tons or about the same quantity as the country at large a quarter of a century ago; and the activity in its development is increasing beyond any measure.

The spread of manufacturing industries based on coal, steel and iron, in the South, is the greatest marvel of Southern development. Almost every product marking the industries, anywhere, is now found South; all must soon follow the logic of development.

One could devote much space to the description of the rocks and stones of the South, which are of large varieties, fine quality, and are an inexhaustible store for future residences and manufactories of the South. Some day these stones will rear and decorate some of the most superb palaces on earth. Sandstones, limestones, granites and marbles are among the resources of this vast store, some of them unexcelled, if equaled, elsewhere in beauty and structural qualities.

In fine, one cannot at all enter into the diversity, abundance and quality of the mineral or subterranean riches of the South. Her marls and clays are topics very inviting, nor shall I comment upon oil or petroleum—a most sensational theme.

The largest topic is that of the South's peculiar product, and the industries cognate to it—cotton. This plant is, as it were, the imperishable foundation of her prosperity, the most conspicuous feature of her agriculture, a sort of preserve or private domain on which the agricultural activity of the rest of the world may not successfully intrude. Such is, of late, the wealth of the South, that, with cotton manufacturing, organization and wise management of her farmers, she bids fair to make of this product and its manufacture such a source of wealth that it is absolutely dazzling. Cotton at its present prices, 10 to 11 cents a pound, is said to be about the price of the last 100 years. For several years past, the cotton crop of the South has averaged over $600,000,000, which is nearly twice the value of the late greatly stimulated gold production of the world. In the last five years, the South's cotton crop has yielded $1,000,000,000 more to its raisers than the preceding five years.

Every statement made in this paper I have gathered from sources which are absolutely reliable, and are based upon the

closest study of this most important question. I have endeavored to place before you the real truth of conditions in the South, for the purpose of inviting your most serious attention to the question, whether or not our Russian immigrants should be located throughout the Southern land, in order to become self-sustaining, and for the purpose of lightening the great burden of our northern cities. I know that there are many who conscientiously oppose colonization of our Russian brethren, on account of many failures in that direction, and on account of the inadaptability of a great many of them, but still I strongly advise that a beginning be made—and, if this view will prevail, you will find that the Southern people in general, and the Southern Jews in particular, will do their share in making welcome those forlorn and homeless strangers—helping them to earn a livelihood in a benign climate and from a generous soil.

One point I have not discussed, and that is, the religious requirement of the immigrant, which I deem in close connection with the colonization question—but this must be kept for a future paper and discussion. I cannot do justice to it, under the limit of time allotted to me.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION—ITS POSSIBILITIES IN PREVENTIVE CHARITY.

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The Committee on Program displayed commendable wisdom in setting aside one afternoon of the convention's limited time for a discussion of the possibilities of agriculture as a means of preventive charity. That act declares either their own belief or that of others that the pursuit of agriculture holds out the promise of relieving the congested centers of Jewish population and of restoring to physical and moral health and to self-dependence large numbers who, by reason of such overcrowding, have become diseased, defective, or dependent.

It has taken twenty-five years for this belief to mature. The desirability of it was felt from the time of the first landing upon

our shores of refugees from Russian persecution, but the practicability of it was doubted because of a general unbelief in the Jew's willingness to enter upon agricultural callings, or in his ability to make a success of the pursuit of agriculture. Notwithstanding the distinguished record of the Jew of the past as an agriculturist, it was the general belief that his long compulsory abstention from that vocation had wholly unfitted him for it, and his long enforced crowding together in the Russian Pale of Settlement has disqualified him for the isolation which, to a greater or lesser extent, rural habitation involves. And these doubts seemed more than verified by the failures that attended the few attempts that had been made, some ten or twenty years ago, at settling Jewish immigrants in agricultural colonies.

It is true, many of the settlers failed. But their failure is to be attributed not so much to their unwillingness to till the soil or to their incapacity for it, as to mistakes that were made in the organization and location of the colonies. The organizers seemed to have been as inexperienced as the colonists. They seemed to have had little knowledge of the fact that fertile soil, advantageously located as to market, constitutes a large factor in making the pursuit of agriculture attractive and profitable. Neither seemed to have had an adequate understanding of the fact that prosperous farmers cannot be made, in a year or so, of peddlers and petty traders, who are physically weak and who lack that brawn that constitutes a large part of the capital of a husbandman, who are uninured to hard outdoor labor, whose past lives little fitted them for rough and exhausting pioneer work, such as clearing forests and brush-land, draining swamps, building homes, fertilizing wildernesses and the like.

