

At the previous Congress Owen had been nominated to act as governor of the community, but he declined the offer because he did not consider that the branches and their more influential members were prepared with funds or experience for more than a preliminary working community adopted to the views and habits of the better conditioned working classes, and were too impatient to wait for the necessary accumulation of funds to commence a community according to his ideas to incorporate general population.

The condition of the working classes to improve and this attempt to succeed, he recommended that John Finch, of Liverpool, Charles Green, of London, and Hector Whalley, of Derbyshire, should direct and manage the community under the general supervision of the board, and promising aid and advice if they were elected. On this recommendation Finch was appointed acting governor.

The society found the capital to start the enterprise, partly from accumulated funds, but chiefly in subscriptions from various branches, each branch which subscribed £50 being entitled to nominate one of its members to join the new community.

Branches and private individuals also gave various useful articles. Here are just a few—17 pairs of razors, 18 knives and forks, 26 quires of writing paper, a complete set of harness and innumerable implements for the stables, farm, shambles, kitchen and dining room.

The large number of presents, many of them costly tools, were the gifts of men who could only show their sympathy this way, and indicated the wide interest and enthusiasm this new venture aroused.

Writing of the first members, the director of agricultural operations, Mr. Aldham, states that he does "not consider it any drawback that the members have not been accustomed to farm work, for agricultural labourers in general are a localised, prejudiced and stupid set of men. The present members having no knowledge of farming will be more easily formed into one grand body of co-operators."

Aldham was stated to be a practical and highly successful farmer! In a few weeks, however, the society appeared to the branches

**DISCORDS**  
The society aroused the bitter animosity of the Church and the Tories. The Bishops of Exeter, Salisbury and Ripon spoke against it and the neighbouring clergy got up petitions and wrote tracts against it.

The mistakes made in America were repeated here. Too many people had been allowed to come and there was not enough accommodation. Some members had to endure considerable discomfort. Also the branches who contributed most money to the fund were in northern manufacturing towns, so the members they sent knew nothing of country life and were dismayed by the hardships, especially in the winter months. When the first enthusiasm had passed there was a considerable amount of unpleasantness and almost open rebellion. Misfortune surrounded those in charge. Ill-health prevented Finch, the deputy governor, from carrying out his duties and he finally resigned. At the meeting of the Co-operative Congress in May, 1840, Green was appointed in his stead, but a few months later found his position so difficult that he also resigned.

In May, 1840, Aldham resigned because of a marked difference of opinion with the residents, and the man Congress selected to take his place died within a year. By the middle of 1840 dissensions had become so acute that Green was instructed to reduce the number of residents, which were 57 men, women and children. Some appear to have left voluntarily, others under the persuasion of the governor.

By the end of the summer, 19 residents were left—eight men, four women and seven children of ten and under. The 12 adult members worked in the dairy, the kitchen and on the farm until the next spring. Fifteen to 20 hired labourers also worked on the farm.

#### SURPLUS—AND

#### DEFICIT

A HASTILY prepared and optimistic balance sheet in 1840 showed surplus assets of over £300. Six months later they had increased to £477 but in the third balance sheet in April, 1841, the auditors had to explain that the surplus existed only on paper and was mainly due to an incorrect

greater than the charge of supporting our own members, even at the low rate of wages paid in Hampshire, averaging not more than 8s. per week. As our members cost only 7s. 1d. per week there is a saving of 11d. for each member employed." The fact that an outsider fed, clothed and housed himself and family was ignored. The buildings ultimately erected cost £15,000, and further large sums were spent in laying out the grounds and providing water, drainage, etc.

#### BUILDING ON

#### GRAND SCALE

IN 1841, as Owen was willing to reside at Queenwood and take an active part in the management, he was again elected governor with almost unlimited powers.

To provide funds for the community experiment, without drawing too much on the Central Board, Owen and others had formed "The Home Colonisation Society" in 1840. The funds were largely contributed by a few wealthy sympathisers and lent to the society on very generous terms.

By vote of Congress these funds were to be used almost absolutely as the president and governor decided. Owen at once instructed the young architect Hansom, who designed Birmingham Town Hall, and who seven years before had taken an active part in the building strike of that town, to erect buildings and a school on a grand scale.

The building, which was almost completed by the summer of 1842, was stately and three-storied. Only the best quality materials were used and it was finished with scrupulous care and thoroughness. The kitchen and basement rooms used by members for evening meetings were wainscoted with mahogany many feet high.

By taking over the lease of Great and Little Bentley and Rose Hill (later known as Hildon House) Owen increased the society's holdings to upwards of 1,000 acres.

Some of the residents were rather alarmed at the lavish expenditure and called in a land agent from Norwich to advise upon the general state of the farms and the prospects of the enterprise. His report was favourable.

