

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

WORKING FOR CO-OPERATION.

What is known as the Altrurian colony has commenced its operations at the new settlement on Mark West creek, seven miles north of Santa Rosa, California. The design of the society is that all its members shall operate on the altruistic idea, as opposed to the egotistic; that is, that they will work for the mutual good of each other. Their controlling principle is expressed in the statement that "the man who fervently and disinterestedly works for the benefit of his brother men is the good man." In the conduct of affairs the co-operative system is to control in all respects. The society cannot be called communistic, as the generally accepted meaning of that word goes much beyond the altruistic idea in the association of individuals, therefore the term co-operative is more strictly applicable. Each worker is to have an equal share in the product of all labor, though private profit and special privileges may be obtained by common consent under the rules of the order; all members are required to carry on the common work in a spirit of fraternity. Unquestioned obedience is exacted from all.

The colony is governed by a president, vice president, and executive council, chosen at regular intervals by and from among the members. Subject to the direction of this governing council, each person is to labor where his ability can be used to the best advantage. The pay for a day's work will be uniform, but a member having a hard or disagreeable task will be favored in the matter of hours of labor. The monetary system of the colony is apart from the national usage, in that the national currency—gold, silver or paper—will not be used for business. Instead of this, each member's personal honor is at stake upon his transactions being in accord with a strict rule of honesty, and the personal checks of the colonists will be the only circulating medium, which is thus enlarged or contracted according to the needs of the society. Should a member desire to go abroad, the amount of community currency he holds may be cashed by the society treasurer. As for the property of the colony, the co-operative farm consists of 2,000 acres of fertile, well-watered land. It is already under cultivation, producing fruit, grain, hay and vegetables.

The success or failure of the Altrurian experiment is a matter for time to demonstrate, according to the fidelity with which the members of the society adhere in practice to their altruistic ideas, and as they have sufficient business capacity in the organization to conduct its general affairs on a paying basis. Its special lesson to the people of this locality is in calling attention to the growing sentiment among people in different parts of the world to take up the co-operative idea, particularly in industrial matters, in the hope of finding a permanent base for individual prosperity. It will be remembered by those who lived in Utah in the early

days of co-operative institutions here, how the argument was made, and the general sentiment and experience of civilized nations quoted in support thereof, that co-operation would restrict individual enterprise and prevent the utilization of individual energy to an extent that it should be opposed as dangerous to the public weal. The uniform demonstration of events at home and abroad since that time has shown the unsoundness of that argument and the fallacy of that theory. The scene now presented to the nations is a general drift toward the co-operative system in idea, through thus far most of the practical applications are crude indeed and consequently failures. Yet they are sufficient to indicate a grand co-operative movement that may find its flood-tide in the next century. Co-operative colonies are but an experiment now; such experiments are a potent factor in preparing men for that vast community of interests to be inaugurated and directed by the Higher power, when "every man shall seek his brother's joy, and therein find his own." Notwithstanding the distractions and divisions of the present, through the mist and beyond the breakers of human uncertainty and discord there can be seen the haven of union and peace toward which an Almighty hand is guiding the storm-tossed vessel Earth.

CIVILIZED INDIANS.

The census office has recently published some interesting information regarding the five tribes of Indians recognized as civilized and occupying Indian Territory. They are otherwise known as the Chickasaw, Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek and Seminole Indians. The aggregate population of these tribes is estimated at 178,097, and they occupy a territory of 26,000,000 acres. The Chickasaws are the most numerous, numbering 57,000. Next come the Cherokees with a population of 56,000. The Choctaws number 43,000, the Creeks 17,000 and the Seminoles only 2,700. They are all regarded as self-sustaining, industrious and law-abiding.

There are several noticeable peculiarities connected with these proteges of Uncle Sam. The majority of them are quarter and half breeds, and the male element exceeds in number the "fair" sex. In their communities there is a large population of negroes and it is asserted that the Creek nation particularly owes its advancement to the presence among them of the colored laborers.

The government of the tribes is formed on the model of the United States. There are governors, or chiefs, elective legislators, courts, officers and police. For their spiritual wants churches and schools are established. School books are printed in English and newspapers and postoffices are numerous.

The land is described as fertile, but on account of the condition of the roads, the Indians find cattle raising

more profitable than farming, owing to the difficulty of finding markets for the products of the farm. Many conservative Indians still follow the customs of their ancestors but the great majority have adopted the white man's ways, even to the devotion to the particularly bad "moonshine" whiskey which is smuggled into the territory from the adjoining states. The climate is fine with but little cold weather and snow. February is regarded as the spring month. The summer is long and hot but the nights are cool and pleasant. There are nine lines of railway with a total mileage of 1,046 miles.

Indian criminals are subject to the jurisdiction of Indian courts alone, and the punishments are promptly administered. Most of the crimes are traced to the use of whiskey. A peculiar feature is the fact that an Indian condemned to death is usually given a period of thirty days of liberty in which to arrange his personal affairs. During this time he is allowed to go home without any guard or control, and when the time for his execution comes he is supposed to meet voluntarily at the appointed place, to be shot. It is asserted that up to the year 1890 not one man so condemned and liberated had failed to appear when "wanted."

A sum of \$413,000, the annual interest on \$8,000,000, is yearly received from the United States on account of lands sold. This money, together with fees from licenses and permits of various kinds, enables the nations to maintain their government without levying any taxes upon their citizens.

A TIMELY THOUGHT.

Lowering skies and falling leaves give warning that the season of warmth and growth is past and that the winter draweth near. The prospect is not all bright for many thousands of families in this broad land. Even in Utah, where there has been a goodly measure of prosperity during the year, and where the wholly poor are few and the means of relief generous, there comes with the chilling wind a sense of anxiety and distress to many a worthy soul. Wife and children must be fed, and with the departure of the season of fruits and vegetables, the food item becomes ever more considerable. They must be clothed, and with the advent of frost and snow, the clothing and shoe expenses take on a magnified aspect. They must be housed and sheltered, and the fuel bills not only look larger, but recur more frequently, as fires become a constant necessity. All this presents itself with impressive force to the head of the family, who in many instances finds his labor no longer in demand, his weekly wages stopped, his resources already well nigh exhausted.

In meeting this issue there is present opportunity for the display of the choicest talents of the statesman and the benefactor. Not in the accumulation of a fund with which to operate free soup-houses, not entirely in the development of a scheme for the collection and distribution of charity! A deserving man would always rather earn his bread than receive it as alms; and just because he happens to be needy is no reason for wounding