

## AMONG THE COLONISTS.

*The Painted Woods Colony.*

I am at present here visiting my two sons, who are getting along remarkably well. We all came here, about three hundred refugees, three and a half years ago. My youngest son secured a place in a barber shop; he learned there the trade, and now he is the partner in a well patronized barber shop, is a good workman, and doing well. My older son is doing even better, has remunerative employment, and gives general satisfaction. Whatever may have been said and written about that colony, I can bear testimony, and so will every one of the settlers, that we are getting along far better than we could expect. More than forty families and a number of young men are located there, all having claims of one hundred and sixty acres of excellent land. We bless the day when we were settled, but more especially that such a man as Rev. Dr. Wechsler lived at St. Paul. For the last four years he has labored for us, and his kindness cannot be described; he has visited our colony nine times; and even during the winter, when the temperature was forty degrees below zero, he came to our colony, and one time at the risk of his own life, for he lost his way, as our colony is situated thirty miles from the railroad station.

We were very sorry in reading, a few months ago, in a New York paper, an article in reference to our colony, which is false in every respect. It was stated that the colonists of Painted Woods, as also others, would never make farmers, as we were not industrious. It was also asserted that Dr. Wechsler had received \$80,000, and that a certain Mr. S. Weil, of Milwaukee, had so remarked at the St. Louis Convention. There is not a word of truth in either of these statements. Let any one come to our colony and we can convince him of our full success. We plead guilty of many shortcomings, but not all men are alike. The settlers have all been industrious. The farmers in the neighborhood no longer believe that Jews cannot become excellent farmers. Our work compares favorably with all others. Last year, we had already a good harvest, raising a good quantity of wheat, barley, corn, potatoes, peas, beans, etc.

Our present condition may be briefly stated thus: We have all from fifteen to fifty acres of land broken for cultivation, and will increase that number in the spring. We have all houses, barns, wells; we own each either oxen or horses, and some both. Cows, poultry, wagons, farming implements (even self-binders and a threshing machine). It would take too much space would we enumerate what we have accomplished. The Painted Woods Colony we consider to-day, as far as reports reach us, the best in America. A large majority of the settlers, myself included, are fully self-sustaining. We are not yet enjoying the comforts of life, but our condition is improving, as all we need is yet one good harvest, and we are on the road of prosperity.

The assistance we have received will bear rich fruit. The noble committees of Europe, as of London, Berlin, Frankfurt, and Hamburg, as well as the noble Alliance, have sent large contributions for our assistance which shall never be forgotten, not less the noble philanthropist, Baron de Hirsch, of Paris. We had also some noble friends here as Rev. Dr. Wechsler informed us: Messrs. J. H. Schiff and L. Lewisohn, of New York, the latter not merely liberally assisting us, but also using his well-known influence in our behalf. We must also mention Judge Isaacs, of New York, who was ever ready and willing to advocate our cause.

The statement that Rev. Dr. Wechsler has received \$80,000 is, however, absolutely false. For our colony proper about \$20,000 has been expended, and we all can testify for what; but this would hardly be necessary, as he has vouchers for all expenditures. There were other expenses, as a few of the settlers had to be removed. Some returned to Europe, and also some other colonists he supported located elsewhere. The many hundreds of Russians who came to St. Paul were also assisted, and the total sum of \$25,000 has been not only expended as all can convince themselves, but he was compelled to pay personally, in addition, some debts incurred.

If all had worked who had the colonies in charge, as the founder of ours, we venture to say, greater results would have been accomplished. We have two settlers among us from other colonies, Mr. Nudelman, of **Cotopaxi**, and Dorfman, of Vineland. They could not succeed in either of these colonies, and left all behind them. But now, assisted by Dr. Wechsler, they are among our best settlers, and will be fully successful as agriculturists.

This communication should, however, not induce more of our co-religionists, and none of our countrymen to come to Painted Woods intending to locate there. We would be glad to welcome all, as there is yet plenty good land to be had

from the government—it is even our wish to see this colony enlarged; we know, however, that without any assistance land cannot be cultivated. It requires at least from five to six hundred dollars to be successful. There are a few families at the colony who met with misfortune, as a prairie fire destroyed their crops, and therefore new-comers, without means, could not succeed. We are not yet able to help others, as much as we are willing to do it.

In 1884, Mr. S. Montagu, of London, visited our colony. We all felt sorry, however, that he could not prolong his stay to convince himself what had been accomplished. Now we invite every friend of ours to pay us a visit, and we will show him around, and we are sure that our colony will be found in excellent condition.

SOLOMON DELLOR.

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