

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### The Cotopaxi Colony.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE.

In December last I was sojourning in Colorado, and while in those parts, visited Cotopaxi with a view of personally investigating how our brethren were faring in their newly-made homes. As anticipated, I found the colonists enjoying the best of health, as the Cotopaxi climate is very salubrious, notwithstanding the expressed opinion of the Denver committee to the contrary.

A long residence in Colorado and some ten years of experience as a stock-raiser, justify me in the above contradiction, as I am very well acquainted with the entire mountain range, climate and soil all around Cotopaxi, clear to Fairplay and the Snowy Range, and have grazed my stock during the summer and early fall in very close proximity to Cotopaxi, but was compelled to drive my herd to the valley in November.

During the entire time of my abode in those parts we have had splendid summer pastures, but grazing alone was profitable and not farming, as the season for the latter are entirely too short, extending from June only to September, and under those circumstances, aside of being a rocky, mountainous range, what colony, even if most completely equipped (which this is far from), could succeed in making a living and supporting its families?

I am satisfied the H. E. A. S. would never have had the remotest idea of planting a colony in that barren country had it not been for the instigation of Mr. E. H. Saltael, whose object the circumstances only too plainly demonstrate, and he alone is to blame and is responsible for the unsuccessful issue of the Cotopaxi Colony, and not the H. E. A. S., who have done everything in their power for the promotion and welfare of the unfortunate emigrants, and they (the colonists) are aware of it and are thankful and ever praying for the good health and long life of its committee.

Had not the high-flavored, or, as Mr. Henry called it, "rose-colored" report of Mr. Julius Schwartz, LL. D., appeared, no trouble would have been known and no Denver committee needed.

Although adding the no doubt deserved LL. D. to his name, he does not possess good, sound judgment, but, on the contrary, manifests his inexperience and downright ignorance of the requisites of a new colony, peopled by strange people in a strange land, by forwarding a report to the easily beguiled committee (who have reposed all confidence in him) that there was nothing left undone and that the colony was in a very flourishing condition. Although at the time the report was made (I believe in August) everything looked brighter. The crop, if such it can be called, consisting solely of potatoes, was in the ground, yet, nevertheless, J. S., LL. D., brought his great imaginary powers, "Col. Sellers"-like, to his aid, supported by his mathematical abilities, and calculated upon a realization of at least two thousand dollars from the crop, which only goes to show that he had as much knowledge of the fall and winter climate as he did of the potatoes. His calculation went wide of its mark, and the unfortunate emigrants in course of time found out the true state of affairs, but, of course, as is usually the case, after the barn-door having been left open, and instead of having potatoes to sell they found themselves compelled to buy, and were willing to work outside of the colony to meet their daily wants, but only a few succeeded in obtaining work.

This state of affairs they communicated to some of the committee, but could get no reply; they wrote again and again, but no answer was sent them.

It was plainly seen from the President's (Mr. Henry) report to the Denver Committee that he imagined the colonists well supplied, and that they from choice alone preferred begging for charity.

Now in the name of humanity and common sense, what could the poor emigrants do? Reply from New York was denied them (as you can see by the letter they wrote to me), work to keep body and soul together they could not obtain; they had no alternative but to lay their very lamentable condition before the Denver Jews.

The Denverites sent a committee *Mcraglem* out to them, and they, in return reported wrongly and greatly misrepresented and exaggerated the matter, and in fact caused more real harm than good to the poor colonists. The ignorance displayed in reporting that a house sixteen by twenty, doubly boarded, etc., costs only, together with stove and cooking utensils, one hundred dollars, is perfectly absurd. I have seen the houses and have been in them, and have the figures of a carpenter. It takes just thirty-five hundred feet of lumber to build the house and partitions, etc., but should not cost over one hundred and fifty dollars, not including any utensils—but there is no use in crying over spilt milk now.

The houses are comfortable enough for eight or nine months of the year, but in the dead of winter no one cook-stove can keep them warm, and they have no other. They have plenty of wood not a great distance off, but have to hire it hauled, as they have only one span of horses on a farm of twelve miles.

In conclusion, I will say that the emigrants of Cotopaxi are a set of hard-working, industrious people, with good manners and behavior, and are willing to work, as work is what they want and not *schuorring*. But work they can not obtain in that forsaken spot, winter is hard upon them, and burdened with families, what can they do but beg or wait until everything is exhausted and starve to death with their families?

Had the colony been planted on a reasonably good tract of farming-land where the chance for the display of sinew and muscle could have been had, I assure you your committee would have been spared all this superfluous aggravation and trouble, and the emigrants would have been on a fair way to prosperity and happiness.

But, nevertheless, this misstep must not and shall not dishearten this most praiseworthy H. E. A. S. of the United States, as all beginnings are difficult, but so much more gratifying is the reward.

The moral this high-priced lesson has taught them, is, to not take every one's word for selecting a location to plant a colony. The selection requires a great deal of judgment and good common sense, and, furthermore, an eye for the future and not greed for personal fame and gain, but to put heart, hand and mind in concert to aid our unfortunate brethren to a future state of prosperity and happiness.

I am of the opinion that a great deal of good may arise out of this controversy, as an exchange of views as to the best plan of planting colonies is the proper question to arrive at now.

In my opinion, timber-land in close proximity to a river would be the most suitable place, where an opportunity for improvement and display of energy could be had, and I would kindly request our co-religionists who have this matter at heart to express their views upon it, and let us all have the benefit of it.

Yours respectfully,

PH. NUSSBAUM.

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