JEWISH WORKERS AND FARMERS IN THE CRIMEA AND UKRAINE

By

EVELYN MORRISSEY

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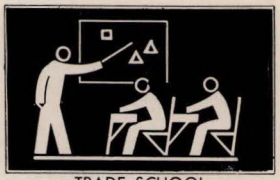
JEWISH WORKERS AND FARMERS IN THE CRIMEA AND UKRAINE

ACTIVITIES OF THE AGRO-JOINT





AGRICULTURAL ELECTRIFICATION



TRADE SCHOOL AND FACTORY COURSES



WATER SUPPLY AND IRRIGATION · PLANT NURSERIES



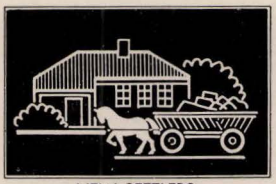
ORCHARDS AND VINEYARDS



POULTRY AND SHEEP RAISING



MUTUAL AID SOCIETY SHOPS



NEW SETTLERS



PLACING REFUGEE PHYSICIANS

PICTORIAL STATISTICS, INC

To the memory of
JULIUS ROSENWALD

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE tried to write down something of what I have seen during four weeks in Russia: of the impressions that have been made on me, not only as to the work of the Agro-Joint, but also as to the daily life and customs of the people with whom we came in contact. Mr. Rosenberg was responsible for the trip; he asked me to write this diary; he made me take a few lessons in photography.

This book presents the results. But a diary does not quite suffice. What is the Agro-Joint? Why, when, and by whom was it organized? What were its purposes? What has it achieved on behalf of the Jewish population in Russia? A few details, even though they may require dull statistics, are needed. Hence, for those who want these data, I have added at page 120 a brief history of Agro-Joint.

E. M.

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AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE PROPERTY OF THE

FOREWORD

EVELYN MORRISSEY has for more than twenty years been one of the most loyal and able of the thousands of men and women who have given service to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Founded in 1914, this organization—known generally as the J. D. C.—has sent more than a hundred million dollars into over forty countries to aid the afflicted and oppressed. This little book, concerning itself with one phase only of the J. D. C. work, namely, that in Russia, is a graphic account—a series of diary notes—recording what Miss Morrissey saw, heard and experienced during a visit to that country, in company with Pauline Baerwald Falk and her husband, Myron S. Falk, Jr.

In 1921 there occurred the famine in Russia. Under the direction of Herbert Hoover and the American Relief Administration, of which he was the head, and with the active participation of all the great American relief organizations, among them the J. D. C., America came to the rescue of the famine victims. Two J. D. C. men were members of Mr. Hoover's staff in Russia—Dr. Boris D. Bogen, an indefatigable and beloved worker, who died in service, and Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, an agriculturist of international renown. The latter's efforts related to crop raising so as to guard against recurrence of the famine in the next season.

The work so begun by Dr. Rosen in Russia was, upon the

completion of the task of the American Relief Administration, continued under his direction through two J. D. C. offshoots, the Agro-Joint and the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia. The problem facing the J. D. C. seemed at the time almost insoluble. The economic and political structure of post-revolutionary Russia was such as to forbid private trade. Only workers had the rights of citizenship. Hence the Jews, who in tsarist Russia had perforce been petty traders, herded together within ghetto walls, became outcasts. They had to change their entire way of life or perish. The task was nothing short of adapting over two million Jews to a totally new life—to transform them from ghetto-prisoned traders into sturdy tillers of the soil, workers in shops and factories and in other productive occupations.

It is of that Herculean effort and its results that this book tells. Those results we may without hyperbole describe as truly stupendous. The life of the Jews in Russia has been made over, recreated to its roots. More than a quarter of a million Russian Jews now till more than three million acres of land. It is modern, large scale, scientific farming. Merely to give a glimpse of the work, more than one thousand American-made tractors are operated by these Jewish farmers. Nearly all the other Jews of Russia are now trained workers in industry. The undertaking has been well characterized by Herbert Hoover "as one of the outstanding pieces of human engineering in the world" and by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., a philanthropist of far vision, who has generously supported the work, as "a notable and creative example of human engineering."

Many factors have contributed to the results. Thousands of men and women in America have helped with money; others with service. Of them all two names stand out so pre-eminently as to require mention. Julius Rosenwald saw eye to eye with Mr. Hoover, Mr. Rockefeller and the J. D. C. Without his encouragement and help and immense financial backing, the work could never have attained its scale. The other is Joseph A. Rosen, a great builder, a man of creative intellect and vision, of expert knowledge and skill, possessed of unflagging energy and patience. Nor could the work have so greatly succeeded but for the active co-operation of the Soviet Government, which opened land and factory to all who were willing to labor, whatever their race or creed. From the beginning it has given its effective and continued support to the efforts of the Agro-Joint and the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia. The J. D. C., of which Mr. Felix M. Warburg, and thereafter, Mr. Paul Baerwald, have been chairmen, and Mr. Joseph C. Hyman, executive director and secretary, has throughout continued active participation in this undertaking.

