

RUSSIAN REFUGEES.

Deplorable Condition of Affairs in the Jewish Colony at Cotopaxi.

The True Inwardness of the Trouble, De-
tailed By Four Reputable Denver
Citizens.

February 11, 1883

The Cotopaxi colony, composed of Jewish exiles from Russia, is again assuming an undue prominence, showing a most worthless management on the part of those who inaugurated the scheme. The facts in the case seem to be as follows: A man by the name of E. H. Saltiel, who has a mining property at Cotopaxi, went to New York city some time since for the purpose of bringing a colony west. Being a Jew he engrafted himself into the confidence of the Jewish relief societies of that city, who gave him from \$8,000 to \$10,000 for the purpose of colonizing sixty Russian Jewish exiles at Cotopaxi. Mr. Saltiel obtained this large amount of money owing to false representations, stating that he had suitable and fertile lands in the Wet Mountain valley, and that by the development of these the colony could soon realize a handsome income. But as he possessed none of the rich ranch lands of the Wet Mountain valley, he could not keep the pledges made to the Jewish societies in New York, and located these poor families in the vicinity of Cotopaxi, where it has been utterly impossible for them to make a living, and the colonists are now in destitute circumstances.

Of late many reports have been received by the Jewish residents at Denver, that the colony was suffering, and that they had neither sufficient food nor clothing to protect them from the cold. When the colonists sent word to this city of how they had been deceived, they at once enlisted the sympathy of the Jewish people of Denver. Their appeal for help was not made in vain. A committee, consisting of L. Witkowski, the well-known proprietor of the Star boot and shoe store, on Lawrence street, and George H. Kohn, an attorney of high standing in Denver, was sent to look after the Cotopaxi colony. They went as directed, and made a thorough investigation, and on returning last week made a report to the Jewish Society of this city. They found the colonists to be in great destitution and abject poverty, and without the means of gaining a livelihood. The committee learned that, instead of locating the colony on the rich lands of that mountain valley, Saltiel had placed them on the productive and sterile lands in the vicinity of Cotopaxi, where it was impossible for them to make a living. Since the report of the investigating committee, Mr. Saltiel has made statements through the public press that the reports made by Messrs. Witkowski and Kohn were false, and that, on the contrary, the lands were fertile and the colony in good condition. In these statements Mr. Saltiel has further declared that the colony is contented, and that he has paid them large sums of money for the development of his mining property.

Denver Republican
11 Feb 1883

Yesterday a REPUBLICAN reporter was sent to interview Mr. Witkowski on the true inwardness of the matter. Messrs. Kohn, Herman Strauss and Isaac Davidson were then sent for, and the statements which had had been made by Saltiel were then and there denied by all of them. They assert that Mr. Saltiel has no character, and that he has an unsavory record, and that he has no standing among the Jewish people here.

Mr. Davidson says that he has known Saltiel for seven or eight years, and that when he (Saltiel) first came to Denver, he failed to provide for his wife, and laughed at the distress of his family.

The fact is now very apparent that the colony venture was simply a scheme of Saltiel's to advance his own private and personal interests. It seems that he attempted to build up a town at Cotopaxi, and hoped by the assistance of this colony to boom his property. He furnished them with miserable huts and charged them \$250 for their erection, when the

The fact is now very apparent that the colony venture was simply a scheme of Saltiel's to advance his own private and personal interests. It seems that he attempted to build up a town at Cotopaxi, and hoped by the assistance of this colony to boom his property. He furnished them with miserable huts and charged them \$250 for their erection, when the original cost could not have been over \$100. He had promised them each a cow, two horses and a plow, but on these lands they could accomplish nothing with them. Only three men have been employed in the mine, and the checks given by Saltiel were dishonored by the Canon City Bank. Messrs. Witkowski and Strauss recently made another visit to the colony, taking with them provisions, clothing and money to the value of \$500. The case has been laid before the society in New York, and an attempt will be made to alleviate the distress of the colony, and place them in a more favored locality. A man named Schwartz, who is a partner of Saltiel's, is now in New York, making an effort to get more money from the Jewish societies on the plea that he desires to erect machinery for irrigating the lands. The New York committee is in possession of the true facts in the case, however, and Schwartz's mission will undoubtedly prove a fruitless one.