

maintains a certain sphere of independence in local administration, but is under the general control and supervision of a governing central authority — the Board of Trustees or Great Council of the Brethren.

THE INSPIRATIONIST

Generations of right thinking and right living seem to have produced a distinct type in the Community of True Inspiration. The older men and women are plain and direct of speech, self-possessed and sedate. They have strong faces and honest eyes — faces refined by much thought upon spiritual things and purified by sacrifice and high aims. There is a gentleness in their demeanor that reminds one of the Quakers, and a firmness and a seriousness in their manner that bespeak their Pietist ancestry. They live quiet and peaceful lives and do not like to admit strangers to their privacy. They have a reputation for honesty and fair dealing among their neighbors and wherever their products are bought and sold. “If you have made a promise so keep it, and beware of untruthfulness and lies”, is one of the fundamental precepts in the training of the Inspirationist.

It is doubtful whether there are many places in the world outside of Amana where more tender care and respectful attention are given to the aged and infirm. Unproductive members of the Community enjoy all the privileges and comforts that the Community has to give. When the dissolution of the corporation was suggested in a recent lawsuit, it

was the problem of the old people that caused the greatest concern in the Community. "It would be wrong to dissolve our brotherhood", said the Elders, "for if this should happen, what would become of our old people?"

There is no prettier picture anywhere than an Amana grandmother with her knitting (and what wonderful things she can do with those needles without seeming to look at them!) unless it is, perhaps, the homage she is paid by the younger members of the household. And what a wealth of stories the dear grandmother has to tell the eager little folks of "our forefathers in the old country", of the early days at Ebenezer and the trouble with the Seneca Indians, and of the long, long journey across the country to the Iowa prairie! And grandfather, his forefinger marking the place in the old Bible he is reading, looks up to add his word of testimony to the fulfillment of the "gracious promise of the early prophecies". Who can estimate the influence on the younger generation of the memory of these "old defenders of the faith" who embody in their personalities fourscore years and more of the most romantic history of the Community?

While the Community of True Inspiration aims at the widest possible community of goods there is in the homes of its members a fine blending of individualism and communism which would hardly be possible in a community established with communism alone as its ideal. The Teutonic instinct of indi-

vidual freedom, coupled with an intense love of home, led its members to preserve a wholesome sphere of domestic independence. Each family lives in a house which is the property of the Society. But the Amana "home" is nevertheless the sanctuary of its occupants. And to each member of the Community there is allowed, out of the common fund, enough personal property to assure personal comfort and to satisfy that desire of every human heart to have something of its very own. Indeed, the separatism of the Amana home, though not in accord with the principles of complete communism, has been an important factor in the perpetuity and prosperity of the Community of True Inspiration.

The cheerless cloisters of the Ephrata Community (notwithstanding the religious fervor of the early Brothers and Sisters) are empty to-day. One by one the "Family Houses" of the True Believers of the Shaker Communities have been closed. Even the great five-storied home of the Centre Family of Lebanon has been deserted; and the United Society of Believers is represented by only a small group of the old guard. The Oneida Community with its Mansion House "as a peculiar form of Society", to quote one of its own members, "is practically no more." In truth the whole host of brotherhoods that have set sail on the communistic sea with the "Unitary Dwelling" and "Great House" ideal (despite the undeniable saving of labor and expense of such a plan) have miserably failed. The devoted

men to whom the management of the Community of True Inspiration has been entrusted for the past century may not have been students of social science; but that they have been profound students of human nature is evidenced on every hand.

The Amana houses are substantially built, and quite unpretentious. It has been the purpose of the Community to construct the houses as nearly alike as possible. There is no hard and fast rule, but the aim is to make one as desirable as the other. There is in the private homes no kitchen, no dining-room, no parlor — just a series of sitting-rooms and bedrooms, which are, almost without exception, roomy and homelike. In addition to the general family sitting-room, each member of a household has as a rule his own individual sitting-room as well as his own individual bedroom. Here he is at liberty to indulge his own taste in decoration — provided that he does not go beyond his allowance or violate the rules of the Community. Here he may ride his hobbies or store his keepsakes without being disturbed — which accounts in part for the general content of the young people.

General housekeeping in Amana is a comparatively simple matter. At more or less regular intervals in each village there is a “kitchen-house” — a little larger than the ordinary dwelling — where the meals for the families in the immediate neighborhood are prepared and served. From sixteen to fifty persons eat at one kitchen, the number depend-

ing largely upon the location. The places are assigned by the resident Trustee or local Council, the chief consideration being the convenience of those concerned.