The farm work has gone forward largely in the Ukraine and the Crimea. The neighbors of the Jews on the soil are Russians, Ukrainians, German settlers, Tatars, Moldavians and other national or racial groups. It is gratifying to note that no discord or strife has ever marred the relations of the Jewish farmers with their neighbors, despite deep differences in culture, background, race, religion. This may be attributed in considerable part to the wisdom of

Dr. Rosen and his staff of competent assistants, headed by Mr. S. E. Lubarsky and Dr. Ezekiel Grower.

When I visited the Jewish farm settlements in the Crimea some years ago, a large group of Tatars called on me to express their gratitude to the J. D. C. for having dug them a greatly needed deep well. Proudly they escorted me to their farm colony, to extend a neighbor's welcome. Their first act was to give me a drink of the pure cold water which our well digging apparatus had provided for them. This slight example of the results of our good neighbor conduct speaks volumes. Pure seeds have been given, agricultural instruction furnished, medicaments supplied, tractors loaned—in short, the hand of friendship has constantly been extended.

To a world embittered and racked by national, racial, religious and political hatreds such deeds have borne harvests which should carry a significant message.

JAMES N. ROSENBERG

Chairman of Agro-Joint; President of American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia.

March, 1937.

JEWISH WORKERS AND FARMERS IN THE CRIMEA AND UKRAINE

MOSCOW

June 2–5, 1935

WE ARE MET at the railroad station in Moscow by Dr. Ezekiel A. Grower, vice-president and secretary of the Agro-Joint. He takes us to the Hotel Savoy, one of the several hotels in Moscow under the management of the Intourist, the Russian travel agency. There follow three busy days of sightseeing. We motor through Moscow on the first day of our arrival and there is every evidence that this is the seat of the Government of the U. S. S. R. The atmosphere of hectic activity seems unequalled by any other city in the world today.

Streets are crowded with people—men, women, boys, girls, not idling, loitering, or window-shopping, but intent on where they are going and what they are doing. Trolley cars are jammed. There are workmen everywhere, building, demolishing, reconstructing, ripping up pavements. There is scaffolding at every turn; new additions are being made to textile, electrical, and metallurgical factories; large modern apartment houses for workers are being erected; a new hotel for foreigners; a new fourteen-storey Government house which is to be a home for employees in Government institutions. A fourteen-storey building—that means something in Moscow. There are new modern

AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE PROPERTY OF THE

buildings for the State Trading Corporation and the Commissariat for Heavy Industries; new clubs and dormitories for workers; new Parks of Culture and Rest.

All of this contrasts sharply with the old Russian architecture. Some churches are still open; others serve as museums or as clubs for workers. Ancient log houses are scattered here and there. Most of the palaces of the former aristocracy and rich merchants have been converted into public institutions, museums, scientific institutes, workmen's club-houses.

We visit the mausoleum of Lenin, an impressive pyramid of red granite standing before the Kremlin walls in the Red Square. Red? A Communist meeting-place? We learn that the Red Square was not so named by the Communists, but was so designated in ancient times when it served as the place for public executions. Was it Ivan the Terrible whose blood-spilling gave it its name? Thousands of workers and peasants wait in line to pay their respect to their dead liberator, Lenin, whose embalmed body lies in a glass coffin on a raised dais. But foreigners have privileges in this country of many contradictions; we are permitted to enter without waiting.

Our next visit is to the very old St. Basil's Cathedral (at the southern end of Red Square) with its nine multi-coloured domes built around a centre tower. We cannot enter the Kremlin; it is not open to visitors today; but beyond its walls we see the building where Stalin now lives; we get a glimpse of its former monasteries and churches, where lie some of the early tsars. The military academy and barracks, the Central Executive, and the Council of

People's Commissariats are now located in these palaces—relics of a past age.

The Intourist guides tell us of Moscow's present and future accomplishments—the *largest* factories, the *finest* parks, the *most modern* apartment buildings, the much-discussed Palace of the Soviets, which is to be the *tallest* building in the world. Their English has a funny accent, but their mood is American, familiar. We can understand them. We smile at their enthusiasm. They become poetic about their subway.

We enter the subway at its terminal and ride in it. We see its seven miles, its ten stations; at every station we view the different styles and designs. The platforms are large, light, and airy; the cars are wide and upholstered in leather, very elegant. Instead of ugly steel girders, each station has a series of marble pillars, supporting artistically vaulted arches, inlaid with tile in various designs, illuminated by indirect lighting effects—a beautiful example of what can be done in subway architecture.

Russians come from far and wide to view this marvel of Moscow. Women and children are a little bit afraid; they are not used to such things. But they are fascinated by the escalators. Greatly daring, they hazard the perils of this device. The authorities have endeavoured to check joy-riding and sightseeing in the subways by charging an entrance fee of fifty kopecks, which is to be reduced when the admission becomes normal.

We visit the Boyar Palace—the house of the first Tsar of Russia, a small three-storey structure of the early seventeenth century—containing interesting exhibits of furniture,

fabrics, ikons, and household utensils of that period. The window-panes are made of mica.

