

THE COTOPAXI COLONY.

Some difficulty in the management of this colony having arisen, the Executive Committee of the Aid Society deputed Mr. Morris Tuska to go out to the colony and investigate the troubles, giving him the fullest powers in the premises. Mr. Tuska in his report says:

Immediately on arrival I called on Mr. Julius Schwarz, the general manager of the colony, whom I found master of the situation, and who willingly gave me all information required as to the doings of E. H. Saltiel, in whose care the colony was intrusted.

The general condition of the colony is, considering the many difficulties that arose from the mismanagement of Saltiel and from his omission to furnish the colony with necessary funds—a favorable one.

Owing to the indefatigable perseverance of Mr. Schwarz, who rendered himself worthy of the trust put in him, the refugees were settled on Government land of 180 acres for each family. The lands are very fertile, full of phosphate, and of almost surprising growing power. The farms are situated on the first division of lands called Oak Grove Creek, are drained by a creek that is always supplied with water and is more than sufficient for irrigating purposes. Here three farms are located. A high mountain range separates these farms from the second division of the lands from the so-called Wet Mountain Valley. Here the rest of the farms are located. Mr. Schwarz told me that although there is no water for irrigation, he is confident that the farmers will in the winter be able to secure a supply of water, to be used next season, by digging a three-mile long ditch and filling the same with water, which is in abundance in the lake, situated on the mountains that border the farms and separate Fremont county from Custer county. The colonists sowed mostly potatoes—about 17,000 pounds altogether. Mr. Schwarz assured me that he repeatedly requested Mr. Saltiel to give him the means to sow a large quantity of potatoes, as they are saleable and greatly wanted; but Mr. Saltiel did not give him the funds required. 17,000 pounds will, as Mr. Schwarz says, yield about 140,000 pounds. 40,000 pounds he intends to save for seeding purposes, and 100,000 pounds he will put on the market. The general price of potatoes varies from one and one-half to two cents per pound; thus about \$2,000 are expected from the potato crop. Cabbage, peas, beans, cucumbers, beets, turnips, etc., have been sowed, but owing to the slowness with which the houses have been built, or, better said, owing to their not having been built at all, most of the garden stuff was destroyed by grazing cattle, and what has been spared is just sufficient to cover the household requirements. Had Mr. Saltiel used the money so readily put at his disposal for the purposes of the colony—for buying or hiring teams and plows, buying potatoes and other seeds, purchasing agricultural implements, erecting houses and buying wire for fencing—the colony not only would have been self-supporting, but been able to repay every cent that has been spent for their sake. As matters stand at present, the colonists will be able to pull through; they must, however, be provided with cows and wire fences. Mr. Schwarz proposed to purchase 12 cows and wire fence for 10 acres on each farm, and assures me that by means of the income of the crop and by means of the cows that will furnish them the two chief feeding articles, namely, milk and butter, they will make a livelihood, and will next year get along splendidly, so much the more as Mr. Schwarz has been offered labor for the refugees during the winter, which will help them towards defraying their expenses for living.

THE FINANCIAL CONDITION OF THE COLONY.

The facts are that Mr. Saltiel used the money put in his hands for his own purpose, and left several bills unpaid, which he said were paid by him. He did not build the houses, although having received the money for them, and thereby caused the colony great damage, much annoyance and disgrace on account of his actions; and fully trusting in the ability, integrity and energy of Mr. Schwarz, I took the charge out of Mr. Saltiel's hands and put it into the hands of Mr. Schwarz, who in my strong belief is the only man that prevented the colony's final destruction. It is with much satisfaction that I note that the Society possesses a faithful, energetic, honest and persevering officer in Mr. Schwarz, who gives his heart, his mind and all his time to his duties. Mr. Schwarz is now the only manager of the colony, and is ably assisted by Mr. Leon Tobias, who acts as field overseer.

Permit me now to give you a statistical statement of the families that compose the colony:

There were on the 30th of July 14 families, comprising 61 souls, 34 males and 27 females. One family, consist-

ing of 6 souls, I sent to Denver on request of the head of the family, Abr. Moskovitz. Another family, the Schochet, Joseph Friedman, who was sent on recommendation of Mr. Saltiel, who promised to assist him but failed to do so, was also sent to Denver, as there was no prospect for his making a livelihood in the colony. Since my leaving Cotopaxi, 15 more persons, relatives of the colonists, were sent there, making the total number of families 15, with 61 souls, 34 males and 30 females. The working force amounts to 35 persons.

The sanitary condition of the colony leaves nothing to be wished for. No serious cases of sickness have occurred. The refugees show a very favorable appearance, look well and robust since Mr. Schwarz took charge of the colony. Kosher meat is procured from Denver, and the people are satisfied with their food. The colonists are clean and neat and take good care of their children. The children will receive education at the public school recently erected in Cotopaxi. Mr. Schwarz will see that the houses are finished and the crop sold for the best price. The colonists keep their religion in accordance with the ancient customs, keep the Sabbath and holidays, possess a Sephar Thora donated by Rev. Dr. Baar, and are on friendly terms with their Christian neighbors. The colony required thus far the following funds: \$6,260 paid to Saltiel, \$500 paid to E. S. Hart by me, \$1,000 sent to Mr. Schwarz so far. Total, \$8,750. Mr. Schwarz wrote me that \$500 more will be required for food, \$100 for cows, and about \$350 for wire, making the sum of \$9,200 that this colony cost the Society. The colonists are aware that they will have to repay the expenses laid out for them, and I have no doubt whatsoever that the Society will be partly repaid. I hope that, despite of the many drawbacks this colony had to undergo, it will be maintained and stand as a monument of Jewish charity, and as the best proof of the laboring abilities of the refugees and of their capacity and competency to become farmers. Jewish farmers were looked upon with scorn; the Cotopaxi colony has and will render evidence that such scorn is nothing but prejudice, and that the Jew can make as good a farmer as any other human being.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signed]

MORRIS TUSKA.