

# AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

AND

## CO-OPERATIVE COLONIES

BY

WILLIAM ALFRED HINDS, Ph.B.

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SECOND REVISION,

WITH ADDITIONS FROM THE FIRST REVISION

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*"Men will not be content to live every man for himself. In work in art, in study, in trade--in all life, indeed--the children of God, called by a Savior's voice, will wish to live in the common cause. They will live for the common wealth.--this is the modern phrase. They will bear each other's burdens.--this is the phrase of Paul. They will live in the life of Love."--Edward Everett Hale.*

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AC-0126

copy 3 of 3

**PORCUPINE PRESS**

*Philadelphia 1975*

cf. BK-0267, BK-0300

First edition 1878  
Revised [2nd] edition 1902  
Second revision [3rd edition] 1908  
(Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1908)

Reprinted with additions 1975 by  
PORCUPINE PRESS, INC.  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Hinds, William Alfred, 1833-1910.  
American communities and co-operative colonies.  
(The American utopian adventure ; ser. 2)  
Published in 1878 and in 1902 under title: American  
communities.  
Reprint of the 1908 ed. published by C. H. Kerr,  
Chicago.  
1. Collective settlements--United States. I. Title.  
HX653.H63 1975 334'.683 75-1008  
ISBN 0-87991-017-8

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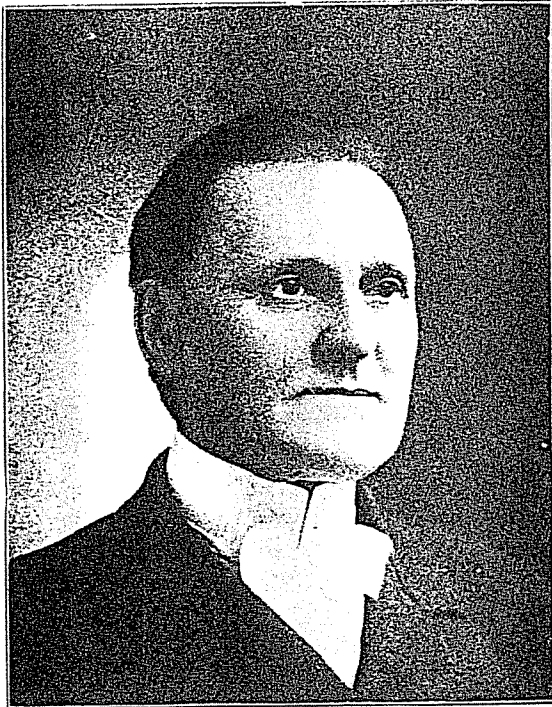
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## INTRODUCTORY.

From this second revision of "American Communities" accounts of a few experiments mentioned in the first revision have been omitted, because their colonial features have been dropped or their existence was brief and uneventful, and no mention is made of some yet in the formative stage; but sketches of the following experiments, new and old, have been added:

Northampton Association of Massachusetts;  
 Wisconsin Phalanx, Ceresco, Wis.;  
 St. Nazianz Colony of Wisconsin;  
 Bruederhof Communities of South Dakota;  
 Woman's Commonwealth, Washington, D. C.;  
 Polish Brook Farm of Southern California;  
 Topolobampo Colony of Mexico;  
 Roycrofters of East Aurora, N. Y.;  
 Christian Commonwealth of Georgia;  
 Point Loma Colony of Southern California;  
 Straight-Edgers of New York City;  
 House of David, Benton Harbor, Mich.;  
 Temple Home Association, Oceana, Cal.;  
 Spirit Fruit Society, Ingleside, Ill.;  
 Helicon Home Colony, Englewood, N. J.;  
 Fellowship Farm Association, Westwood, Mass.

The accounts of several experiments given in the first revision have been amplified or rewritten, to



CYRUS R. TEED  
KORESH\*

## THE KORESHANS.

What Ann Lee was to the Shakers, George Rapp to the Harmonists, Joseph Bimeler to the Zoarites, John H. Noyes to the Perfectionists, Eric Janson to his followers, Cyrus R. Teed is to the Koreshans—their founder, leader, teacher, and inspired medium. He was born October 18, 1839, in Delaware County, New York. Graduated as a medical student, he was for some years a practising physician in the city of Utica. When about thirty years of age, or in 1870, it is claimed he was illuminated, or in other words came under the control of supernal forces of a high order. From that time he has enacted the role of prophet, and has been successful in interesting many people in his theories and claims, now numbering, it is estimated, ten thousand in the United States and other countries.