We wander for hours through the halls of the Tretiakov Gallery, which houses the art collection of the wealthy merchant whose name it bears and who donated it to the city of Moscow in the nineteenth century. The collection has been enlarged by other acquisitions; there are several thousand paintings, ikons, drawings, and sculptures. The leaders of the Revolution have carefully preserved Russia's art. It is essentially a gallery of Russian paintings from the period of primitive ikons to the modern Impressionists. Our Intourist guide, not content with translating for us the names of the artists, insists on describing each picture in the light of the social, political, and economic release of the Russian people. We should have preferred to wander about and enjoy the treasures of this interesting gallery in our own way. In the gallery of Modern Western Art, happily, we need no guide and do not have to be told that it is one of the largest and best collections of modern French paintings — Monet, Renoir, Matisse, Picasso, Gauguin, Degas, and Van Gogh.

Groups of Russian Tatars and Mongolians wearing all sorts of funny clothes stare at these pictures. What do they mean to them in terms of the fine arts?

It was not until some weeks later, in Leningrad, that we were given an opportunity to discover how some of the most famous pictures of the world are explained to the masses. Standing before a Van Dyck painting of a merchant in the Hermitage was a shabby group of Tatars, and the guide described the painting: "You see his glove,

which is a symbol of power; his soft hands, which have never done a hard day's work; his fat paunch; the smug, contented expression on his face. He lived at the expense of the workers and peasants, and those days are now over."

With great pride the Intourist guide shows us the Moscow Park of Culture and Rest, on the Moscow River, with its neatly laid-out walks, newly planted rows of trees, and grassy lawns, with umbrellas and canvas beach-chairs; and large wooden buildings—a day nursery, lecture and concert halls, cinemas, exhibits of economic, cultural, and political subjects. The entrance fee is about thirty kopecks, but the workers secure free or reduced tickets from the factories, which encourage the use of these parks at all times and especially on rest days.

In the U. S. S. R., week-days, as we know them, do not exist. Only the dates of the month are known. After five days of work the next, a rest day, falls regularly on the 6th, 12th, 18th, 24th, and 30th of each month.

This vast Park of Culture and Rest contains rest homes for workers and employees. Here they read, play games, dance, listen to good music. They have volley-ball courts, sheds for sun-bathing, kitchens and dining-rooms, libraries and instruction in games and dancing—quite a change, our guide tells, from days before the Revolution, when Sundays were spent in drinking, wife-beating, and street brawls.

The frenzied desire of the masses for education in all fields astonishes us. "The liquidation of illiteracy." We see a splendid example of this in the institution established for the "Care of Mother and Child," with charts, statistics, and exhibits of prenatal care, child feeding, diet, clothing,

sanitation, etc. Ninety per cent of all maternity cases in Moscow, we are told, are cared for in State hospitals.

Our first evening in Moscow is spent at the State Opera Theatre, of fine classic design. It is perfectly maintained and has a fine auditorium, with seven tiers of boxes and balconies, beautifully decorated, reflecting the magnificence of the past. The opera and ballet companies are State-supported; but the famous Russian ballet continues on the high plane made known to us by Nijinsky and Diaghileff; the stage settings are superb, colourful, imaginative. The undersea scenes in the opera *Sadko* are unsurpassed in beauty and in ingenuity of costume — marvellous fishes, lobsters, crabs, and frogs. One accident occurs, however, to mar this perfection. In the second act a high-prowed ship, rolling on stormy seas, with full sail set, catches a back-stage draught and crashes into the orchestra! Fortunately, no one is seriously hurt, and after a ten-minute delay the opera continues.

BEFORE leaving Moscow, Dr. Grower suggests that we see an "artel" or shop established by the Agro-Joint. The Agro-Joint has discontinued practically all activities in the Moscow District. They have been so successful that the Government Trusts have now taken over the workshops, factories, and co-operatives organized and developed during the first seven or eight years of Agro-Joint activity; and they have absorbed also the work of the Jewish Mutual Aid Societies and Loan Kassas. Five years ago the woodworking shop had 35 young Jewish workers and students; now we see 300 young men and women, some Jews,

EVOLUTION OF AN AGRO-JOINT COLONY:



The first step: a group of prospective settlers select a likely site with the aid of an Agro-Joint representative.



Agro-Joint surveyors lay out the site.



The first settlers erect their homes.



The colony completed. Whitewashed houses, wide streets, clipped lawns give it a trim and fresh appearance.

others non-Jews, working under the chairmanship of an energetic young Jew who, after many financial and technical difficulties, has put the shop on its feet as a productive enterprise. How many of the three hundred are Jews? Nobody seems to know. The question is unimportant. The thing that counts is whether you do good work. On inquiry, I finally learn that over 600 young Jews have been trained in this shop and are working in Government factories. In the first five months of 1935 this shop turned out 45,000 chairs, for which it received 1,203,000 roubles. There is no difficulty in disposing of the output; all the chairs are contracted for in advance through Government co-operatives.

