ends and all will share alike in the results of their labor.

To become a member of the Association, and participate in its benefits, each applicant, man or woman, must make a deposit of \$300 in one payment, or by installments of one dollar or more a week; and if the said depositor subsequently concludes for any reason to sever his connection with the Association, it is agreed by the Association to refund to him the amount of his deposit in full.

PROJECTED COLONIES.

The Industrial Brotherhood, Thomaston, Me.

The League of Brotherhoods, Moorestown, N. J.

Great Western Co-operative Home-Building Association, Buena Vista, Col.

The Christian Co-operative Association, Clay Center, Kans.

The Home Industrial College, Devers, Texas.

Equality Industrial Association, Tekumeh, Oklahoma.

Co-operative Vegetarian Colony, Highland, N. Y.

Bellamy Colony Association, Merrimack, N. H.

This work being a record of social colony experiments, it would be inappropriate to describe the plans of such as have not begun practical operations; hence only a list is given of projected colonies, with their proposed location or the post-office address of their projectors—the list itself being probably quite incomplete.

AMERICAN LEAGUE OF CO-OPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS.

List of Societies and Delegates present at the convention held in New York City, Sept. 25, 1901:

The Workingmen's Co-operation Association, Philadelphia, Pa.;

Louis H. Bernstein, *Delegate*.

Co-operative Association of America, Lewiston, Me.;

Bradford Peck and Chas. E. Lund, *Delegates*.

The Co-operative Brotherhood, Burley, Wash.;

Francis Ficke, *Delegate*.

New York Industrial Co-operative Society, New York;

Dr. S. Peskin, *Delegate*.

The Co-operative Union of America, Lawrence, Mass.;

J. J. Kennealy, *Delegate*.

Freeland Association, New York City;

Alex. Horr and L. M. Turner, *Delegates*.

Patchogue Co-operative Society, Patchogue, N. Y.;

R. C. Thomas and Henry W. Paine, *Delegates*.

Straight Edge People, N. Y. City and Rossville, Staten Island, N. Y.;

Theo. Atworth and E. P. Bancroft, *Delegates*.

New Jersey Co-operative Association, Campgaw, N. J.;

Claude Ferdinand, *Delegate*.

League of Brotherhood, Moorestown, N. J.;

Edgar Conrow, *Delegate*.

Clothing Co-operative Association, New York City;

Wm. Klingenberg, *Delegate*.

INDUCTIONS

from the historical facts of American Communistic Societies, and particularly of the religious Communities, despite their many imperfections:

That Societies based on common property may exist in prosperous harmony for more than a century;

That the individual holding of property is not essential to industry and the vigorous prosecution of complicated businesses;

That pauperism and trampism, necessary results of the system of individual ownership and competition, by which some are made extremely rich and others extremely poor, have no place in Communism;

That litigation and other expensive evils, necessary concomitants of individual property, disappear from Societies fully communistic;

That means of moral, intellectual and spiritual culture may be brought within the reach of every member of a Community;

That Communism increases the number of producers, and diminishes proportionately the non-producers, and in this and other things has great economic advantages over individualism;

That it is possible to solve by methods free from strife the problem of the relations of labor and capital, there existing in these societies no distinctions of rich and poor, all being at the same time laborers and capitalists, and a "strike" or "lockout" rendered impossible by their common interest;

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

That the necessary preliminary conditions of successful Communism are few and accessible to all who are willing to subordinate their individual wishes to the general good ;

That successful Communism is not dependent on any single theory of the sexual relation, monogamic Communities having been as prosperous as the celibate ones, and those favoring complex marriage as prosperous as those holding to monogamy ;

That while no special religious system or special interpretation of the Scriptures is essential to success in Communism, agreement is indispensable, and thus far that has most surely come through the religious life ;

That the growth and prosperity of a Community require a strong communistic spirit at its center at all stages of its career, and in proportion as that is weakened or displaced by individualism it tends toward decadence and death ;

That an ideal Community is an enlarged home, or aggregation of happy, intelligent, virtuous households, with enlarged dwellings, domains and workshops, multiplied labor-saving appliances, and increased facilities for improvement and happiness, wherein all strive for the common good ; and such a home will be as much superior to the single household in all that makes life worth the living as it excels the latter in means and numbers ; but if, perchance, the demon of strife enters and continues to assert itself in the enlarged home, then its miseries will be multiplied in the like proportion.

ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNITY LIFE,

as described by Charles Nordhoff, editor and author, after a visit to the larger Communities :

“Communists do not toil severely.”

“In a Community no member is a servant.”

“The Communist’s life is full of devices for personal ease and comfort.”

“Communists are not lazy.”

“Communists are honest.”

“They are humane and charitable.”

“Communists live well, and much more wholesomely than the average farmer.”

“Communists are temperate, and drunkenness is unknown among them.”

“Communists are tenderly cared for when ill, and in old age their lives are made very easy and pleasant.”

“Communists are the most long-lived of our population.”

“None of the Communes make the acquisition of wealth a leading object in life; they are in no haste to be rich.”

“The communal life provides a greater variety of employment for each individual, and thus increases the dexterity and broadens the faculties of men.”

“It offers a wider range of wholesome enjoyments, and also greater restraints against debasing pleasures.”

“It gives independence, and inculcates prudence and frugality; it demands self-sacrifice and restrains selfishness and greed; and thus increases the happi-

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

ness which comes from the moral side of human nature."

"It relieves the individual's life from a great mass of carking cares; from the necessity of over-service and exhausting toil, and from the dread of misfortune or exposure in old age."

"If I compare the life of a contented and prosperous, that is to say a successful communist, with the life of an ordinary farmer or mechanic, even in our prosperous country, and more especially with the lives of workingmen and their families in our great cities, I must confess that the communist's life is so much freer from care and risk, so much easier, so much better in many ways, and in all material aspects, that I sincerely wish it might have a further development in the United States."

A CENTURY OF SOCIAL PROGRESS.

BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

I hope and believe that the twentieth century will be a century devoted to social advance and regeneration; but in order to succeed in this great work it must deal with causes and principles, not merely with symptoms. The crowning disgrace of the nineteenth century—that, with a hundred-fold increase in our powers of wealth, production adequate to supply every rational want of our whole population many times over, we have only succeeded in adding enormously to individual wealth and luxury, while the workers are, on the average, as deeply sunk in poverty and misery as before—must be abolished forever.

In order to do this, we must adopt as our beacon-light and guide the fundamental principle of social justice—equality of opportunity—not as a mere phrase or catch-word, but with a stern determination to carry it out to its logical consequences.

SOCIAL PROGRESS.

I am myself convinced that the society of the future will be some form of Socialism, which may be briefly defined as the organization of labor for the good of all. Just as the post-office is organized labor in one department for the benefit of all alike; just as the railways might be organized as a whole for the benefit of the whole community; just as extensive industries over a whole country are now organized for the exclusive benefit of combinations of capitalists; so all necessary and useful labor might be organized for the equal benefit of all.

It is clear that under such an organized system three or four hours' work for five days a week by all persons between the ages of twenty and fifty would produce abundance of necessities and comforts, as well as all the refinements and wholesome luxuries of life, for the whole population.

But although I feel sure that some such system as this will be adopted in the future, yet it may be only in a somewhat distant future, and the coming century may only witness a step toward it; it is important that this step should be one in the right direction.

In our present society the bulk of the people have no opportunity for the full development of all their powers and capacities, while others who have the opportunity have no sufficient inducement to do so. The accumulation of wealth is now mainly effected by the misdirected energy of competing individuals; and the power that wealth so obtained gives them is often used for purposes which are hurtful to the nation. There can be no true individualism, no fair competition, without equality of opportunity for all. This alone is social justice, and by this alone can the best that is in each nation be developed and utilized for the benefit of all its citizens.

WILL SOCIAL COLONIES BE MULTIPLIED?

Since many of the forces that brought into being the various social colonies of the past still exist, and some of them with augmented power, it may be safely assumed that they will be repeated and multiplied, and doubtless also their partial successes and many failures, until their internal and external conditions are much improved.

Certainly people will in the near future, as in the past, be impelled into such experiments by their discontent with existing circumstances.

