

## Russian Refugees.

Some Jewish litterateurs in Russia have undertaken to write a joint and detailed history of recent events in that empire, in order to transmit to posterity a faithful account of the troubles by which the Jews in Russia have been overwhelmed since April, 1881.

The heads of the Jewish community in St. Petersburg have determined to petition the Government asking for its sanction to the raising of a fund wherewith to repair to some extent the damage done by the disturbances of this and last year, by means of help to be afforded to those who suffered from those disturbances. It is proposed to collect weekly from each Jewish person, who is not in needy circumstances or in receipt of communal charity, the small amount of five kopecks. This would realise upwards of 100,000 roubles per week, sufficient, it is estimated, to settle from 500 to 1,000 families in places where they can reside and carry on their former occupations in safety.

### AWAKE FROM YOUR LETHARGY!

The San-Francisco **Hebrew** makes the following appeal to the Jews of the Pacific Coast:

"We live in California, the land renowned for its hospitality. We come of a race noted for the same virtue. Shall we turn a deaf ear to the piteous appeals for these exiles? Shall we continue to turn aside from the call of sympathy and humanity. Is the old spirit dead among us? Is not even the pride left us with which we used to boast of our achievements? We have always believed that the **Hebrews** of this State and Coast were of a superior class; that they were the picked men of the older Jewish communities; that on the average they were in this city particularly of better intelligence and of more public spirit than those of most of the cities of the Union. We certainly believe that San Francisco Hebrews stood higher with their fellow-citizens than is elsewhere the case. We have contributed freely to sanitary funds and patriotic purposes, and to every civic occasion. Have we nothing left to give our downcast brethren,—no monetary hospitality for these victims of outrageous persecution? For the sake of our fair name let the answer be "Plenty more."

### EXILES IN PALESTINE.

When it was announced that Mr. Laurence Olphand was about to take steps to divert a portion

of the Russian exodus towards the Holy Land, a large number of refugees, without awaiting the culmination of Mr. Oliphant's arrangements, started thither of their own accord. Most of them were poor and their means were readily exhausted. In the meantime, negotiations failing, the refugees reached Jerusalem without any arrangements having been made for their care. The result is shown by the following from the correspondence of the *Jewish Chronicle*.

"The streets of Jaffa, partially also of Jerusalem, are full of emigrants, who in vain seek a helping hand. Poor as the Israelites here are, they do all in their power to aid their brethren; they lodge and feed them, and the emigrants themselves, in so far as they are artisans, are eagerly set to work. But were it not for a number of American ladies and gentlemen, who by great sacrifices have already saved from certain death a number of Israelites that some months ago arrived from Yemen in utter destitution, and who likewise nobly assist any worthy Russian emigrant cases coming under their notice; were it not for these generous and worthy children of the Great Republic, as also the English missionaries, many of our miserable Russian brethren would have perished from sheer want."

#### AID SOCIETY NOTES.

Thirty-seven emigrants were returned yesterday to Europe.

The Employment Bureau continues its efficient work. At Castle Garden employment was found for over ninety men, while at the East Broadway bureau, thanks to the Ladies Auxiliary Society in general and Misses Alexander and Kantrowitz in particular, over fifty females were found employment in various branches.

Mr. C. H. Heimberg, of Pensacola, Fla., remitted to the Society this week \$32, collected from Jews and Christians in that city. In his letter he says that as the locality is neither an agricultural nor a manufacturing one, they can find no employment for any refugees, except one good tailor, and so propose to aid by sending monthly such sums as can be collected for the purpose.

The expenditures for the month of July were as follows: salaries, \$1505 64; rent, \$158; carpenter, \$106 82; one policeman, \$67 95; Mr. Goldman's expenses, colonizations, \$405; advertising, \$95; stenographer, \$55; stationery and printing, \$324 01; postage and telegrams, \$187 24; sundries, \$272 93; board and lodging, \$11,056 80; Ward's Island Refuge, \$2201 24; transportation, \$9765 54; clothing, \$1489 23; relief, \$5204 43; Brooklyn refugees, \$1971 52; Vineland Colony, \$5313 61; Colorado Colony, \$1617 10; branch societies, \$1151 24; total, \$43,657 30.