Through Dr. Grower, as interpreter, we learn of the many advantages extended to workers through factory employment. Living-quarters are made available to them. This, we are told, may not appear to be an extraordinary concession. When, however, it is realized that rooms and apartments are at a premium in Moscow (the population since the Revolution has increased from 1,700,000 to 4,000,000) we see that living-quarters—a roof, a shelter —mean something. Despite new construction and the building of apartments for workers, housing remains one of the greatest problems in Moscow today. Theoretically, coming first in the category of the preferred and privileged are the workers. Then come factory and office employees. Government officials, civil employees, and the army seem to have special advantages. Their salaries are small, but they receive better types of dwellings and daily necessaries such as food and clothing, at substantially reduced prices.

We are shown some of the living-quarters of the workers. They are allotted ten square metres of space (not quite twelve square yards), with an extra allowance for each child. Often four and five families will occupy one apartment with a common kitchen and bathroom—not too conducive, I reflect, to congenial home life or privacy.

Then I discover another interesting bit. Rent is paid on the basis of earning capacity. An unskilled worker making 150 roubles per month will pay ten per cent for his living-quarters, or 15 roubles, whereas a skilled worker earning 400 roubles per month will pay 40 roubles for the same apartment.

Children of workers are sent to public day nurseries. Workers are admitted to public vacation homes and sanatoria at almost nominal rates. Workers receive free tickets for theatre, opera, museums, the Park of Culture and Rest, and "one-day rest homes"—all in the form of bonuses, based on merit in their work. So industry and initiative are encouraged in Russia too!

The very life of the worker is centred in the factory. It is regimentation of life, but an important step, I suppose, in the development of an unlettered people.

The youthful chairman of the artel insists that we must have tea and cake at the Red Corner. Every factory and office in Russia has its Red Corner, a meeting-place, with the inevitable statues or portraits of Lenin and Stalin, decorated with red bunting. Several technical and cultural heads of this shop show us with pride two banners which they have earned, one from the All-Union Co-operative Organization, the other from the Moscow County Co-opera-

tive Organization. They express thanks to the Agro-Joint for making possible these accomplishments.

OUR VISIT to the Government Torgsin stores brings home an illustration of the economic difficulties of the country. I had always understood that valuta (foreign currency) was highly prized in Russia, and made possible purchases not generally available to the Russian people, and I assumed, therefore, that only foreigners shopped in these stores. I am surprised to find few foreigners but many Russians shopping here; the food department has shelves well stocked with canned goods; butter, vegetables, fruit, meats, and eggs are on the counters; there are clothing and shoe departments, bolt goods, fabrics.

The cashier's department explains what is happening. Russians are handing over cheques and cash—mostly American dollars—also gold trinkets, ornaments, jewellery. The cashier weighs the gold and silver, evaluates the jewels; against these he issues coupon credit slips enabling their fortunate possessors to buy items of comfort or even luxuries they could not otherwise secure—an effective measure for bringing out hidden wealth and bringing into the Government treasury foreign remittances from relatives overseas.

Only a few of the Russian people have means to avail themselves of the Torgsin stores. The standards of living are still low, even though they have immensely improved in recent years. The peasant is paid largely in produce on the basis of the crop yield and his contribution in labour toward collective efforts. He handles little cash. The

unskilled worker receives an average of 100 to 150 roubles a month; the skilled worker 300 to 500 roubles a month; an employee, clerk, stenographer, 150 to 250 roubles; an expert technician, up to 600 roubles, and in some cases as high as 1,000 roubles. It may be assumed that the vast majority of workers average 150 roubles a month. But the striking thing about all this is the variation in salary according to merit and usefulness. That is not what one expects in a Socialist State.

In terms of purchasing power, however, bread sells at from 1 to 3 roubles a pound, depending on quality; meat at 7 roubles a pound; butter at 15 roubles a pound; vegetables other than potatoes, carrots, and cabbage are very dear. Decent clothing for the general masses is still almost out of the question, since the industrial program of the Soviets has so far emphasized heavy industry. A good pair of shoes in the Government commercial stores costs 100 roubles. On the streets of Russia a sort of canvas tennis-shoe or cheap bedroom slipper is a frequent sight.

En Route to the Crimea—The Jewish Colonies of the Agro-Joint

June 6

We leave Moscow for Simferopol in the Crimea. The railroad station is packed. There is a tremendous movement of people in Russia today—many changing employment, seeking new opportunities, workers going to sanatoria and rest homes, soldiers to Government camps, Government employees on inspection trips, vacationists, peasants going no one knows where.

We are accompanied by Miss Epstein, a clerk in our Agro-Joint office in Moscow, who is to act as interpreter and guide. We are prepared for a long trip, with baskets of food—there is no dining-car on our train.

We are informed that the railway system is undergoing reorganization. Passenger service is being sacrificed temporarily to freight. The pressing need for more rapid transportation of goods and agricultural produce requires passenger comforts to give way. And even foreigners' money does not "talk" under these circumstances. It is impossible, therefore, to be sure of comfort or privacy even by purchasing tickets for full compartments. Still, people must travel. We are, however, fortunate in having a so-called International Sleeping-Car on our train, which is comfortable and roomy.

