

## MR. SALTIEL AND THE COTOPAXI COLONY.

## COTOPAXI PLACER MINING COMPANY.

Cotopaxi, Colorado, Oct. 19th 1882.

TO THE AMERICAN HEBREW.

In your issue of October 4th, 1882 I find a publication purporting to be a "report" of Mr. Tuska, on the condition of the colony of Russian Refugees now here. The glaring falsehoods contained therein necessitate a reply, and as you have given publication to Mr. Tuska's side, I must respectfully request that my side be given, and assure you that in every specific charge made, I hold substantial proof—both under proper oaths administered by proper officers or by letters written by persons in high repute.

In the commencement of the quotation from Mr. Tuska's report, he states that "Immediately on my arrival, I called on Julius Schwartz, 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."

In this opening paragraph, the entire foundation for the falsehoods concerning my "doings" is laid bare, and the reason for the criminal libel, thereafter perpetrated can be briefly shown. In the first place Schwartz, a relative of Mr. Tuska, was employed at the office 15 State St. last April as a clerk at a salary of Ten dollars per week out of which he boarded himself, and was, after several conversations, between M. A. Kursesheed Esq. and myself, appointed, or hired, at a salary of Twenty dollars per week, to go to Colorado as a clerk and interpreter to the colony. I went to Colorado at my own expense and arranged for the building of a number of houses during the summer months, guarding as is usual, loss or delay to the Contractor from flood, fire or visitations of Providence. On the eighth day of May this contract was verbally agreed to, between the Contractor and myself and a memorandum agreement in writing was drawn up, but not signed on that day, but a short time afterwards the signatures of both parties were attached, and the houses proceeded with.

The Refugees arrived on May 5th, at Cotopaxi and on May 11th. I requested Mr. Schwartz to accompany a colored farmer, one Edward Jones, to Oak Grove Creek with a few of the colonists and stake out the bottom land under the farmer's direction. In the afternoon the whole of them returned, discontented, and reported a fierce quarrel had taken place between Schwartz and themselves, and they did not like the land. Quarrelling continued between Schwartz and the colonists at intervals, until early in the morning of May 12th, when I was awake by loud cries and shouts. I immediately partially dressed and started for the door of my house where I found Schwartz terribly excited, surrounded by a threatening mob of men and women. Not understanding their language, I at length by asking a few questions in Hebrew, got to understand that they had demanded their "declaration of citizenship" papers; and that Schwartz had refused to deliver them up. I at once peremptorily ordered him to bring them to me, as the Colonists made themselves understood that they wished to leave Cotopaxi. On receiving their papers from my hands with the exclamation "Go in peace! God be with you," they quieted down, until Schwartz turned on them with a hateful look and made use of some angry expression in German, that I did not understand. Whatever it was, it had a similar effect to throwing oil on fire, and a regular mutiny broke out; so much danger did I consider him in that I called to a couple of men and had rifles loaded to protect him if it should have become necessary. During this time, the colonists were comfortably housed in a long house that I had bought for them and in two log houses that I owned and had hitherto used for several of my miners. Detailed accounts of the tribulations of the colonists were sent to the Secretary and L. Gershel Esq. to New York; and all of which are set forth in full in my report now only awaiting a settlement with the Society to complete.

For about four weeks after his arrival, Schwartz worked hard, and being a young man, entirely ignorant of everything pertaining to either pioneer life or methodical business, did really well, and his efforts to overcome the novelty of his position, received from me warm praise. On May 27th I went with Schwartz and another man into the Wet Mountain Valley, and selected a corner to start a survey line, and gave directions to run from that point as a centre and take up Two thousand acres of the best land. I drove three stakes into the land and directed Schwartz to tell the colonists that ploughing must commence on the following day. One team of good horses and two ploughs had already been provided from funds sent to me by M. A. Kursesheed for that purpose. Several of the colonists had applied to me to give them lots to build on, upon the town site of Cotopaxi, of which I am the largest owner. I agreed to grant them a forty-nine year lease—and under certain restrictions permit them to take the water from the Cotopaxi Placer Mining Company ditches—of which I was President. Two families only

out of the twelve here, appeared settled and willing to work the land with a determination to succeed. To these two families, I apportioned two building lots each and ordered the Deputy County Surveyor to run certain lines across my lands, to enable the houses to front what will at an early day, be a business street. This Deputy Surveyor Freeman, had already been engaged by me to lay out and survey the lands for the colony and it took him about two and a half days to run the lines across my lands for the benefit of these two deserving families. That has been the only cost that the Society has been at in the matter.