The kitchen-house system of Amana may lack the economy of the communistic ideal—the unitary dining-room—but there is much to be said in its favor. To the Great Council of the Brethren the purity and simplicity of the Community have ever been more important considerations than minimum expenditure. And they have felt that these could best be preserved by avoiding, what has proved to be the cause of the downfall of so many communities, frequent congregations of large numbers of individuals. Moreover, the mass meeting is in no way a part of the working scheme of the Amana Society. Even in the church there are separate apartments or meeting-rooms for the young men, the young women, and the older members. Indeed, if Amana has made any distinctive contribution to practical, working communism it is in the combination, or rather the nice adjustment, between separatism and communism whereby mutual interest is maintained without inviting the pitfalls of “too much getting together”.

The Amana kitchen is large and airy, often extending through the full depth of the house. Each kitchen has its supply of hot and cold water and its sink and drain. Every pan and kettle has its shelf or hook; and there are more conveniences for paring

and slicing, chopping and grinding, than the average housewife of the world ever dreamed of. But the really distinctive feature of the Amana kitchen is the long low brick stove with its iron plate top. This is built along one side of the room; and back of it there is a sheet of tin several feet high which shines like a mirror. From its upper edge hangs a most surprising variety of strainers, spoons, dippers, and ladles. On top of the brick stove are the hugh copper boilers and kettles which a community kitchen necessitates. In recent years there has been added to each kitchen a modern cook-stove, which is used during the winter for heating as well as for cooking purposes.

In the kitchen everything from the floor to ceiling is as clean and bright as it can be made by soap and water, brooms and mops. The Amana woman knows none of the vexations of the village housewife of the world, in whose home as a rule proper conveniences for the kitchen are the last to be provided. Woodsheds and store-houses are built in the most convenient places; there are covered passage-ways from the house to the "bake-oven" and outbuildings; and there is commonly a hired man at the kitchen-house for the carrying of water and hewing of wood. There is absolute system in every detail of the housework. Everything is thoroughly and effectively done; and the women do not appear to be overworked.

Each kitchen is superintended by a woman ap-

pointed by the Elders, who is assisted by three of the younger women, each taking her turn in attending to the dining-room, preparing vegetables, cooking, and washing dishes. As a general rule one week of "part time" follows two weeks of service in the kitchen — which, it must be admitted, is a great improvement over the ceaseless routine of the life of the average housewife of the world. The older women do not work in the kitchen as a rule; hence it is sometimes necessary to hire help from the outside. It is the aim of the Community to have hired help in the hotel kitchens in order to shield its own young women from too close contact with the world. The fact that the average summer visitor too often leaves his manners in the city when he chances to take an outing makes the wisdom of such a rule evident.

Wagons from the village bakery, butcher shop, and dairy make the daily rounds of the kitchens. Cheese and unsalted butter for table use are made in each kitchen, along with its own special cooking and baking. Large dryers at the woolen mills, where steam heat can be utilized, are now used for the drying of vegetables for winter use. Ptomaine poisoning and adulterated foods have little chance to do their deadly work in Amana.

It is the aim of the Community to produce as far as practicable all the food consumed by the members. At the same time the Amana people do not deny themselves any comforts which are compatible with simplicity of life. The tables are bountifully

laden with wholesome food; but the menu is practically the same from day to day, except as varied by the presence of fresh fruits and vegetables in their season. The Inspirationists are not faddists in their diet; they have no theories regarding the effect of a vegetable and fruit diet on "the health of the body, and the purity of the mind, and the happiness of society". They have no decided opinions regarding the relative merits of lard and tallow, and no rule against the "eating of dead creatures". Tea and coffee are commonly used. In short the food throughout the Community is well cooked and substantial, but unmodified by any modern "dietetic philosophy".

Breakfast is served in the Amana kitchens at six o'clock in the summer-time and half an hour later in the winter-time. The dinner hour is 11:30 the year round. With the supper bell, which rings at half past six in the winter-time and at seven o'clock in the summer-time, the day's work closes. In addition to these three meals the Inspirationist takes a lunch in the middle of each half day. Those who work at considerable distance from the kitchen carry their lunches with them. When the supper things are cleared the members gather in small groups at different places in the villages for the evening prayer-meeting.

There was a time in the pioneer days of the Community (when all energies were bent to the building of a new home in the wilderness) when the women,

in the manner of our Puritan grandmothers, shared almost equally the physical labors of the men. But as the Community prospered the lot of the women became easier; and to-day the woman of Amana knows nothing of the cares of the average house-mother who is expected to perform the combined duties of housemaid and nurse, hostess and church worker.

In every department of service in which woman participates the work is carefully apportioned to her strength. The woman with children under the age of two is not required to take part in the general village work, and her meals are brought to her home in a basket from the nearest kitchen-house. There is a nursery or kindergarten in each village well supplied with sand piles and the variety of playthings deemed necessary to keep children interested. Here the little folks between three years and school age are cared for when necessary to enable their mothers to take part in the village work.

In connection with every kitchen-house is a vegetable garden of from two to three acres. The heaviest of the garden work is always done by the hired man, but the superintendence and general care of the garden are entrusted to the women. This work is lighter than the kitchen work and the hours are shorter; and so the garden work is allotted to the middle-aged and older women.