Excitement. A robbery. At five o'clock in the morning the train guide wakes us. In great excitement he explains to Miss Epstein that he has found Mr. Falk's wallet in the washroom. The Falks' compartment had been entered during the night, Mrs. Falk's pocketbook and all its contents taken, as well as cash and traveller's cheques from Mr. Falk's wallet. Fortunately, their passports are safe.

At the next station GPU officers solemnly receive our reports of the robbery. They promise complete investigation. Surely the thieves will be captured, their booty restored. This is the all-powerful GPU. We wait hopefully —for days. The all-powerful GPU . . . but the thieves are not apprehended.

Now we settle down to long hours of riding through the endless low, wide, fertile fields of the Ukraine. Wheat, barley, oats, and corn wave in the wind.

The train stops at a number of stations. We stroll up and down the platforms. The stations are crowded. The peasants stare at us. They all seem well fed. Their clothes are nondescript. Soldiers are on guard. Passengers rush to the food counters and fill their tea-kettles with hot water. Peasants are selling cherries, cucumbers, radishes. There is much bargaining.

There are hordes of children. Here and there indescribably filthy, ragged urchins come crowding around us, their hands out for a coin. Miss Epstein tells us that this is nothing compared with the scenes of a few years ago. This begging and wandering of homeless children have been almost completely eliminated, she says.

SIMFEROPOL

June 7

SEVEN O'CLOCK in the morning. We've been dressed and ready for an hour, looking at the flat green steppes. Straggling houses begin to appear. The train slows up. The forty-hour trip is finished. We have arrived at Simferopol. For years I have heard about this city. Near it are many of the Jewish farm colonies. Soon I'll see them. Dr. Lubarsky, chief of the agricultural activities of the Agro-Joint, an eminent agronomist, is welcoming us. He looks like a farmer, husky, bronzed, hearty. He conducts us to the Leningrad Hotel. Our rooms are large and airy, but they do not boast of private baths. The beds are covered with the cheapest of wool blankets. The lumpy straw mattresses look as if they antedated Ivan the Terrible.

Breakfast in the courtyard of the hotel. A pleasant place and the air feels clean and fresh after forty hours in the hot, stuffy, dusty train. The accommodations are primitive with respect to sleeping-arrangements, bath, and sanitary conditions. But we are happy.

After breakfast Dr. Lubarsky takes us to the Agro-Joint office, located in a one-storey, whitewashed stone building owned by the Agro-Joint. We are introduced to the members of the staff and are shown the offices, clean

and efficient in appearance. The side porch opens on a lovely, shady garden. Here we talk with Dr. Lubarsky and Mr. Zaitchik, in charge of the Crimean colonies of Agro-Joint. Mr. Zaitchik had spent a year, 1930-31, in the United States at the instance of the Agro-Joint, observing and studying farming and agricultural conditions in the various sections of our country. His knowledge of the English language is a tremendous help to us.

A busy morning; then lunch on the porch. For the first time in many days a good, substantial, freshly cooked meal. Smoked fish, caviar, fresh salad, veal cutlets, wine—a product of Crimean grapes from the Jewish vineyards—small crisp cakes, and stewed fruit. Wonderful!

AND NOW for the colonies. But before we depart, Mr. Zaitchik is interrupted by several visitors from the Agro-Joint colonies, who have been sent by the "Kolkhoz" (as the collectivized farming groups are called) to consult with respect to grand plans for improving conditions in their Kolkhoz. The colonists explain eagerly that with profits from the Kolkhoz operations for last year they plan to build a hospital. But they require an additional two thousand roubles for the purchase of lumber. So they make application to Agro-Joint for a loan. Also they need counsel as to the specifications of the building, dimensions, equipment, etc. This is a typical piece of business, we are told. Agro-Joint constantly receives visitors from the colonies for advice on all types of problems; not only technical information as to agricultural matters, but also concerning schools, hospitals, day nurseries, social and institutional planning.

Finally we get started. Simferopol is well planned; the streets are clean, planted with shady trees. As we pass through these streets, Zaitchik points out several fair-sized buildings; one is a medical college, another an agricultural and teachers' training college. There are several Soviet executive buildings, GPU offices, two small theatres. The one- or two-storey apartment houses are well kept.

In general the inhabitants—women in white dresses or light-coloured cottons, men in white Russian blouses—look healthy, clean, energetic.

After a drive of one and one-half hours on fairly passable dirt roads, through flat fertile country, we arrive at the first Agro-Joint colony in the Simferopol District, Kalininsk. This is one of the oldest of the Agro-Joint colonies in the Crimea, established early in 1924. So at last I am to see—really to see—something of this work with which I have so long been connected!