To their lasting credit be it told that many of them tried hard enough, and a goodly number of them took root, and some of them have persevered in it, with considerable success, to this day, showing only too clearly what signal success might have been achieved had mature experience guided the choice of land and of those who were to till it.

Another factor that militated against making the attempted colonies successful was their ignorance of modern practical and scientific methods of agriculture. For the securing of a mere

living the method of farming in vogue in the least progressive parts of Europe might have sufficed; but agriculture pursued for profit requires a knowledge of practical and scientific methods so as to enable labor and soil to yield the largest possible results.

Such knowledge was not possessed by the colonists, and for the imparting of it no provision had been made to equip at least the young with what their elders lacked. The consequences, as might well have been foreseen, were disastrous. The younger generation found little allurement in a life that was all hardship, isolation, and privation, and so they struck out for the city, whither they soon drew their elders after them.

But the mistakes have been recognized. Provisions have been made to make a repetition of past failures impossible. Two agricultural schools are now at work training scores of Jewish lads in practical and scientific agriculture, for a profitable pursuit of the honored calling of their ancestors, and for successful location and leadership of Jewish colonies.

Graduates of these schools have laid to rest every doubt that has hitherto been entertained as to the Jew's fitness for agriculture or as to his willingness to take it up as a life calling. Quite a number of them are to-day employed by the Agricultural Department of the United States Government. The Secretary of Agriculture has repeatedly spoken and written of the excellence of their work. Others are creditably filling positions of trust and responsibility either as managers of estates or as foremen, gardeners, horticulturists, orchardists, florists, dairymen, poultrymen and the like. The wages they receive are considerably in excess of those earned by the average young man of their age in ghetto sweatshops or in city stores, to say nothing of the infinite superiority, as to physical and moral health, of the work in which they are engaged.

The mistakes of former days have been recognized also in another direction. Jewish farmers have recently been located in accordance with a plan quite different from the one that was followed a score of years ago. Due regard was had to proper land, to a proper location of it, to proper selection of those who are to till it, and to proper incentives for keeping them contented in rural callings. And the eminent success that has attended the

efforts has proved conclusively the potency of agriculture as a means of relieving the congestion of our large cities, and of lessening the disease and debasement to which it gives rise.

Naturally, whatever has been done along these lines has been carried on on a small scale. The knowledge of past failure and the widespread unbelief in the Jew's fitness for agriculture have been too deep-rooted to command the large moral and financial support necessary to carry on the work on a larger scale.

But the time for doubt is past. The experimental stage is over. The most convincing demonstration has been given that the Jew is as fit for agriculture as any other man, if not more, considering his superior thrift, temperance and practical sense.

The appalling physical and moral status of the overcrowded ghettos of our large cities, the dependency of thousands on the charities, the ravages of consumption among those engaged in sweatshop work within filthy tenements, the immoralities that are festering on the very surface of these seething pestholes, which, in the City of New York, for instance, house within an area of one square mile a population as large as that of Pittsburg, Cleveland, or Buffalo, the constant inrush upon the already overcrowded of new streams of immigrants—this appalling state of affairs makes scattering of this population no longer a choice but an urgent necessity, makes colonization of large numbers of them, under leadership of agriculturists trained in our Jewish agricultural schools, the most pressing duty of the hour.

Never, in the history of human kind, have such enormous sums been expended on the alleviation of suffering among the poor as at the present time. Millions upon millions of dollars are annually sacrificed to the Moloch Pauperism. Buildings upon buildings are erected and organizations upon organizations founded for the care and cure of the diseased and dependent of society. And yet, the more the ravenous appetite of dire want and fell disease are fed, the greater is their clamor for more. From every direction comes the cry for more money, for more hospitals and homes and shelters, for more penal and corrective institutions, for more charity workers to take the place of the disheartened or the despairing.