Communism being a primal principle of Dr. Teed's new religion, which he terms Koreshanity,\* it was natural that the more devoted of his followers should come together in Communistic Colonies; and when the first revision of this work was published, in 1902, there were two of them in Chicago and one at Estero, Florida. Since then the Koreshans have completed

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\* From Koresh, the Persian word for his own name of Cyrus.

## AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

the transfer of their Chicago Societies, including their printing-plant, to the last-named place, which is now their recognized capital.

On September 1, 1904, Estero was incorporated, its territory, embracing 110 square miles, being exceeded by only four cities in the United States; and we are assured that this great city of the future will include all that is worthy of imitation in the existing great cities of the world, and exclude all their evils.

Years ago, we are told, this city, with its havens of peace, magnificent palaces of education and recreation, giant temples, beautiful plazas, boulevards and crystal sea, was planned in the mind of Koresh, its founder. It is, the Koreshans say, to be the New Jerusalem, and it follows that the good things described in The Revelation will come into it. Its founder declares that "the world itself is to contribute to its greatness, for here is the center of activity, the vitellus of the cosmogonic egg, the vital beginning of the new order."

And again: "Like a thousand world's fair cities, Estero will manifest one great panorama of architectural beauty, one great system of orderly activity, where every obstruction to the free motion of every human orb in its circle of progress will be removed. Here is to exist the climax, the crowning glory, of civilization's greatest cosmopolitan center and capital. We may stand upon the site of ancient Babylon—in the present wilderness of Assyria—and wonder at the existence of one of the world's greatest cities of the past. We may stand upon the site of the Greater

## THE KORESHANS

Estero-to-be, and think, not of the past with its ruins and its dead, but of the near future when, through the influence of scientific truth in its application to life and human relations, there springs into the world a new element of human progress, which shall loudly call to all the world for the millions of progressive minds and hearts to leave the turmoil of the great time of trouble, and make their homes in the Guiding Star City."

Prof. U. D. Morrow, editor of *The Flaming Sword* and a leading Koreshan, says in a recent letter that the Koreshan Unity (a general term covering all societies, orders and adherents) was never in a more prosperous or hopeful condition; that its membership is constantly increasing; and gives the following statistics:

"Total number of members of the Koreshan Colony at Estero, including Branch Homes in the vicinity, .....	170
"Total members of the Society Arch-Triumphphant in various parts of the world.....	505
"Total number of adherents to the Koreshan beliefs, readers of <i>The Flaming Sword</i> , and those who accept the teaching of the Cellular Cosmogony, throughout the world, we estimate to be perhaps .....	10,000."

Prof. Morrow states further that there are branch Societies in Baltimore, Md., Beaver Falls, Pa., and Springfield, Mass., and New York City, and unorganized groups of members of the Society Arch-Triumphphant and adherents in San Francisco, Boston, Chi-