WE VISIT several homes. In the first one we are welcomed by an aged couple, Mr. and Mrs. Tonne. After greeting us in Yiddish, Mrs. Tonne disappears—only to return within a few minutes in a stiffly starched white apron and her finest calico dress. We carry on quite a lively conversation with this interesting couple through Zaitchik as interpreter. They came to Kalininsk in the latter part of 1923 from a small village in the Kherson District of the Ukraine.

Mrs. Tonne shows us with great pride the three clean and comfortable-looking rooms. The cheap iron beds are covered with clean white coverlets; the windows are cur-

tained; and the plain wood tables are adorned with gay coloured cloths.

Adjoining the living-quarters are a small barn and an open shed. Mr. Tonne explains that they have a guest temporarily. He has come to the colony intending to build his own house. In this way the Tonnes earn ten roubles monthly, for the use of one of their beds.

I ask this elderly couple whether they are satisfied with life here in Kalininsk. Mr. Tonne answers: "I am seventy-seven years old and I have had much hardship. But I am happy in my old age. My son is the head of this Kolkhoz, and is capable and highly respected. My children and grandchildren are working and studying, and what more can a man ask?"

"But," I ask, "are you able to make a living here?" Mr. Tonne replies: "Oh yes, my son, as head of the Kolkhoz, does very well, and although I am too old to work very much in the fields, I have already twenty-two working days to my credit so far this year. We own a cow; and my daughter, who is a widow, also has a cow. I have one sheep, one steer, and about a dozen chickens. Maybe we ought to have more chickens. We have sixty apricot trees in our own private orchard, and we do not wish to have too many chickens, for they would spoil our orchards. We have no pigs; we are good Jews. We market our apricots and our surplus milk and eggs."

We are very much impressed and question Mr. Zaitchik as to just what all this means. He explains that the Kolkhoz is a collective farm, formed by a group of peasants or farmers who combine and undertake collective



Mr. and Mrs. Tonne.



Workers and Students in Kiev Factory.

work. The members of the collective farm pool their agricultural implements and their horses, which are collectively owned. The Soviet farm tractor centres supply the collective farms with tractors, machines, plants, and seeds.

On the other hand, the individual farmer retains his house, his garden, his chickens, his cow, sheep, and pig. These possessions he may dispose of at his own will and he may market his milk, eggs, vegetables, and fruit, in the open market or through the local co-operative.

"How," we ask, "are the individual farmers compensated for their labours?" Mr. Zaitchik points out that the compensation of each worker depends on his or her individual ability, energy, and skill, and such compensation is computed in working days. For example, Mr. Tonne's son, as head of the Kolkhoz, would receive credit for more than the normal working day, since his work is on a higher basis than others, owing to the time that he must devote to directing the community activities. "But when we visit the Executive Committee House," Zaitchik adds, "you will see just how this works."

Here a youngster of eight years interrupts us; he hands Mrs. Falk a straggly bunch of field flowers and immediately dashes off. Mrs. Tonne says proudly: "That is my grandson. My daughter also has a fifteen-year-old son in a technicum in the Ukraine, studying to be a mechanical engineer. He works on the farm during the summer. We like it better here than in the city. My oldest grandson is in the high military school. We consider that an honour." This statement we could easily understand; for it was unheard of in tsarist days for Jews to be permitted to study

for important posts in the army. But now such discrimination is not allowed.

At the next farm we are greeted by another elderly couple. Their house, similar to all the others in this colony, is made of porous blocks of stone peculiar to this region of the Crimea—natural deposits of early sea formation, stone and seashells, and a mixture of lime and loam. The blocks are twelve inches thick, eighteen inches wide, twenty-four inches long, and whitewashed both outside and inside. It is good building material.

Mrs. Smilansky is a talkative old lady. She points to an electric bulb set in a crude iron fixture in the centre of the ceiling and explains that they are eagerly waiting for electricity. She tells us that they have come from a city in northern Russia and have brought their furniture—good substantial pieces—with them.

"It is not an easy life," the old man says, "there is much hard work, but we get along." Mrs. Smilansky interrupts. "Yes, but is it not hard to make a living everywhere—in America too? Ask our guests. Our daughter and her husband live with us and they have two sons; one is fifteen years and the other is ten. They are all out working in the field. We have lived here eleven years. We have a son in town—he is a mechanic. We own a cow, a pig, one sheep, one calf, and twenty-three chickens."

"Do you know," Mrs. Smilansky asks, "that on May 1st an international delegation came to our colony and into *our* home as guests of the Soviet Government? The Government officials were pleased at being able to show their visitors our house, and the guests were very much impressed

with the clean floors, rugs, white walls, and our pictures. They had expected to see the old type of crowded, ill-kept moujik farms."

Mrs. Smilansky takes us to the home of her neighbours, the Chesid family. This home differs from the others that we have seen only in that the floors are not made of wood but of a mixture of manure and mud. That doesn't sound attractive, but it is not at all bad. The floors are clean, clayey, although the faint odour of the stable lingers. Mrs. Chesid tells us that she cleans and washes the floor every few days. But Mrs. Smilansky shows her disapproval of such floors and emphasizes that her son had insisted on wooden flooring in their home. "We are city people," she explains. "These people are from the country." She shrugs her shoulders. Quite evidently floors are a symbol of social status.

