

Besides the usual teachings of Christianity, they have incorporated into their creed a number of precepts which make them a peculiar people. Among these are: Absolute non-conformity in dress; total abstinence from all oaths; non-resistance; the administration of the holy kiss and the adoption of no new thing. The strict churchman is required to wear a full beard with no moustache, and to wear his hair so long that it will at least touch his shoulders. He must wear a very broad brimmed stiff hat, a long coat, and trousers of a peculiar cut; and must use hooks in place of buttons on all garments. The women are required to wear only the plainest of dress goods, never to go without their little black cloth head caps, and to avoid any form of a bonnet. In winter they wear black silk handkerchiefs tied about their heads, and in summer a broad straw hat with the brims turned down and held by strings which tie under the chin.

Their customs in dress give to them a quaint appearance, indeed, and carries one back in imagination to ancient Switzerland, where their sect was organized by their great teacher, Simon Menno.

Non-resistance is faithfully practiced by all the members. No one would be allowed to go to war under any circumstances. They never go to law, and should a difficulty arise between two members it is referred to the church and settled by discussion of the members. In case anyone should disobey the laws of the church all the other members avoid the transgressor, and he is made to feel so uncomfortable that he soon repents and endeavors to make good the wrong. This done, the offender is received again into the church with appropriate ceremonies.

Their houses are very plain and scantily furnished. The woodwork of the houses is rarely painted. Window blinds, carpets, pictures and other ornaments are forbidden. A fireplace, or stove, a table, a bed and a few chairs are the usual furniture of a room. Yet, with the absence of all these seeming necessities there is still much about the house to be admired. The floors are white and spotless from frequent scrubbing; the mantle is adorned with ancient dishes; the polished hearth glistens in the light of the fire and all the inmates appear happy and contented. The ordinary housewife would find great difficulty in preparing a single palatable dish with the few cooking utensils supplied to the kitchen; but they supply all the needs of the Amishman, for his appetite for dainties is as dormant as his ambition. The few plain victuals