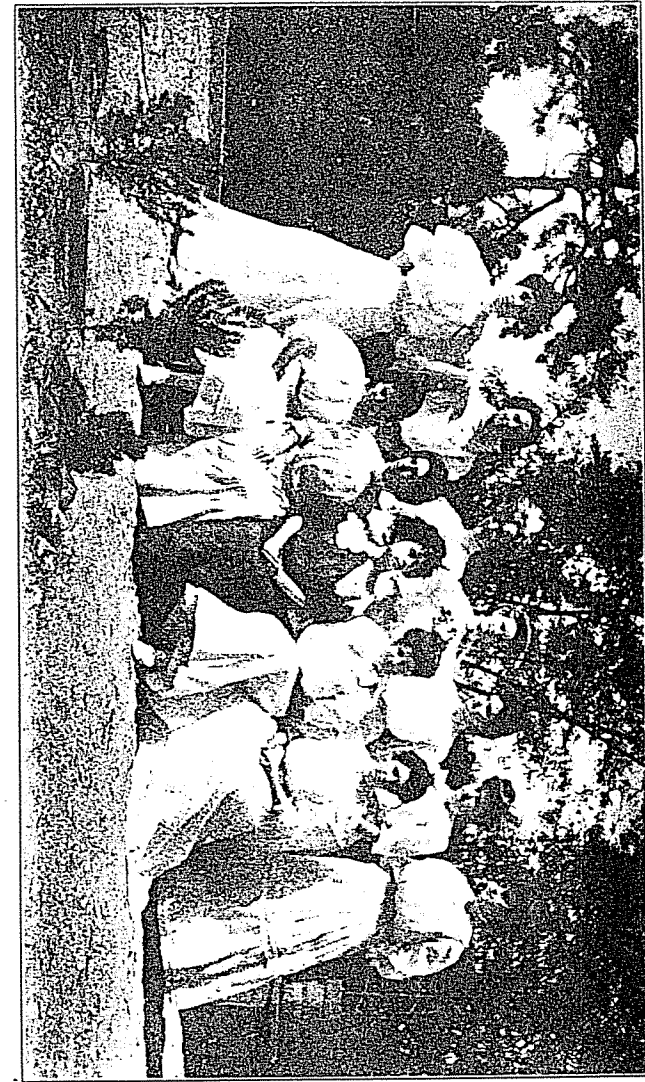
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cago, Pittsburg, Denver, Los Angeles, Tacoma, and Ogden, Utah.

The same writer thus speaks of the social life at Estero.

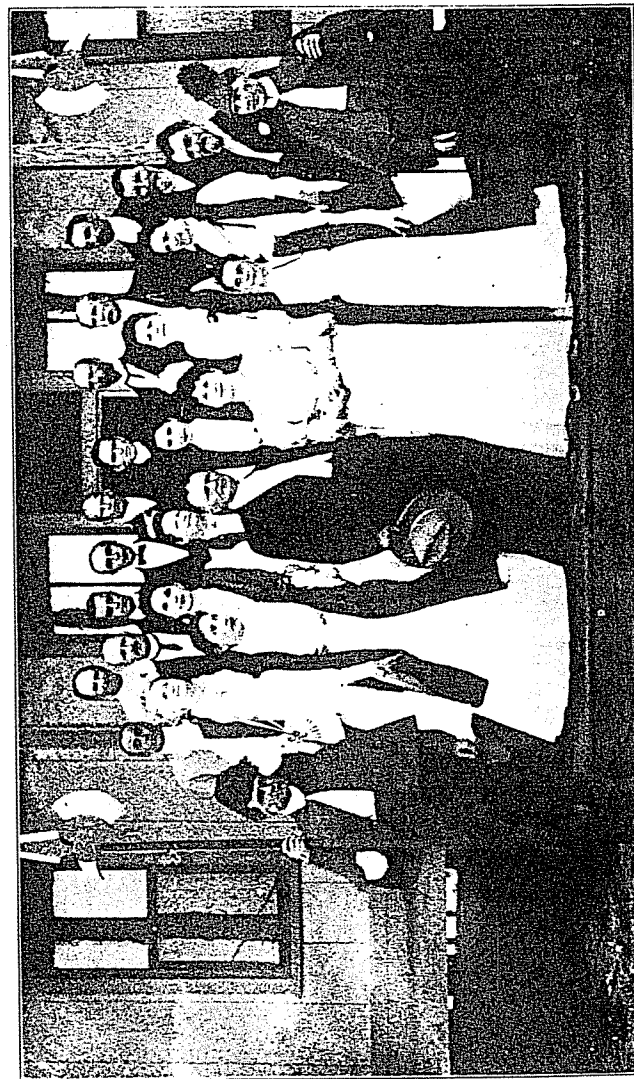
"The visitor at once remarks that, while many of the customs prevailing here radically differ from those obtaining in the ordinary home and town, there is no evidence of the slightest danger from moral and religious points of view in the innovations. This is no free-love Community, no anarchistic settlement. Here are advocates of law and order. The laws of the State and Nation are sustained and enforced. Moreover, the evils and vices common to the ordinary town and city are absent from Estero. No saloon is ever to be permitted within the corporate limits of the town, no gambling-houses, no houses of ill-fame, no grafting, no political corruption. All these things are forever barred from the town through the essential constitution of the city and system.