About the end of the fourth week after arrival here, I found that Mr. Schwartz began to grow somewhat discontented at not having received his salary and as he had learned through letters received by him from New York that Mr. Kursesheed had either resigned or that a change was about to take place, he urged me to go to New York and see if I could obtain some further aid to guard these people during the coming winter and especially to look after his own salary. On my asking how much was due him, he replied that some six week's salary was due and after I had figured it up at twenty dollars per week, he demanded that his board should be added to it. I was so astounded at the proposition that I determined to simply hand him twenty dollars on account, pay his board bill and leave to the Society to settle up with him. I said nothing at the time to Schwartz but found that my business was suffering from the time and attention that I had given to the colony, for which I neither received nor asked any compensation; but as I had performed much work for which Schwartz claimed both pay for and the merit of doing, I determined to have him earn, if I could, his full wages in the future. By my direction the horses of the colony were carefully stabled in a neighboring barn, neither Mr. Schwartz nor the field foreman Tobias paying much attention to them, I had my son and another lad take them up nearly every night. By terribly hard usage, the horses became slightly disabled. I ordered them carefully taken care of for a few days by Edward Jones, and as soon as they had recovered admonished Schwartz of the necessity of caring for the horses better. So neglectful had Schwartz become, that on the 15th day of June I felt compelled to tell him that he had neglected his work. I at once noticed his suppressed anger, but never imagined that it would lead him either of his own accord or by conspiring with others to attempt to defame my fair name. In the mean time two houses had been completed and occupied by the Nudelman and Chutman families, notwithstanding Mr. Tuska's report that "Saltiel had failed to build the houses," and over forty thousand feet of lumber, a large quantity of nails, doors, windows, spikes and material purchased to build other houses, the greater part of which had been delivered on the ground near the railroad depot. In addition to the building material, six out of twelve No. 8 western cooking ranges, costing in Canon City \$25 each had been delivered, as well as stove pipe and cooking utensils. On June 21st, it became necessary for me to employ a lawyer on behalf of the colonists, as Mr. Schwartz had reported to me that an attempt had been made to illegally take away two parcels of land that the colonists had located upon. I paid for that purpose \$25 as a retainer, and to have the matter looked into.

Having found that the funds on hand were insufficient to both complete houses, buy wire fence, cows, etc., that were necessary, I reluctantly left my business and started for New York, to lay before the Society the exact condition of affairs. In the mean time I requested the then contractor, Mr. Hart, to continue building the houses steadily on the farms until my return, and ordered ploughing to be continued and a turnip crop be planted early in July. About fourteen thousand of seed potatoes had been sowed prior to the 21st of June, and a supply of seed for later planting, such as turnips, etc., that are planted always in July in this part of Colorado.

My orders before leaving here were to push forward the building of houses vigorously upon all the farms selected by the colony, and particularly to take good care of the horses. Several coils of wire fence I purchased, so as to start fencing in the most exposed places, and requested Schwartz to set that the men cut sufficient posts and have them set in the ground ready to receive the wire as soon as the Society should have supplied sufficient funds to obtain it. Mr. Schwartz gave me profuse promises that these instructions would be carried out, and the man Tobias, who acted as field man, well understood my directions. I placed great confidence in Schwartz, so much so that, at that time he passed his time almost entirely with me—slept in the same bed and actually became a confidant of my social secrets. \* \* \* While absent in New York trying to aid these people I received several letters, now in my possession from Schwartz, urging me to try to procure for his father a position in the Society, on account of his father's financial condition, and also urging me to have his salary paid at \$27 per week. This I afterwards learned was all that he had done during my absence of over three weeks in New York.

