

Queer Community Located in Iowa

In the heart of progressive and wide-awake Iowa there exists a community of people whose manners and customs have not changed in 200 years. "The Community of True Inspiration," better known to the world of trade as the "Amana society," came to this country from Germany in 1842, and after three years spent near Buffalo went to the present site of the community, where they have been thriving, physically and financially, ever since.

As a church they had their beginning in Germany, in the noted revival of the eighteenth century. The main tenet of their belief is purity of life. They hold some of the views of the Quakers, such as speaking when moved by the spirit, abhorrence of fighting, and affirming instead of taking an oath. Soon they became unpopular in Germany through the practice of some of their peculiar beliefs. For example, the "spirit" often moved some zealous convert to enter the church of another denomination, mount the pulpit, thrust aside the preacher and proceed to exhort the congregation from his point of view. In other cases, entering quietly and sitting in the congregation, the enthusiasts would suddenly rise and speak, drowning the preacher's voice. When cast out of convenient windows they raised the cry of persecution, made it a watchword, and throve accordingly. Finally matters became so unpleasant for them that they decided to emigrate to America, and eventually they bought a tract of land in Iowa of 18,000 acres, lying on both sides of the Iowa river. They now own 25,000 acres. They laid out a township later on and called it by the name of Amana, which has been adopted by the society from the bible on account of its meaning, which is, "Remain true." There were about 800 of the colonists and they formed eight villages—Homestead, where their first settlement was made; West Amana, High Amana, East Amana, Middle Amana, Old Amana, South Amana and New South Amana.

The settlement is and always has been absolutely communistic. The managing department is in the hands of thirteen trustees, who are elected annually. The executive department consists of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, elected annually by the trustees out of their number. The articles of incorporation were signed by thirteen leading men of the colony on December 13, 1849, and the community began to make itself known in the commercial world. Mills were soon erected and a canal nine miles long was dug to bring water power from the Iowa river. There were grist mills, saw mills, print mills, woolen mills, broom factories, harness, wagon and blacksmith shops. The print mills now turn out 4,000 yards daily and the woolen mills 3,000. There is one wholesale store at Homestead, but each village has a retail store. There is also in each village a hotel, or, as they call it, a "kitchen house," where all take their meals, the women taking turns in cooking. There is always a church and school house also. The sick are cared for by the resident physicians.

All kinds of fruit, vegetables and grain are raised and industry, thrift and economy are everywhere in evidence. Every foot of ground is used. All nooks and corners and walls of buildings are covered with grape vines. They have also many large vineyards. They manufacture a superior quality of wine from their grapes.

The houses are all built on about the same plan, roomy and comfortable, but severely plain. Everything within is for actual use, and is of the plainest description. One peculiarity of the houses is that the front doors all seem to open on the back alleys. The few that do open on the street look like back doors. There are the wood piles, hen coops, garbage barrels and all the appurtenances characteristic of back yards in country villages. Often one sees cool looking vine covered porches, but no one is ever seen reclining in a hammock with a magazine or lounging in the shade. The women may be at work at the wash tubs, or peeling fruit or vegetables, but they do not lounge or read. They work, and eat, and go to church and at night they go to sleep. That is all.

All members of the society are on a perfect equality in all things. They all work the same number of hours, live, dress and eat just the same, and obey the same rules. All property is put into a common fund. When

anyone joins the society he gets credit on the books for the amount he brings. If he withdraws, it is returned to him without interest. If he dies his family inherits on the same terms. He agrees upon joining to give his services without pay and his money without interest. The trustees decide how much each family needs for a year's expenses and they are allowed to "trade out" that amount at the general store. Besides that they receive a small sum of money for contingencies. Though they are communists, they do not consider personal ownership of property a crime. They have no desire to overthrow the government or to establish the "square divide," so longed for and worked for by those who will work for nothing else. The communistic plan was adopted in the beginning as a means of caring for the many converts who flocked to them, poor in all things excepting love of God and faith in the new belief.

If a member of the colony wishes to go away on a visit he must first get permission of the trustees. If he desires to receive visitors the official consent must also be obtained before they are allowed to come.

The costume of the women is exactly the same that the German peasant women wore 200 years ago. It consists, in summer, of a light print sunbonnet, always made just the same, a dark calico dress, made with a plain waist and full gathered skirt, and always an apron of gingham or calico. In winter their dresses are of flannel, and the sunbonnet is replaced by a dark, close-fitting woolen hood. On the heads of all girls and women at all seasons is worn a hideous, close-fitting black skull cap. It is not removed when hood or bonnet is worn. One would expect Venus herself to look frightful in such headgear, yet some very pretty faces are seen, faces that fade early and are old before middle age is reached. Why, it is hard to say, unless it is hard work. It certainly is not dissipation, care, worry or mental overwork. Their faces have an apathetic look, almost expressionless. Their smooth, infantile brows are "unrippled by a single thought." They have never learned to think. They have nothing to think about.

Perhaps the unattractive dress is, like the rigorous separation of the sexes, intended to discourage matrimony, of which they do not approve. A party of excursionists driving through a colony village after sunset one summer day passed a party of young colonists out for an evening walk. A group of girls walked in front. Next came an old man of somewhat severe aspect, carrying a club. Or it may have been a walking stick; if so, it was a very heavy one. Behind the elderly "chaperone" walked a group of young men. An observer in the passing carriage remarked, sotto voce:

"Well, if it takes an able-bodied man with a club to keep them apart now, I'm afraid they'll take a sneak sometime and meet in spite of him."