"All phases of immorality are prohibited by the municipal government. But the social relations are such as to make the practice of immoralities impossible here. The sexes are separate. The purest ideals of life are constantly inculcated. Celibacy is maintained as a stepping-stone to higher natural and mental states. The communistic order is comprised of celibates. A marital order exists, in which monogamy is recognized in accordance with the laws of the State and Nation; but even in the marital state there are ideals to be attained, ideals almost universally ignored in the ordinary sex relations. In the celibate order there is a constant social intercourse between old and young, males and females, brothers and sisters, parents and children, over which there is no restraint but the moral obligation which makes it incumbent that



GROUP OF KORESHAN SISTERS





KORESHAN GROUP, KORESH AND VICTORIA IN CENTER

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the fellowship be upon the broad lines of a Christian (or Koreshan) brotherhood.

"Features of the Koreshan social life which contribute to the happiness and contentment of the membership are: studies in the various branches of research and world-progress; entertainments and parties; the drama and art exhibits; meetings in religious capacity. Almost three times daily the people of the Community meet in one large dining-room. It is often a pleasure to look upon this aggregation of brothers and sisters of the new belief as they enjoy in common some of the products of their common labor, constituting as they do a large family in association and fellowship in the passing years, hopeful of the attainment of high ideals in thought and life."

A Shaker friend, Ezra J. Stewart, of Ashton, Fla., in whom I have the fullest confidence, after spending several days at Estero, gives the following interesting account of Koreshan life and conditions:

"There are at Estero about 200 people, including some 25 children, the sexes being nearly equally divided.

"Almost every nationality in the world is represented, although Americans, English and Germans predominate. There are two Hebrews, a young man and a sister, the only Jews ever connected with the Unity. I had the pleasure of meeting a woman from Denmark, a man from Norway, some people from Australia, Ireland, England, Canada, but no negroes. The latter are to be provided for, by being colonized on separate land, with houses, tools, animals, etc., furnished, and will be allowed to live in monogamic marriage relations in all particulars same as now, only subject to elevating influences. This matter is not now developed, but by the time race antagonism reaches

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serious results here in the South the Koreshans expect to be able to offer ample relief to the negro race.

"It was a surprise to me to meet at Estero so many intelligent, capable young men between 19 and 40 years of age, possessed of skill in mechanics, art, science, and engaged in varied mental and manual occupations. There is every appearance of intelligence and refinement and order. Each mentality seems to find opportunity for its highest and best development.

"The Sunday I was at Estero an informal service was held in the large common dining-hall. Dr. Teed explained to me before this meeting that a ceremonial service had been inaugurated, but that it had not yet been much practiced on account of other more pressing duties. Afterwards I saw the hall or building in which such service is held. The stage or platform consists of several small platforms, some elevated above others, and used to seat the several orders of which the Koreshan Unity is composed. For instance, Koresh and Victoria, the central duality of the Unity, occupy one platform; six women, members of the Planetary Chamber, another platform; four men, members of the Stellar Chamber, another platform; and still another platform seats six males and six females, members of the Signet Chamber. These orders are involved in the Koreshan system of government, and, as I understand, are patterned after the order of the stars and planets.

"There are numerous buildings large and small, about 35 in all. A large three-story building contains on the first floor a dining-room, 70 by 40 feet, with kitchen, etc. Two upper stories contain rooms for sisters only. This building is unpainted and unfinished inside, but clean and commodious.

"A large audience-room or hall is in a separate building and has a high ceiling. Here religious meetings, entertainments, dancing, music and school ex-

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ercises are at present carried on. Its inside walls are entirely covered with framed oil paintings of various sizes. Some of these are estimated to be worth thousands of dollars. Dr. Teed says it is the finest art gallery in Florida. Here the band and orchestra practice and give musical entertainments.

"Another one-story building contains a large well-equipped machine-shop, where engines and other complicated machines are made. Several mechanics are here employed, all Koreshan brethren.

"The sisters live apart in buildings by themselves, and the brethren live near their work, some of their rooms adjoining the workshops. The sisters have the best rooms generally, although all are comfortable, yet they need finishing, and this is being attended to as fast as possible.