In this family only the father works in the fields. The son works in a factory at Dniepropetrovsk. This, indeed, is the case in several homes we visit. I spoke to Zaitchik. Did it mean a movement away from the soil? Zaitchik answered, "Experience has shown that although one or two children leave for city life, the families are usually large and one or two or even three members remain in the colonies; so instead of the population of the colonies decreasing, it is growing from year to year, as the younger people marry, build new homes and have a good many babies. Furthermore, many of the youths who leave the farms for technical training return to their Kolkhoz bringing back the benefits of their technical education."

Before we leave, Mrs. Smilansky proudly tells us of her

grandson in the Agricultural Technicum of Poltava where the authorities maintain that the children from the Agro-Joint colonies are better trained and quicker students than those who come from the cities and towns. "Thanks to the Agro-Joint," said Mrs. Smilansky, "we have good schools here and good teachers and our children have finer possibilities of success in life."

NOW TO THE Executive Committee House in Kalininsk, a low one-room building. The walls are covered with Soviet charts and posters issued by the Government, explaining the care of cows, livestock, chickens; pictures of milking methods; charts about seeds, plants, ploughing; all sorts of businesslike information for farm life.

Tovarisch (Comrade) Bookkeeper presides. He is the right-hand man and general factotum for the local chairman, a sort of career man, the clerk of the community. He explains that the Kalininsk Kolkhoz is small, with only twenty-six members or heads of families. There are in this colony fifty-one workers—men and women—and fifty-one non-workers—children, the aged, and those physically unfit. During vacation time many children join the army of workers. This Kolkhoz has 580 hectares of land (about 1,433 acres) and twenty-five houses. The Kolkhoz itself owns no cows; these are individually owned by the members, each of whom may have one or two. There are, in all, thirty-two cows owned by the twenty-six members. A cow is expensive, costing from a thousand to twelve hundred roubles. Suddenly I begin to understand this perpetual enumeration of livestock. Four-footed, walking

wealth instead of bank accounts. "A wealthy community—thirty-two cows!"

The bookkeeper shows his ledgers for the year 1934. The profits of the Kolkhoz are divided among the workers at 1 rouble 15 kopecks per working day. The average number of working days per family is 350. I make a mental calculation—350 working days multiplied by 1.15 roubles approximates 400 roubles in earnings per family for one year.

"Comrade Bookkeeper," asks Mr. Falk, "how is it possible to get along on such a small earning basis when you tell us, for example, that a cow alone costs a thousand roubles?" "Ah," he replies, "that is the price in the open market; but we in the collectives can buy our cows from the Government livestock estates for two hundred roubles. The Government owns and manages, you know, many large State farms, known as Sovkhozy. Here workers are employed and paid by the Government; they do not receive a *pro rata* division of the produce, but a flat salary. The Kolkhozy, or collective farms, buy their animals, seeds, etc., from these State farms.

"Now, to answer your question as to how the farmers in the Kolkhoz are compensated for their labours," he adds. "It is very simple. The value of this working norm of 1.15 roubles per day is equal to 10 to 12 roubles in the open market, so that the actual value of the apportionment per family on the basis of 350 working days per year, is 350 times 12 roubles, or about 4,200 roubles per year. That means 350 roubles per month, which is the average salary paid to a college graduate holding an important position in

the city." "That is all right in theory," we say, "but how does this work out in practice, and how is the individual able to purchase his daily requirements?" "Each family is credited monthly with the total working days contributed by the family members. Against this credit, the family is able to purchase some of its daily necessities at the Kolkhoz store. In addition, there is apportioned out of the crop yield of the Kolkhoz, based on the working days to the credit of each family, a given quantity of wheat, barley, oats, etc. This apportionment is made at the end of the season, after Government taxes, servicing costs, and other incidental expenses have been paid. The *pro rata* share of each family naturally must depend on the crop yield. Furthermore, each family, from its own possessions, is able to cover a portion of its actual cash requirements through the sale of vegetables, milk, eggs, and fruit at open market prices."

We ask the bookkeeper what crops are raised in this particular Kolkhoz, whether they have prospered recently, and what the yield has been. We are told that 1934 was a good year, but that 1935 will be even better. They confidently expect from the 1935 planting 303 tons of wheat, 54 tons of corn, 37 tons of oats, 21 tons of barley, and, in addition, beans, peas, cotton, and medicinal herbs. "What will be the approximate value of this crop?" I ask. "In so far as the Kolkhoz is concerned, we have estimated that this crop will have a value of 350 roubles per ton. On the other hand, the price in the free or open market is 2,600 roubles per ton, seven times as much."