Whoever has fared on the produce of the kitchen-house garden can understand the feeling of the

Amana prodigal who returned to the Community because there was "nothing fit to eat in the world". There is fresh lettuce from March to December, grown in hotbeds at one end of the season and kept in sand in the cellar at the other. There is ever-green spinach that is delicious the whole summer long; and the garden superintendent knows how to lengthen the green pea and wax bean season to the most surprising extent. There are great white cauliflowers averaging ten inches across; there are kale and salsify, red cabbage and yellow tomatoes, and much more that the visitor from the world does not even know by name. At one end of the summer the kitchen garden brings forth huge strawberries and raspberries, to which even the gorgeously illustrated seed catalogues can not do justice; and at the other end a marvelous variety of apples, and pears, and plums, and grapes.

In their dress (like the Shakers, the Mennonites, and in truth all of the communities whose religion prohibits "a life of vanity") the members of the Amana Community are "plain". And like the Shakers, too, they do not profess to adhere to a uniform, but claim to have adopted and retained what they find to be a convenient style of dress. This is particularly true of the dress of the women.

There is nothing distinctive in the dress of the men of Amana to-day. While there is still a great aversion among the pious to "looking proud", there is an equal dislike on the part of the younger members

of being conspicuous on account of their clothes. And so the men, particularly those who come in contact with the world, dress in much the same fashion as do men of the world—a little more given to “plain goods”, perhaps, and a little less responsive to the latest edicts of fashion.

Formerly the village tailor made all of the clothing for the men, but it was found to be cheaper to buy “ready-made” clothes for ordinary wear. The “best clothes” are still quite generally made by the Community tailor; for the young man gets his goods at cost from the woolen mills and, as the time of the tailor belongs to the Society, he is thus enabled to dress well on less than one-fourth of what it costs his brother in the world. The older Brothers are a little more orthodox and still wear “Colony” trousers and a Sunday coat without lapels; but unlike the Amishman, with whom he is often confused, he does not regard the button as an “emblem of vanity”, nor cut his hair in “pumpkin-shell” fashion. He does, however, resemble both the Amishman and the Shaker in the cut of his beard and in the absence of a moustache, which latter is regarded as a badge of worldliness.

The costume of the women might almost be called a uniform two hundred years old, the dress of to-day among the more orthodox being practically the same as at the founding of the Community. “Do not adorn yourself in dress for luxury’s sake”, reads one of the precepts of the Community, “as a feast

for the eyes or to please yourself or others, but only for necessity's sake. What you seek and use beyond necessity is sin." For mother and grandmother this is still the law and the gospel; but granddaughter, in the manner of the "growing-up-youth" of all ages, is less inclined to follow rules and regulations and oftentimes discards the "shoulder-shawl" and black cap, originally designed to suppress pride, changes perhaps the cut of her Quaker-like gown, and wears a bit of jewelry or a pretty slipper. Until recently the summer clothing of the women was made largely of the calico printed by the Community and known from Maine to California as "Amana Calico". The printing works, however, were closed during the World War owing to the impossibility of obtaining reliable dyes — particularly the indigo for the Society's best known "Colony Blue" — and up to the present time the industry has not been resumed. The only head dress in the summer time is a sun bonnet with a long cape; a hood takes its place in cold weather.

How it came to pass that the planting of flowers escaped condemnation as "a pleasure to the eye" is more than the "worldly minded" can explain. We only know that it is so and are thankful. For all the pent up love for the beautiful in the Community of True Inspiration for six generations seems to find expression in the cultivation of flowers, which are found in great profusion everywhere — around each dwelling, in front of the church, and even in the hotel

and school yards. Indeed, the Amana village from June to October is one huge garden all aglow with quaint old-fashioned flowers. There are great rows of four-o'clocks and lady-slippers, borders of candy-tuft and six-weeks-stock; gorgeous masses of zinnias, marigolds, and geraniums; great pansy beds and rose gardens — all laid out with precision and cared for with such devotion and such genuine pleasure that the visitor too rejoices.

The picturesqueness of the Amana estate is enhanced by a mill-race — a canal seven miles long which furnishes the water power for the mills and factories. This mill-race is now old enough to be fringed with pickerel weed and dwarf willows bent by the weight of wild grape-vines. Here and there the race is spanned by quaint wooden bridges. Half-way between two of the villages the mill-race expands into a lake which covers about two hundred acres and is now almost filled with the American lotus or yellow nelumbo. In July when the lotus lifts hundreds of great buff blossoms above the water, the Sunday quiet of the peace loving Inspirationist and his family is sadly disturbed by the endless procession of automobile visitors and their attendant noise and dust.

THE REAL AMANA

“To be a church always” is the essential aim of the Community of True Inspiration; and it is in the personal service and the practical devotion of six