"There are still other buildings on small estates near the home place, and on islands near Estero Bay, owned by the Koreshan Unity. These outside estates are small places recently bought of neighbors, and generally have a house, barn, garden, small orange grove, and some broken ground.

"I was told that Victoria and another sister came to Estero 12 years ago, and lived in a small one-room house still standing, for want of chairs sitting on a dry-goods box, and otherwise having very rough fare and few comforts for a number of years. Most of the improvements in the buildings and grounds have been made the past three years; and now the Community presents as good an appearance as any Shaker Community I have seen, although the buildings may not be of so permanent a character. They own about 7,000 acres of land, and estimate the net value of their property at \$250,000.\*

\* This estimate is corroborated by an affidavit of the Secretary made June 27, 1906, but their schedule includes \$50,000 for art works and designs and other amounts not usually regarded as "quick assets."

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"The Koreshans at present use all their fruit products at home, including cumquats, oranges, grape-fruit, pomegranates, bananas, pine-apples, paw-paw, guava, lemons, loquats, limes, pears, etc. They have about 30 acres in oranges and grape-fruit, but the trees are not all in bearing yet. Last year 1,000 gallons of sugar-cane syrup was consumed by the Koreshans, and the year before 1,800 gallons, all produced on the place.

"The waters in the vicinity are teeming with the greatest variety of fish, such as the mullett, pompano, Spanish mackerel, red-snapper, red-fish, grouper, trout, sheep-head, flounder, jack-fish, and others. While I was there two lads went fishing with a small boat and a 150-yard seine—a gill net—and brought home before supper 500 fish, and it is not uncommon to catch 800 fish at one time.

"The dining-tables are supplied with well-cooked food, which is well served.

"At their meals the brethren are seated at long tables at one side of the room, and the sisters on the opposite side, and the same order is observed at all their meetings, in entertainments, etc. For example, in their dances the sisters dance with sisters only, and the brothers with brothers.

"Educational matters receive much attention. A common elementary school for small children is conducted daily, including singing and instrumental music on piano, violin, cornet, etc. Higher branches are taught in the large art gallery and music-hall before referred to. One brother teaches algebra and book-keeping, others music, art, science, languages, etc. Lessons are given by the hour, and any who wish may attend, adults as well as children and youth. A surveyor brother takes boys out in the woods, and gives practical demonstration of his art. Boys are taught practical carpentry, printing, boat-building, mechanics,

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pattern-making, etc., etc., and Dr. Teed stated to me that the purpose is to give practical as well as theoretical instruction in all branches of learning.

"There are many books in various places about the Community, including the works of such authors as Shakespeare, Burns, Emerson, Longfellow, Spencer, Gibbon, Goethe, Tolstoi, Dickens, Cooper, Smiles, Max Muller, Swedenborg, J. H. Buchanan, besides concordances, cyclopedias and medical works. A library building is contemplated, and a Koreshan University, to be established on Mound-key Island, is also planned.

"The buildings are mostly set in a park along the right bank of the Estero River for about a mile. This park contains sunken gardens filled with flowers, banana trees loaded with fruit, paw-paw trees in fruit, palm trees of many varieties, the tall and stately eucalyptus, the bamboo waving its beautiful foliage, and many flowering trees and shrubs. Mounds are cast up, and crowned with large urns or vases for flowering-plants. Steps lead down into the sunken gardens and to the water's edge at the river. This land, where the park and buildings are located, was at times overflowed with water before the Koreshans came. They expended \$3,000 or more in dredging the river, besides making a deep ravine to carry off the surplus water into the river. This ravine is now beautified with Para and Guinea grasses, both natives of Cuba, and is crossed by several artistic foot-bridges made of bamboo and other woods. Almost every kind of tropical fruit possible to grow in Florida can be found in this delightful garden. Flowering vines cover the verandas of the houses and the foot-bridges in the park. Steps leading down to the boat-landing, made of concrete colored with red clay, are quite grand, and were designed and made by the brethren. In fact, all the work in this magnificent garden is the product of

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home brains and industry. Koresh says he intends parking the river banks on both sides down to the bay, a distance of five miles. Altogether the grounds around the buildings at Estero are very beautiful, and if present plans are consummated promise to be still more attractive. A green-house or conservatory has been started, so as to have a constant supply of plants for park and gardens.