Certainly, also, will they be attracted into them by the many and great advantages that have been realized by the more successful of them, as described on a previous page by Charles Nordhoff.

The fact that such experiments have been maintained, surrounded by unfavorable conditions, for eighty-one, ninety-six, one hundred and fourteen, one hundred and sixty-nine years, while the greatest of them all—Amana, with its seven villages and more than 1,700 members—shows no signs of decadence after a life of fifty-nine years, will cause their repetition.

All of the religious Communities, and many of the non-religious ones, would never have existed but for the record left of the pentecostal Community of the early Christians; and that record has lost none of its power as a colony-creator.

The so-called political socialists anticipate the time

WILL SOCIAL COLONIES BE MULTIPLIED?

when the government will do for the nation all that the colonies can do for their limited members, and more. Meantime, whatever they may effect, with their army of advocates, including at least a respectable minority of the world's foremost thinkers, speakers and writers, in educating the people in the principles of "social justice and equality of opportunity," as enunciated in the preceding article, and lying at the foundation of all socialism worthy the name, and so rendering such final result probable or possible, will so far make conditions favorable for the multiplication of social colonies and improve their chances of success.

The partial success of Co-operative Societies in the United States and other countries, and their very great and ever-increasing success in England, where their membership has reached seventeen hundred thousand, and their annual business nearly four hundred million dollars, with profits of thirty-nine million dollars, must induce multiplied applications of the co-operative principle to social colonies. Indeed, aside from religion, which in the future, as in the past, is likely to draw people into Communities, and hold them in strong bonds of unity for long periods, co-operation would appear to offer the most promising outlook for such colonies. Though a lower form of association than Communism, it has this advantage, that people can come together in co-operation without parting with their individual interests, and so can sever their new relations, if they find them unbearable, without great loss; while those who are so well satisfied with colony life, after practical experience in its co-operative form,

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

and after a full knowledge of their associates, that they wish to continue it, can do so; and if they should wish to advance into any of the higher forms of association, their previous experience would enable them to do it with more safety and probability of success than there would have been had they first rushed into Communism, without preparation or sufficient mutual acquaintance of the members.

WILL COMMUNISM BE THE ULTIMATE BASIS OF SOCIETY?

The Communists will answer, Yes, a thousand times yes. There is, they affirm, in every undepraved heart an innate, unquenchable desire for a social state based on human brotherhood. Men's highest conceptions of society center in Communism. It embodies all that is conceived of the bright hereafter. If there is any truth in the doctrine that "attractions are proportional to destinies," certainly Communism is the ultimate destiny of mankind.

The noblest souls of earth and heaven—philosophers, poets, seers, and the Divine Teacher—have heralded Communism as the crowning glory of the race. Wherever a people has given birth to an ethical mind capable of perceiving the deepest truths, the advent of unity, brotherhood, Communism, have been proclaimed. Glimpses thereof were caught by Buddha, Pythagoras, Confucius, Plato; but its full announcement was the Lord Christ's, who exemplified it in his own daily

AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

life; and after his death and resurrection sent down into the hearts of his disciples the Holy Spirit, the first work of which was to sweep away all "mine and thine," as the mountain torrent sweeps from its path all obstacles; and "they that believed were together and had all things common." Why "all things common?" Why not "each had his own?" Manifestly, because individual ownership and the heavenly spirit in its full purity and force cannot co-exist. In this fact there is ground for believing that "mine and thine" may yet be swept from the whole earth.

Moreover, as all roads led to Rome, so all paths of human progress, all material, social, moral, intellectual and spiritual improvement, lead to Communism as the final goal. This is true, not only of the paths of progress now trod, but of the evolutionary changes that have brought men to their present condition from their primitive savagery—their advancement, as shown by Prof. John Fiske in his "Destiny of Man" and other works, being ever toward the displacement of all that is brutish in their character by all that is noble, unselfish, altruistic—ever toward a social state in which earth's prizes will no longer go to "the hardest heart and strongest fist," and "the ape and tiger in human nature will become extinct;" and with their extinction, however accomplished, the principle of brotherhood will assert its rightful control of all human relations, and Communism become the recognized basis of society.

Cornell University Library
HX 653.H62

American communities.



3 1924 002 674 665