#### COMMENTS

IN August, 1842, advertisements appeared in the "New Moral World" of the boarding house and educational establishment at Harmony Hall, Hants. The terms were £25 a year, including clothing.

A visitor in 1842, commenting on the building, states: "There were few kitchens in London so extensively fitted up. Outside the kitchen were large wash-houses, baths and a well-arranged place for each member to wash before going to meals. The new garden contained 27 acres.

By May, 1843, there were 61 pupils—35 paying fees—the remainder children of residents of the colony. A boarding house at Rose Hill was also opened. There were 43 adult members in residence—30 men and 13 women.

The visitor also gave a good picture of the activities of the colony. "Trenching, planting and gardening in every department were extensive. Brickmakers were making bricks, builders were building, lime-burners were burning lime, roads were being made, the shepherds were with their sheep, nine ploughs were at work; a hundred acres of wheat were already sown, and more wheat land was being prepared. Upwards of 800 acres were under cultivation. A reservoir was being constructed to save all the liquid manure." The only trades were blacksmiths and carpenters, and their work was entirely absorbed by the community.

During the year ended March, 1843, over £11,000 had been remitted to Queenwood, but only £214 had been received from there.

Once again the committee stated that if another £8,000 could be raised to complete the existing buildings, erect a new dairy and farmstead, another boarding house and the equipment of workshops and a printing establishment, the residents increased to 260-300 and hired labour dispensed with, the experiment might soon be in a flourishing condition.

Owen further urged that another farm should be taken as the society could work it more cheaply than an outsider; also the equipment of an industrial school for 1,000 children at £12 or £13 each.

#### ON BREAD AND WATER

SOME members complained that they were not given a share in the government of the colony, others of recent measures of economy. The cheese at supper

WHEN the new management took over in 1844 the enterprise was in a sad state. The extravagant buildings were not finished and the furnishings were incomplete. The gardens and roads were unfinished, the farms had been starved and more horses and cows were needed, also more machinery and implements. The trades could not be developed for lack of capital.

In May, 1844, debts amounted to over £2,500—£600 more than estimated.

The total sum spent on the house was £2,295. A valuation at the beginning of the financial year 1844-5 showed the total liabilities—loans, shares and current debts to amount to just under £40,000 and the property, buildings, crops, etc., to be less than £26,000, leaving a deficit of £14,000.

It was found necessary to lower the school fees, because the Socialist parents could not afford to pay £25 a year, and even with this reduction the numbers diminished considerably. The revenue was decreasing, the landlord pressing for the rent and other creditors were becoming impatient.

A select committee appointed to enquire into the sorry state of affairs found that £10,000 was needed to provide buildings, etc., to put the farm into proper order, and unless this sum could be found at once the society should dispose of their interest. In July it was decided to wind up the affairs of the society.

Just three days before the decision to close down the society the scene at Queenwood was very different. The usual monthly party

#### PURPOSES "

MR. JOHN GRAMP, the last secretary of the Congress, writes from Queenwood in August, 1845, when the colony was broken up and the buildings deserted: "I look back on what we have been and what we are; we were a society united for the holiest of purposes; we had a leader in whom we reposed the most unbounded confidence—ney, by many of us he was almost worshipped, and all were ready to follow him to the death for the accomplishment of our object... and now we are disjointed, cast down and powerless. Shortly afterwards Harmony Hall and the adjacent grounds were let for the purpose of a school to Mr. Edmondson, a member of the Society of Friends, and became known as Queenwood College.

The community enterprise failed because it was never practical, but at a time when working people were exploited, the ideal community as planned by Owen was a religion to the Socialists.

The mystic 'C. M.' carved over the doorway, and thought by many to mean "Commencement of Millennium," were genuine expressions of an aspiration after a better social order.

The ideals are expressed in the Co-operative Congress opening hymn:-

*These things shall be! a loftier race  
Than e'er the world hath known  
shall rise  
With flames of freedom in their souls,  
And light of knowledge in their eyes.*

## UNIVERSITY IN SPACE PROJECT

SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY has been invited to place scientific instruments in an American satellite which will be put into orbit in 1966.

University College, London, is included in the invitation, which comes from the United States National Space Administration.

The satellite will be America's fifth geophysical observatory.

Southampton's project is directed by Prof. George Hutchinson, head of the physics department.

## Australia's first balloon flight for 50 years

A YOUNG electrical engineer has made what is believed to be Australia's first manned balloon flight for 50 years.

He is president of the Aerostat Society of Australia, 25-year-old Terry McCormack.

Watched by 2,000 people, he made his flight in a hot air balloon, Archimedes I, at Parkes, 277 miles north-west of Sydney.

He rose to 2,000 feet and landed 15 minutes later, two miles away, reports Reuter.