

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

UTAH ALFALFA ELSEWHERE.

In another part of the NEWS is a note from Hon. A. M. Musser on the matter of lucern, or alfalfa, in other parts of the world, from seed grown in Utah. Mr. Musser himself furnished seed for planting in Bombay, India, and though no report has been received of results there, the gentleman, who spent some years in India, is confident that lucern would make a superior forage plant for that part of the world. The note of Mr. Musser contains a report from his son of lucern grown in Alabama and South Carolina; and the NEWS has been furnished with a sample of the latter, now in bloom, showing a most excellent growth. From the report received, it would appear that alfalfa would be a great boon to the South, and can be raised there with success. This being the case, its introduction from Utah would be a constant reminder to people of the disposition of Utah residents to aid in benefiting their neighbors, for that was the sole purpose in forwarding the seed. Alfalfa seed has been carried by the Mormon Elders to many different states, and to several foreign nations during the past few years, and it has been demonstrated that in a number of these localities it is suited to the soil and climate as an excellent forage crop.

THE DEATH OF RUIZ.

Mr. Calhoun, the special commissioner sent to Cuba to aid Consul General Lee in the investigation of the death of an American citizen, Ruiz, in a Cuban jail, is now on his way home, ready to report. According to the dispatches, it is believed that his official statement will confirm the opinion of Consul Lee formerly expressed, that the death of Ruiz is a case of murder, although direct evidence as to who dealt the fatal blow cannot now be procured.

The facts seem to be that Ruiz was kept 315 hours in jail "incommunicado," in violation of the treaty that fixes seventy-two hours as the limit of that style of incarceration. When he was taken out dead it was found that he had several wounds on his head, which in the opinion of Dr. Burgess of the U. S. marine hospital corps, could not have been self-inflicted. Even in the absence of further evidence, this will undoubtedly determine public opinion as to the responsibility for the death of the unfortunate man.

But after all, the killing of an American citizen in a Cuban jail is only one incident of many of a warfare which civilization must shrink from contemplating in all its details. According to the reports Cuba is at present one vast camp where barbarism holds high carnival. Women and children are being carved to pieces, or slowly starved to death, simply because they are Cubans. People are being shot to death for the crime of attempting to relieve the sufferings

of wounded insurgents, or for giving food to those who are not of Spanish birth. Blood flows daily, not on battlefields where foe meets foe in open combat, but after the manner of assassins, innocent people, unarmed and peaceful, most often being selected for victims. And this is going on a few miles from the American shore. Surely, if the good offices of the United States government have any weight in Madrid, they should be tendered in the interest of the blessings of peace for unfortunate Cuba.

The contention of Spain that the Cuban question is exclusively one for Spaniards to deal with may be correct in theory, but when it has been demonstrated that Spain is unable to handle it except by resorting to most revolting methods, the case assumes a different aspect. If all the details of the Cuban war were known, it would undoubtedly appear that it cannot, in the interest of civilization itself, be allowed to go on indefinitely. And on that ground friendly interference by a friendly power is not only justifiable but may become imperative, for no great nation can afford to have savage lawlessness rampant at its threshold for any considerable length of time.

MONTANA'S INDIAN TROUBLE.

A Montana dispatch today states that the Indian murderers of Sheepherder Hoover (some of whom have been arrested, whose action is likely to be followed by the taking into custody of the others), will be turned over to the sheriff, but that it is probable they will be taken from that officer and lynched by the settlers. If the latter should be the case it would be an outrage upon civilization, for allowing which the Montana officers would have no justification whatever, since, knowing the intention, the officials are able easily to prevent its being carried out. There was considerable excitement when, after the murder was committed, there appeared a prospect that the Indians would not surrender the murderer and his companions; and much was said of the great peril in which the settlers would be placed if there should be an Indian outbreak. But now that the Indians generally have shown their desire for peace and have recognized the law by surrendering all their number connected with the homicide, the alleged peril to settlers does not appear to amount to much when the latter, through a savage desire for revenge, propose to violate the law. There will be little sympathy with the Montana settlers who talk of lynching the Indian prisoners; and if the intention be carried out, every participant therein should meet with the severest penalty of the law. But the officers ought to make sure and prevent the intended lynching, and to teach the vengeful white men that they, as well as Indians, must respect and obey the law. A cruel, bloodthirsty Indian bent on wreaking vengeance, for real or fancied wrong, is bad enough, as

every frontiersman knows; but he is not nearly so bad as the savage, vengeful white man who would lynch Indian prisoners in the custody of officers. Indians cannot be expected to have confidence in and respect for the laws of the white men if the latter are allowed to break them with impunity. It is to be hoped, in the interest of civilization, that the threatened Montana lynching will be averted, and the law be allowed to take its course.

CO-OPERATIVE COMMONWEALTH.

The announcement made by Rev. Myron Reed in Denver on Thursday is a confirmation of the correctness of the Chicago Record's account of E. V. Debs's intentions regarding his proposed co-operative commonwealth. Mr. Reed made the further declaration, foreshadowed in Mr. Debs's statement, that Utah has been selected as the field of operations. This having been agreed upon, it is well to remember the salient features of Mr. Debs's statement, as published in Chicago, and given by the NEWS a couple of weeks ago. One of these was that the Brotherhood of the Co-operative Commonwealth, which it is expected the American Railway Union will go to in a body at the convention on June 15, intended to capture politically some western state, and by a change in its constitution and laws resolve it into a co-operative commonwealth; or, really, a communist commonwealth. And it was estimated that the Brotherhood could make available 200,000 male voters for this purpose, these to be gathered from the East and Middle West.

From Thursday's telegraphic news it appears that Utah has been chosen as the victim of the proposed metamorphosis. How far it will be carried out, or whether there really will be any serious attempt towards it, remains to be seen. But if the effort really is made in force, there is likely to be considerable antagonism thereto. The people of Utah have wrested from the desert this garden spot of the West, and now the proposition practically is to seize it by an overwhelming invasion, and to overturn the system of government that has been in vogue here from the beginning. That system is American in form, and Americanism is not the communism proposed; a republican form of government conforms to the idea now prevailing in all the states, not to the socialistic aims of the Debs plan. A republican form of government permits all the co-operative schemes of an honorable character that people may enter into, but the plan to seize the State politically is a conspiracy against which objections will come out more prominently the more determined the effort to carry it out. There is a possibility that the Debs plan may cause trouble, as his policy did in the great railway strike of 1894, but it likewise lacks the essential element of success.

Then there is objection to the proposed limited colony named by Mr. Reed; not because it is co-operation, but because of its embodied discontent. So far as its commercial and industrial success is concerned, it may