"During my sojourn at Estero two entertainments were given: one consisting of orchestral music, including selections from the great composers; the other of music by the same organization and dramatic exercises by the children. Besides their orchestra of 15 pieces the Koreshans have a fine band.

"On Estero Island the Koreshans have a large house kept by their members, to which they resort for change and recreation.

"The apparent devotion and love existing between Koresh and his disciples I have never seen excelled, although I have seen in some Shaker Families a like condition existing between a few members and their leader.

"Koresh mentioned to me that Victoria Gratia, his dual associate, was pointed out to him at the time of his illumination in 1870 as destined to walk with him, and eventually become the mother of the 144,000 sons of God. She is refined and still beautiful although over sixty years of age, proficient in music and art, and thoroughly imbued with the idea of her high calling, moving among her associates like an empress, as Koresh explained to me she is, and that the beautiful things with which she is surrounded were granted to her in love by her people. Victoria's greatest work is to begin with the martyrdom of Koresh, of which event Koresh himself freely conversed, though he confessed he was without knowledge of the time and manner of its accomplishment; but when accomplished

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the chosen woman of the age will be exalted into divine motherhood and imperial pre-eminence, as the divine natural head of all the orders of church and State.

"The Visitor at Estero is not only impressed with the many things of interest in their organization, life and externals, but with the fact that the Koreshans themselves are happy and buoyant with expectation. I have never beheld a people who seemed so united in spirit and so confident of the fulfilment of all their hopes."

From the account thus far given of the Koreshans, by themselves and by my Shaker friend, the reader must conclude that very favorable conditions prevail at Estero, and that a measure of success must already be credited to them.

But the question of success or non-success, as determined by the common standards, is evidently in Dr. Teed's own mind of trifling importance. No one realizes so well as he that the success of the Estero Colony, and of his grand schemes affecting humanity, is dependent upon the inherent truth or falsity of the basic facts, principles and theories enunciated by him, and these should be so frankly stated in this sketch that the interested inquirer will have no reasonable excuse for misapprehension of their import.

And, first, attention should be called to the fact that Koreshanity is not merely a new system of philosophy, to be added to the multifarious systems previously existing. It would sweep them all out of existence, boldly claiming "it is the antithesis of all modern theories, of all schools of thought; the climax of all mental progress, the ultimate and absolute truth of

## AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

being and existence; the revelation of all mysteries; the uncovering of the occult; the true explanation of all phenomena; the scientific interpretation of Nature and the Bible."

Nor is it merely a new form of Christianity; for Koreshanity, we are told, "is to supplant Christianity as Christianity supplanted Judaism."

### DOCTRINES AND PRINCIPLES OF KORESHANITY.

#### *Condensed from Writings of its Founder.*

Koreshanity teaches that "the universe is a cell, a hollow globe, the physical body of which is the earth; the sun is at the center. We live on the inside of the cell; and the sun, moon, planets, and stars are all within the globe.\* The universe is eternal, a great battery, and perpetually renews itself through inherent functions, by virtue of which it involves and evolves itself."

That "the science of alchemy is the philosopher's stone, the key to the mystery of life; chemistry is false; alchemy is true."

That "God is personal and biune, with a trinity of specific attributes;" that "Jesus the Christ was God Almighty."

That "the coming of the Messiah is as inevitable as the reproduction of the seed. The divine Seed was sown nineteen hundred years ago; the first-fruit is another Messianic personality. The Messiah is now in the world, declaring the scientific Gospel."

That "reincarnation is the central law of life—the law of the resurrection; reincarnation and resurrection are identical. Resurrection is reached through a succession of re-embodiments."

That "heaven and hell are in humanity, and con-

\*This theory, upon which the Koreshans largely base their system, is very fully explained and defended in "Cellular Cosmogony," a work of 194 pp.

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stitute the spiritual world; the spiritual domain is mental, and is in the natural humanity,—not in the sky."

That "origin and destiny are one and the same. The origin of man is God, and God is man's destiny."

That it is possible to attain immortality "in the natural world—the first step being the recognition of the Messiah and the application of his truth."

That "to become immortal one must cease to propagate life on the plane of mortality. The standard of Koreshan purity is the virgin life of Jesus the Messiah. The Central Order of the Koreshan Unity is celibate and communistic. Celibacy obtains in the central nucleus, never in the world at large."