#### UNNATURAL, BUT TRUTHFUL.

"It is a curious fact that the Russian Jewish residents of the United States seem less interested in the fate of their wretched brethren than any other class of Hebrews. It is heartlessness for which it is difficult to account, and those who have worked most among the refugees have noted how unwilling the more successful Russians are, to assist those who are suffering. In places where subscription lists are started the Russians seldom give a cent. Is it a national characteristic—not to help each other?" Thus says the *Record*, and that the same state of things exist here is shown by the following letter received at this office:

#### A NUT FOR OUR DOWN TOWN FOLKS.

#### TO THE AMERICAN HEBREW:

Since the topic of the day at present is the Russian refugees, and the great problem to solve is how to obtain the necessary means to alleviate their sufferings, permit me, being rather of an inquisitive turn of mind and finding your paper the only "American Hebrew" organ which devotes its columns in profusion to the refugee question, to make an inquiry. Could you or your numerous readers inform me what has been done for the refugees by our large community of the east side, which is composed chiefly of Jews of Russian and Polish origin? I remember once, after being criticised, they came out with the startling news that they had sent the enormous sum of \$650 to the Aid Society, and that at the end of the week they would complete it with the first \$1,000 of their subscription. Since that time which was last March, I have heard nothing further; and not only did they fail to fulfil their promise, but claim that they have completed

their work satisfactorily, as could be judged from the following facts: When approaching a certain party named \_\_\_\_\_ who is the publisher of a certain newspaper, and who also presides over the so-called Auxiliary Society, and reproaching him for neglecting his duty in not substantially aiding his unfortunate brethren, he smilingly replied, "Why, did I not do all that was necessary? didn't I provide them for a whole week, namely the Passover week, with all the necessary paraphernalia to satisfy their spiritual wants?" And with this action he considers himself justified in neglecting their bodily as well as their spiritual wants for fifty-one weeks, the balance of the year.

Now the question arises, is there any prospect for a permanent relief for the refugees when their own countrymen who ought to stand pre-eminent in that noble charity are the very ones shamefully neglecting them. Amongst other reasons for their shameful actions they assert that they are too good Jews to mix themselves with their more liberal coreligionists. It is true, Judaism is, to a great extent, indebted to our down town brethren for being strict adherents to our holy religion. But what provisions do they make for resisting the reproach which our so-called radicals are hurling at their heads, when they argue, admitting that the orthodox element is following up the Jewish customs to the letter, even appertaining to fasting? Did not our prophet Isaiah comment on it when he said, "Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy home? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" Would it not be more advisable for our orthodox brethren to show their liberality by taking a lively interest in the present movement? Not only would they perform the duty they owe to humanity, they would also perform their duty towards their religion by showing their antagonists that a man's piety does not prevent his benevolence. But to their present action one is forced to apply the Talmudical expression *עיר השן מרקד ברייה* for not only do our east side Jews neglect their duty to themselves, they are also trying to prevent others from doing it, as not long since it was brought to light that one of their so-called orthodox rabbis sent damaging letters to England and France concerning the philanthropic work of our enlightened coreligionists. Hoping that you will be able to throw some light on the subject, I remain till then,

AN INQUIRER.

New York, July 23, 1882.

A PLEA FOR AGRICULTURAL COLONIZATION AS THE SOLUTION OF THE RUSSIAN REFUGEE PROBLEM.

#### TO THE AMERICAN HEBREW.

It will at once be conceded by any one who has had the opportunity to study the characteristics of our unfortunate brethren, the Russian refugees, that in spite of all the disadvantages and drawbacks under which we see them, they still contain a large proportion of sturdy, able-bodied men, loving manual labor and desiring only a chance to be self-sustaining. Never in modern times has there been witnessed the spectacle of masses of Jews flocking to the hardest toil and even competing with men trained from their youth to the severest labor. Nor have we in America ever before seen such numbers of mechanics and agriculturists. Under these circumstances, with thousands already here and thousands knocking at our doors and soon to follow, it seems to me that all motives, whether religious, social, political, or simply those of self-defence, should dictate such a course of action on the part of the Jewish community as to cause this increase of Hebrew population to be one not merely in numbers, but also in respectability and standing, so as to redound to the credit of Judaism and add to the dignity and influence of the entire Jewish element in the United States.

Now, these good results are not obtainable by a mere system of dispersion, scattering large numbers of destitute people over the country, and bringing them into rivalry in the lowest classes of labor with the lowest classes of laborers. From these only two results will follow: one part will remain in their new-found occupa-

tions at the sacrifice of a large part of their religious and moral character; the other part, to protect their Judaism, will leave their new pursuits and take to the time-worn old clothes dealing, peddling, etc., with the inevitable sacrifice of dignity and respectability, in either case very undesirable results for American Jews to contemplate. It is evident therefore, that in our efforts to place these people we should act on a careful and well-considered system. We have two classes to deal with: persons having a mechanical trade or skill in some useful occupation, which they wish to exercise, and persons without a trade but willing to work at manual labor, or having a trade and preferring agricultural occupation; and to suit these two classes our system must be twofold. For the first class, which we should strive to keep in the minority, we must have a competent, efficient Employment Bureau. This being now in course of development, I will not advocate it at length, but will merely lay down a few rules which I think should govern it.