On my return to Cotopaxi I found the horses

dead—owing to the two men Schwartz and Tobias, not taking proper care to have them stabled at night. They were run over by passing trains on the railroad. The few rolls of wire fence remained where I had left them; and no fence posts of any consequence had been set in the ground. It was reported to me, that Schwartz had not visited the Wet Mountain Valley settlements during my entire absence. The colonists crowded round me, on my return, with complaints and lamentations. I told them that I could not understand much that they said, but that if they had any real grievances to set them down in writing, and I would consider them. Tobias heard me tell them, it was the duty of Schwartz, the salaried man, to have taken care of them. Schwartz knowing the fact also, immediately set to work, changed his entire behavior towards me, and commenced the preparation of a Jesuitical plan to circumvent what he readily understood must be my action, namely, a demand for his instant recall from the position that he had of late so poorly filled. I telegraphed on the 17th, 19th, 20th and 21st to H. S. Henry that either Schwartz leaves or I cease my connection with the Society. I was ignorant at that time of the fact that he, Schwartz, was a relative of Mr. Tuska. \* \* \* Mr. Tuska arrived on July 30th, and left on the 31st. It will be perceived that there was a motive to shield Schwartz, or why did Tuska go to the salaried clerk of the colony instead of the Trustee and General Manager, who gave his time and labors gratuitously. In my letter of instructions from M. A. Kursesheed, Esq., no mention was made of Schwartz as a manager—he simply came here as an interpreter and clerk, or so I was informed. It must be plain to every intelligent person that a green student, only eighteen months in America, and never without a guardian, far away from his parents, could successfully plant a pioneer colony in one of the wildest parts in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, and without any previous training; whilst I, who have lived here eighteen years, mined successfully and brought hundreds of men to the mountains, and am personally known to all the leading men of Colorado, from the Governor down to the County Clerk of my County for the past sixteen years, could make a rank failure of the Refugees' Colony. The article published in the New York Herald during the last days of my personal supervision, and written without my knowledge by Mr. Schwartz, gives the lie direct to the report made by Mr. Tuska on his visit a couple of weeks later. The utter absurdity of Mr. Tuska and his impudence in attempting to make our co-religionists believe in what he has called a report, is best exposed to the scorn it merits by quoting one of his own paragraphs, in which he absurdly states:—

"Cabbages, 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, etc."

Mr. Tuska first stated that Mr. Saltiel did not give Mr. Schwartz funds to purchase potatoes and other seed. Mr. Schwartz never asked nor had he any authority or reason to ask for such funds, as I had ordered and paid Mr. Hart for such seed, potatoes and other seed that he, Hart, had produced and delivered according to orders, and which my bills previously sent in fully exhibit. Mr. Tuska then goes on to state that because the houses were being "slowly built", or as he would probably have liked to have had them "not built at all," crops would not grow. It is the first time in my life of experience in the mountains and valleys of the Far West, that I have ever heard of "cucumbers, peas, beans, cabbages, beets and turnips" requiring "houses" to make them grow or to shelter them. The proposition only tends to further show that Mr. Tuska is as ignorant of the subject that he essays to write or report upon as his nephew is boastful of his integrity and ability to manage colonists in Colorado. I regret to be compelled to take up so much of your valuable space in defending myself against the malicious attack that your columns have been made the channel of procedure, but I cannot close without stating the actual facts of the case, which are as follows:—