That "the Bible is the best written expression of the human mind."

That there should be "communism, not only of the goods of life, but of life itself;" and that "the bond of the true communism is the true religion, and the central personality of the divine communism is the Messiah."

That its "social system is patterned after the form of the natural cosmos." We "demonstrate the fallacy of competition; advocate the destruction of the money-power; the control of the products of industry by the government, and the equitable distribution of the goods of life. Koreshanity will abolish wage-slavery; and make it impossible for men to accumulate wealth and impoverish the people."

"The government of the universe is imperialistic; and humanity will constitute a unit only when every class is emplaced at rest and liberty as are the strata, stars, and spheres of the physical cosmos."

The messianic law and the law of reincarnation, it is elsewhere stated, are fulfilled in the founder of Koreshanity, Dr. Cyrus R. Teed, whose father's name

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was Jesse, recalling the prophecy of Isaiah: "In that day there shall be a root of Jesse which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious." The extraordinary claims put forth by Koresh and by his followers in his behalf, form the very warp and woof of Koreshan literature, and are everywhere frankly avowed, but perhaps most strikingly in his proclamation of January 15, 1891, year of Koresh 52, declaring the year of liberty for woman, and that the desecration of maternity shall cease. This document (see Woman's Mission Tract No. 4) speaks of "the wisdom and anointed power of Koresh," and of "Koresh the Lord's anointed," and thus concludes: "Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of Jehovah with Michael and his hosts in congress assembled." Koresh elsewhere asserts that his dictum is "derived from the throne of God," and "is the veritable word of the Eternal God," and in "Cellular Cosmogony" he is spoken of as "the divine and natural scientist," and the "sole interpreter and expositor of the Bible;" and in *The Flaming Sword* of April 15, 1907, Koresh says: "By the authority of the Almighty I am gathering the people who are willing to make the essential sacrifices to the end that they may become the offspring of the Almighty."

Whether Koreshanity will "supplant Christianity as Christianity supplanted Judaism," and become the one world-religion and power, depends upon whether Dr. Teed has received, as claimed, credentials for this work from the Most High. Koreshanity will stand or fall by itself, and it must be said to its credit that it

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asks no favors, except that the most rigid tests shall be applied to its doctrines and claims. To applicants for Community membership the Koreshans wisely say: "If you cannot come to us thoroughly imbued with the spirit and the religion of our work we do not want you."\*

### Koreshan Literature.

\* Book I.—The Immortal Manhood: the Laws and Processes of its Attainment in the Flesh. By Koresh. De Luxe Edition, containing 184 pages.

Book II.—The Logos or Word-Book. By Lucie Page Borden. In preparation.

### Pamphlets.

The Cellular Cosmogony or the Earth a Concave Sphere. By Koresh and Prof. U. G. Morrow. 200 pages, profusely illustrated.

Koreshan Science; The Science of the Decalogue; Reincarnation, or Resurrection of the Dead; Emanuel Swedenborg—His Mission; The Shepherd of Israel, by Koresh; Identification of Israel, by Dr. A. W. K. Andrews; Kapital; Lohnsklaverei und Industrielle Freiheit (German), Translated from the English of Koresh, by Dr. J. Augustus Weimar; Judgment (a discussion of the sex question); The Koreshan Unity (containing information concerning membership in the Koreshan orders), by Koresh; Scientific Experiments on Lake Michigan, by Prof. U. G. Morrow.

### Tracts.

The Covenant of Life; A More Literal Exposition of the Decalogue; Proclamation; Where is the Lord? Fundamental Principles and Covenant Defined; The Mission of the Lord; Cardinal Points of Koreshanity; Celibacy; The Law of God; Mnemonics, or the Science of Memory, by Koresh; Ein Kurzer Inbegriff der Koreschanitischen Universologie (German).—Translated from the English of Prof. Morrow, by Dr. J. Augustus Weimar.

### Leaflets.

What is Koreshanity? Unsolved Problems of Chemistry; Unsolved Problems of Astronomy; Astronomical Hypotheses; Koreshan Integral Cosmogony;—Geolinear Foreshortening. The Flaming Sword: A Monthly Magazine published at Estero, Lee Co., Fla.