The officers in charge of the employment bureau should not forget that the persons with whom they have to deal are Jews. This implies the further recognition of two facts: 1 That, they should be given the opportunity to observe the Sabbath as far as possible; 2, That they should not be placed indiscriminately among Gentile workmen, for, say what you will, there is considerable prejudice in this land against the Jew, especially when he is a foreigner, ignorant of the language and customs, and if placed at random, hundreds of Jewish workmen are certain to become victims of annoyances and petty persecutions, which will render their permanent stay in those workshops impossible. To provide for the first case, the officers should endeavor to obtain the consent of the employers to absence from work on the Sabbath: to favor especially those occupations which allow absence on the Sabbath without detriment, and to not overlook the fact that there is a not inconsiderable number of Sabbatharians in this country. One gentleman in Plainfield, New Jersey, a Sabbatharian, has, I am informed, an establishment where several hundred men are employed, and where no work is done on the Sabbath. To provide for the second case, which I know by experience to be true, the employment bureau should especially seek Jewish employers, and not place single refugees among hundreds of non-Israelites, but to try, if possible, to send several at a time.

The second part of our system must be to secure agricultural employment for the second class of people with whom we have to deal. But here the same difficulties and inconveniences present themselves, if we hire out these people to Gentile farmers. We cannot ignore the fact that it will not do to place people for employment where all the holiest traditions of their lives are continually, ruthlessly, necessarily violated. A sincere Jew, at most of our Russian brethren are, may be willing to undergo the hardest unremitting labor, but how can we ask him to remain where he knows no Sabbath, no holiday, no synagogue, and where he must eat forbidden food. We do not speak of the merits of his position—that is another question—but we must look at the thing from his standpoint. Hard enough in the case of a single man, how much aggravated in the case of a married couple, and what if he should fall into the hands of a brutal and dishonest master? So the only true course (justified already even after this short time by experience) remains to establish agricultural colonies such as at Cotopaxi and Vineland. Here all can be useful, the unskilled, side by side with the skilled, will develop into practical farmers, and the colonies can also serve as the site of industrial, alongside of agricultural occupations. Thousands of Israelites can thus be helped to farms and homesteads of their own, and every unbiased mind will at once acknowledge that the prospect of becoming independent, united to their proverbial sobriety, frugality and industry, will soon make them a creditable accession to the community at large, and a pride and honor to Judaism and the Jewish race in the United States. So many reasons being in favor of colonization, there remains only one grand objection, that of expense, but this, though at first sight colossal, will, on nearer investigation, be found entirely to disappear. We need not impoverish our community to realize colonization; by no means, it will eventually be found the cheapest plan, as by false economy we may create a large pauper population in the near future, a thing which in our own defence we must strenuously seek to avoid. A system of colonization should not, in fact, cannot, be undertaken by funds donated for charity, and given to the settler without return. To successfully undertake it, we must have a credit institution or joint stock company, an au-

xtensive scale, of course, without the full strictness of purely commercial undertakings, but managed on a business basis and contemplating not only the ultimate return of the moneys expended, but a reasonable profit on the venture.

This company shall acquire, either in one desirable locality, or in several portions of the country, large tracts of land, say from half a million to two million acres, and take all necessary measures for its colonization by our Russian brethren. Under these necessary measures may be understood the erection of small dwellings, the purchase en gross of agricultural implements, stock, etc., the establishment of depots, a model farm, employment of competent instructors in farming for the unskilled, etc. The refugees who shall be settled on these lands shall be charged on the books of the company with the cost of their land and outfits, on which they shall pay a low rate of interest, with the privilege of eventual purchase at a reasonable figure. All it needs to realize this plan is for a number of gentlemen of high social and financial standing, of whom the Jewish community of New York numbers many, to band together for this purpose, perfect an organization, and place the stock on the financial markets of America and Europe. There would be raised in this way in one month a hundredfold as much as could be raised in a year for charity, for the public is always more ready to entrust vast enterprises to business companies than to charitable organizations, and it is right that it should be so. I might also suggest that the company could grant small loans to those wishing to preempt government land. Should an undertaking such as this be established, the Jewish community will have reason to congratulate itself on this emigration, which will greatly add to its wealth, dignity and influence, besides securing what has long been the ardent desire of many enlightened and patriotic minds among us, namely, the partial return of our people to the pursuit of agriculture, to wipe away the old reproach that we are not producers. It will also be a benefit in another way, by providing a **Hebrew** rural population, and furnishing summer resorts where many a sensitive mind can pass the heat of summer secure from all fear of insults, and the annually recurring Rishus of shoddy hotel guests, and boorish hotel keepers. I would also point out that it is of no small importance to us, in this age of prejudice and partiality, to strengthen our position by the addition of so many thousands of votes, that peaceful weapon which secures respect from politician and government. It seems to me, that in view of the many blessings that would flow from agricultural colonization, and the degradation and proletarianism which may flow from a neglect to establish it (may God avert them), **American** Israel cannot long hesitate in its choice. **הנה לפניך הברכה והקללה**, Behold before you the blessing and the curse. But you shall choose the blessing.

A WELL WISHER.