Marrriages do occur, but the institution is certainly not encouraged, and the young folks get little opportunity of forming attachments. No calls are made, there are no parties, or any social amusements, and it is a mystery how they ever hold any communication. A colonist being asked about it replied:

"I can't tell you how dey find out dey love each other, but sometimes dey do. Den dey go to de village elderman and tells him about it and dat dey want to get marriet. He makes inquiries, and if all is favorable he tells dem to wait two years and den dey can get marriet. Dat's to see if dey has de real, true love for each other. Maybe so it ain't de right kind, and dey



Mrs. J. C. Hallam, Mrs. Flora S. Barkley, Mrs. Alice Foy, Mrs. Alice A. C. Bailey, Mrs. John L. Davis, Jefferson, Des Moines, Council Bluffs.

OFFICERS OF THE IOWA FEDERATION OF WOMAN'S CLUBS.

see someone else dey like better before de time is up. Better dat happen before dey is marriet den afterwards, don't it?"

No marriage is ever permitted unless the parties are mentally and physically sound, serene and happy. They are always morally sound. Marriage, as might be expected, is a success when it is unheard of and infidelities are unknown. Divorces are not allowed. If a married couple have a difference of opinion they are apt to prefer settling it themselves to having a council of from one to a dozen elders "sit on them."

Besides, their mode of life is such that there can hardly be much cause for domestic difficulties. Intemperance does not exist among them, neither the social evil. As to temper, they are obliged to control it. Being Germans they are naturally slow to anger in any case. They are not a nervous or excitable people. The head of the family never becomes irritable from business worries or "a night of it." There are no milliners' or dressmakers' bills for him to swear over. Swearing is forbidden anyhow. The hired girl problem doesn't exist, neither does the green-eyed monster. If matrimony is ever a success it should certainly be here.

There is an elderman in each village who supervises everything. Under him is the agricultural boss, who plans all the farm work and attends to all details. The cow boss and oxen boss, and all other "bosses," are under his rule. The women work in the fields, but not at the hardest work, and never with the men. The laborers in the shops, factories, mills and stores are all under the charge of foremen and managers as elsewhere. Apprentices are kept learning trades, and are promoted, and others recruited from the ranks of the rising generation, as often as needed. The rule of the authorities is firm but mild, and no one ever rebels or questions the wisdom of their decisions. They settle all disputes. As a punishment two people who have had a slight difficulty are made to ask each other's pardon. In extreme cases they are punished by being compelled to remain away from church for a greater or less period, according to the offense.

The churches are very plainly furnished. They have no preacher, the services being conducted by the elders in turn. Men and women occupy opposite sides. The elders and the most saintly minded occupy the front seats, those less so the second row, the children and the least saintly the last. Meeting begins with silent prayer, followed by a hymn without any accompaniment. (There are no musical instruments in the colony.) A chapter is read from the bible upon which all comment as they choose, speaking when the spirit moves them. A reading from some one of their inspired writers, another hymn, and the services are over. These services are held on Sundays and on Wednesday nights. All members attend all meetings.

Education is compulsory. From 7 years of age till 14 all children attend school the year around. There are no vacations. From 14 to 20 they attend school only in the winter. Both girls and boys learn to knit and sew and to do all kinds of light work. English and German are taught, but all conversation among themselves is in



Taffeta \$8.75
Etons . .

Made of good black taffeta silk—all over tuck, silk lined. Orders by mail promptly filled—satisfaction guaranteed. We have attractive novelties to show in all lines of ready-to-wear garments.

O. K. SCOFIELD
CLOAK & SUIT CO.

1510 Douglas Street, Omaha.



A Sense of Pleasure

comes to the mouth that's made sweet and wholesome by the use of delicious

Arnica Tooth Soap

Preserves and whitens the teeth, strengthens the gums, sweetens the breath, is antiseptic, cooling, refreshing. The standard dentifrice for 30 years. Use at all drug stores, or by mail.

C. H. STRONG & CO., CHICAGO, U. S. A.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS OF MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES the GUMS, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC and is the best remedy for DIARRHOEA. Sold by druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" and take no other kind. Twenty-five cents a bottle.

Photographic Art Studies

These are the works of the Tennessee Sisters of Chicago, and there is probably no more capable photographic artists in the world than these enthusiastic young women. There are twelve subjects from which to choose, of which we reproduce two. These pictures are handsome enough for anyone's drawing room and may be used effectively unframed, or will look splendidly with a simple dark frame.

How to Get Them

These pictures are mounted on handsome black raw silk mounts, 12x15 inches, the photographs are 7x9 inches. These have never been sold at the art stores for less than one dollar. By securing an immense quantity of them we are able to offer them

With a Coupon for 10 Cents.

When ordering state the name of the subject, and if they are to be mailed enclose four cents additional for postage and packing.



THE ROSE.



DOLORES.

ART DEPARTMENT.

THE BEE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
17th and Farnam Sts.

CUT OUT THIS COUPON

Present at Bee Office or mail this coupon with 10c and get your choice of Photographic Art Studies. When ordering by mail add 4c for postage.

ART DEPARTMENT, BEE PUBLISHING CO., OMAHA.



"JOHNNY BEAR" UP A TREE IN RIVERVIEW PARK—Photo by Elmer L. Lindquist.