And a far louder cry than has hitherto been heard is yet to

resound. From the Boards of Health of our larger cities comes the report of the alarming increase of disease and exhaustion among the poor, of the frightful havoc of consumption among the overworked and underfed in the tenements and ghettos, of the thousands that enter life there, born *in* disease, *with* disease, and *for* disease. From the police courts comes the report of the deepening of vicious and immoral tendencies among the tenement population, and of their moral and mental debasement in quarters not only unventilated, unlighted, filthy, but often so cramped that a single room must serve the purpose of workroom, kitchen, dining room, nursery, hospital, sleeping room for the entire family, of both sexes and of all ages. And from the studies of scientists comes an ominous prediction as to the future harvests from such present plantings, as to the onerous burdens we are heaping upon our children, despite, if not with the aid of, the millions of dollars we are annually expending on the cure of pauperism.

What if we had known a quarter of a century ago what we know now? What if we had entered a quarter of a century ago upon a cure of pauperism by preventing its propagation? We would not have permitted ghettos to spring up in these free United States, and in these ghettos an industrial system that first diseases the treadmill slave and then taxes the public for the caring for the diseased in the charity hospitals, or for the rearing of their children in the asylums. We would not have deliberately created the disease first, or suffered it to root, to deal with it at an enormous expense when no longer eradicable. We would not have allowed its indwellers to fester in congested quarters. We would not have condemned them to breathe polluted air when their enfeebled lungs required large quantities of oxygen. We would have removed them to the country. We would have encouraged them in agricultural labor, for the upbuilding of muscle and morals. We would, in brief, have *reversed* our mode of spending millions on impossible cures, with scarcely a dollar to spare for possible prevention. We would have spent thousands on prevention and saved the millions we are now obliged to spend on the maintenance of institutions and societies for remedial charity.

"But they will not leave the ghetto for the country" is the objection with which our cry "Back to the Soil" is frequently met. That objection was valid at one time. It is, however, no longer true to the same extent it was in former times. One needs but to inquire of any of the agricultural aid societies, or see the applications that reach our agricultural schools to see the change that has taken place in the attitude of the ghetto population toward country life and country pursuits. If you doubt it, then you have not read the latest threnodies of Rosenfeld, the ghetto poet, in which he, the consumptive sweatshop representative of all the sweatshop slaves, gives passionate and morbid utterance to the ghetto's yearning for the sound of rustling trees and singing birds, for the sight of waving fields and flowery meads, for the smell of fragrant flowers and freshmown hay; then you have not read his poem entitled "Despair," in which an overworked and overcrowded sweatshop slave is solaced thus: "You wish to be in fields where it is airy and green? *Never mind,* you will be carried *there soon enough.*" Then you have not read that other poem of his entitled "The Nightingale to the Laborer," in which he makes the beauties of nature call aloud to the sweatshop slave: "Enough of your slaving in stifling shops! Break away! See how nature opens wide to you her rosy arms to press you to her joy-throbbing, life-giving, health-distilling bosom. All are there but you, and all ask for you. Your part is there, there is your share, so take it, oh, take it, you sweatshop machine!"

Another objection is raised on the grounds of lack of means to establish colonies in sufficient number perceptibly to relieve the congestion of the ghetto. Such objections might have been valid prior to the organization of the National Conference of Jewish Charities. It *is possible* for the different organizations composing the National Conference to set aside annually a sum sufficient for part payment of a number of tracts of arable, properly located lands and for the expense involved in the starting of a few settlements. It *is possible* for them to provide homes and the necessary farm equipments, and they can so locate these as to constitute groups of settlements, so as to satisfy the social and educational and religious requirements of the colonists and to content the young as well as the old.

In addition to farm equipments, they can provide industrial shops, so that field and factory shall mutually supplement each other, afford work and wages, in winter as well as in summer, for women as well as for men, for the old as well as for the young, and what is most essential, provide an outlet for different tastes and for different skill in labor.

In charge of a few of such agricultural settlements, the National Conference can place a practically and scientifically trained leader, a graduate of one of our Jewish Agricultural Schools, who, besides teaching them the art and science of agriculture, will watch over their best interests, will open profitable markets for the produce of their fields and shops, will look to cheapest transportation, and to all other matters that may assure success.

After the settlements shall be fairly on the way to success, an opportunity can be afforded to every colonist to acquire his own homestead, on terms that, while working no hardships on him, shall reimburse the organization's original investment.