In the winter of 1881 and 2, I was urged by several of the directors of the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society of America to visit the office at 15 State street. I reluctantly consented to do so, and one day in company with Uriah Herrmann, Esq., I went there, and was told of sending off of emigrants into Louisiana and other southern States. I was asked my opinion, and freely gave it, to the effect that the peculiar training of Israelites and their wants would of themselves be sufficient to cause failure, when brought into competition with the half-starved half-clothed negro of the South, or the cheap pork and corn eater of Missouri or Arkansas, and I therefore recommended the rich phosphate soil of Colorado, and the speedy growing and hardy vegetables as the most likely crop to have them succeed in raising. After many subsequent interviews with M. A. Kursesheed, Esq., Hon. M. S. Isaacs, L. Gershel, Esq. and Uriah Herrmann, Esq., I consented to look after the colony, as far as my mine-operating business

would permit, and by request made a proposition and estimate which upon due deliberation by the Committee was accepted, and I selected a number of families for a colony, that, with no change in the management, would have been a success to-day instead of a failure, excepting for the aid extended by myself and the railroad company in the shape of daily work for which they are paid actually more than they can earn when compared with the muscular Christian laborer. At the time of Mr. Tuska's arrival, the potatoe crop was several inches above the ground—thousands of cabbage-plants were growing and all other seed plants were growing, and all other seed planted. Similar imaginary complaints, such as is heard every day in New York City from the refugees whenever a prominent Israelite comes near them, was repeated to Mr. Tuska. What Schwartz in an attempt to obtain revenge for my requesting his dismissal may have tried to have coached them in, is unknown to me, although I am informed that he acted as prompter to them to air their new found grievances to his relative for nearly two hours. The whole burden of the complaint appears to have been and yet is "the houses are not being built quick enough." Mr. Hart explained to me that a great flood had come about twelve days after my departure for New York, and washed away both wagon and railroad bridges, and thus prevented him from building as quickly as he could have desired. This and other reasons equally legitimate, prevented the houses that would have been built in the Wet Mountain Valley from being rapidly constructed.

After Mr. Tuska had left, and as I had been pleased to learn, requested Schwartz to look after the colonists, what really was the duty for which he had been salaried. I talked with Mr. Hart and got him to turn over the building contract to me and such building material as he had on hand, and permitted him to apply the various sums of money that I had paid to him to my credit for other matters that I might require, excepting five hundred dollars for the reception house, which I had already turned over to the Cotopaxi Placer Mining Company, and I personally assumed the responsibility of building the houses, and have since that time quietly proceeded with them with two carpenters. I have given some of the men of the colony frequent employment, and have two families yet in my log houses, burning my timber, and using a stove tree of charge.

At the time of Tuska's flying visit, he expressed himself pleased with everything excepting the slowness of house building. He even went so far as to talk of uniting a certain smelting works works that he owned with one of my mines, and asked me if Schwartz would not make a good Secretary? Other incidents occurred that lead me to the belief that Mr. Tuska has been somewhat imposed upon, otherwise a man of his standing would not have risked a heavy lawsuit for criminal libel.

In regard to Friedman the Shochet, he arrived after I had ceased controlling the colony, but I contributed \$10 to his aid. Schwartz prevented his remaining. So far as the colony is concerned to-day, the majority of them are on my lands gratuitously leased to them, at their earnest solicitation, and are sincerely happy for being thereby enabled to keep their religious services in sight of the protection thrown around them by being near and in sight of my mountain home. They are not living on the imaginary crops raised by the vivid imagination of Schwartz, but upon the proceeds of their labor done for the railroad company, and in my mines.

What was the actual cause of the failure of their crops? Nothing more nor less than the unnecessary time consumed in the preparation for every little religious feast and fast, engagement and marriage celebration. Schwartz, by pandering to these superstitious ceremonies, obtained a mastery over their minds, and encouraged superstition and bigotry, and when one little man, Snyder, with more manhood than the balance, had the temerity to tell Schwartz and Tobias of their miserable actions and called them rascals, they had him formally excommunicated, and actually prevented him and his family from being employed and making a living. The incapacity of Mr. Schwartz is not in itself blameable, as experience was lacking; but his persistent attempts to destroy the good name that I have earned by nearly eighteen years of hard and generally successful work in this State, is what I condemn, as sooner or later the truth must come out. I will, Mr. Editor, before closing hereby declare that I can take this colony of Russians, and without a dollar from the Society, make them sow their crops in the Spring of 1883, and, without a calamitous visitation from Providence, put every family in a good position by the fall of the year with abundance to live on and to spare.

EMANUEL H. SALTIEL.

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