There will, therefore, be no charity in this plan but true philanthropy. It will be a philanthropy that, though involving a considerable expense at first, will be the cheapest in the end. It will make laborers instead of paupers, bread-producers instead of bread beggars. It will build up physical and mental and spiritual health instead of Ghetto degeneracy and disease. It will restore the Jew to his original Palestinian pursuits, and there on field and moor, it will create within him anew that moral and virile fibre that, in ancient times, produced kings, prophets, lawgivers, bards, inspired writers to whom, to this day, the whole civilized world does homage. It will build up a body of people that, by reason of industry and thrift and intelligence and perseverance, will enable their country to apply to them, in slightly altered form, the words of the Proverbs: "Many people have done righteously, but ye excel them all."

If transplanting of large numbers of these people of the Ghetto to far away districts be deemed too hazardous and too expensive, there is no reason why *small settlements,* partly agricultural and partly industrial, might not be established *in villages close* to the *overcrowded cities.* Speedy trains and trolleys will give them a sense of nearness to the city, and to its religious and social and

educational advantages. The need for their products in the city will make their labor profitable. A number of factories can be built in such settlements to furnish labor for such members of the family whose services are not needed on the little truck or dairy farms. Little six or eight room cottages can be erected and rented at a price no higher than is now being paid for two or three dark and damp and filthy tenement rooms. By easy instalments, these little houses may in course of time become their own. The agricultural work about the home, such as the raising of garden truck, dairy products, flowers, fruits, poultry, and the like can be carried on for the most part by the women and children, at profits larger than those they now earn in the filth-reeking and life-sapping and demoralizing sweat shops, and which, besides adding to the earning capacity of the household, can help out the needs of the family in times when labor is slack and when the industries are idle. It is a plan that has been tried abroad with marvellous success. It has restored health and morals. It has built up real homes and real family life. It has made paupers self-supporting. It has fitted young men and young women for noble careers.

Even if this simpler mode of entering upon relieving the congestion of the Ghetto and of lessening the enormous drain on the charities be deemed unfeasible or too expensive—then, if the National Conference of Jewish Charities is really serious in its intention of devising ways and means for practical, preventive philanthropy, if it really desires to build up the physical and moral fibre of those condemned to live and toil in the pest-holes of our large cities and that make necessary nearly all of our eleemosynary institutions, then let them at least save the young by making possible an agricultural education for the hundreds of Ghetto boys, as well as girls, who are desirous of an agricultural training, and for the hundreds of others, who could easily be induced to take up an agricultural training, and thus be saved.

It ought to be the paramount duty of each organization composing the National Conference of Jewish Charities, and of the others as well, to lessen the number of inmates of our eleemosynary institutions by making possible an increase in the number of pupils in our agricultural schools.

Every one taken out of the Ghetto, and made healthy, vigorous and self-dependent in the country, will in due time draw hundreds of others after him. His example will find followers. His success will stimulate emulation. His physical and moral health will make a benefactor of him who, had he continued in the Ghetto, might have become a beneficiary.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION. (1)

By ~~Dr.~~ H. L. Sabsovich, ~~General Agent of the Baron de Hirsch Fund, New York City.~~

National Conference of Jewish Charities, Proceedings, 1908, pp. 203-214.

In presenting to this Conference the subject of Agricultural Education for Jews in the United States, it is impossible to treat it independently from the general status of farming and agricultural education as carried on in this country.

In view of the great difficulties Jewish farming has had to encounter in the past, and even now has to contend with, and in view of the general standing of farming, the question has arisen in the minds of many: "Is it *advisable* to direct the energies of the Jews into a new channel of activity—agriculture?" We will not consider Jewish farming here as the result of a spontaneous movement toward farming, but as the result of certain philanthropic efforts to regulate this spontaneous movement, and prevent, if possible, an unnecessary waste of means, energy and enthusiasm in a large number of our co-religionists, principally newcomers, in their efforts to better their material conditions. I will therefore consider here Jewish farming as one of the preventive problems which present themselves to Jewish philanthropy in the United States.

The question of the *advisability* of fostering and encouraging Jewish farming by giving Jewish lads an agricultural training is not an idle one.

1. *Farming in the United States*—In comparing the numbers engaged in various employments, the enumerators of the twelfth census report that out of 29,287,070 persons of ten years of age and over who were in 1900 engaged in gainful occupations, 10,438,219, or 35 6-10 per cent., were following agricultural pur-

(1) Presented at the Fourth Biennial Session of the Conference, Philadelphia, Pa., May 6-8, 1908.