I cannot resist asking questions about the press reports

and statements I have read concerning the poverty, starvation, and despair of the peasant population of Russia, as a result of excessive taxation and the confiscation of their produce. I have read that during the First Five-Year Plan and the early days of the intensive drive toward collectivization the peasant population suffered not only from the burdens placed on them of feeding the city populations and the army and of providing the Government with exports, but also because of the resistance of the kulaks to the collective scheme. Subsequently over-zealous local Soviet officials, I understood, insisted on using the profits of the Kolkhoz for local improvement rather than for the benefit of the individual Kolkhoz members. I learn that this situation is being corrected; now, we are told, the Government prohibits the use of more than thirty per cent of the Kolkhoz income for local communal improvements and insists on a more equitable division among the members of the Kolkhoz. And so far I have seen little evidence of misery—at least in this particular enterprising settlement.

We are very much interested in the records for 1935, and the bookkeeper shows us a chart of all the workers—sixty-one in all, including children—computed on a monthly basis and also on a cumulative basis to June 1st. The Kolkhoz blacksmith, who has been an interested listener, asks us to look at his record, showing that he is credited with one and one-half working days for each actual day's work. In answer to our query, we are told that the rate is computed not only on the basis of the individual's actual output, but on the type of work—a skilled worker being paid a higher rate than an unskilled worker. On the other

hand, some workers may receive credit for only half a working day — those who are lazy and shiftless, and also many of the women and children who have not the strength for the hard labour of the fields. We are interested in the fact that the books are kept, not only on the basis of each family unit, but also on the basis of each member of the family—husband, wife, sons and daughters. This is a precaution taken in the event of divorce or other disintegration of the family; each member will be entitled to receive his fair share of the family output.

It is very exciting—this treatment of a day's work as if it were money, this combination of collectivism and individual ownership. The cow, the apricot trees, the chickens, the violin, the calico dress, I can own these. But the tractor, the plough, the wide fields, they are the property of the community. So it is the community that receives what these hectares earn. It's a sort of co-operative corporation; the community members are stockholders. But their dividends depend upon work. They can't sit at home and cut coupons.

And now good-bye to Kalininsk and its nice people, who seem really contented. Kalininsk is named after the peasant President of Soviet Russia. Not a Jew, he has been one of the men who from the beginning believed that a bent Jewish pedlar could be transformed into a horny-handed farmer. He has put his beliefs to the proof.

WE DRIVE to the next colony, Pervomaysk. Motoring over these flat dusty roads of the Crimean steppes, we see fields stretching to the blue horizon. I admire the golden

fields. Sunflowers are growing. They are valuable, too, for the oil from the seeds, which is used as a substitute for butter. Zaitchik explains that the workers we see in these fields are all prisoners serving sentences for minor crimes. They have practically no surveillance or guards and live under fairly good conditions. There is little or no fear on the part of the authorities that these prisoners will try to escape; such attempts are more or less futile. Besides that, they live in comparatively uncrowded quarters and have plenty of substantial food. As escaped convicts they would have no "passports" and so could not secure work. Undesirables, counter-revolutionaries, and class enemies in Russia, deprived of "passports," are thus isolated from counter-revolutionary activities. Only workers and those who accept the Soviet system receive passports—precious documents which have to be renewed every three to five years. This, it is explained, provides a careful check on the Soviet citizen. We have read much of forced and prison labour conditions and its horrors, but here in these golden fields of sunflowers we cannot visualize what it means.

We arrive in the Pervomaysk colony, which is five or six years old. It is larger, but not so well developed as Kalininsk. There has not been enough time to build up the modest comforts which we found at Kalininsk. We do not stop to visit individual homes in this colony, but go directly to the busy poultry station.

Another of the important activities engaged in by the Agro-Joint was the work of poultry-raising, which is still being carried on in the Crimea and Ukraine. For this purpose, the Agro-Joint purchased several incubators—

one having a capacity of 25,000 eggs, another of 15,000, another of 10,000, and numbers of smaller ones. After a time, the Agro-Joint undertook community hatching; that is, the farmers would bring their eggs to the hatching houses and remove the chicks when they were one or two days old. For this hatching service a slight charge was made. These hatcheries have been turned over to the collectives and at the present time the people themselves are managing them. However, courses of instruction are being given by the Agro-Joint as to the care of the chicks, their breeding, feeding, etc.

We visit the day nursery. The establishments for children are an essential part of the scheme of life. I talk with the teacher in charge, an intelligent, alert young woman. The nursery was opened only the preceding month and naturally, she states by way of apology, there is still much to be done. We are shown the little cots, the kitchen, the combined dining-room and playroom—all inadequate, but a good start. By and large, the children look well fed and well cared for. They average from two to six years of age. The idea of the nursery school has been growing rapidly in the colonies. This enables young mothers to work in the fields and increase the family earnings. Meantime the children are in good hands. It seems a sound plan; the young women can do much useful work in the fields.

Unfortunately the schoolhouse, the huge whitewashed building which serves three adjacent colonies, is closed for the summer. We are unable, therefore, to learn of the methods and conditions of education here. We note eight



Carefully tended vineyards in the Kolay District of the Crimea.



Hotbeds for growing plants on irrigated tracts. Cabbage, eggplant and tomato seedlings are in sprout.



Demonstrating an American incubator to a group of colonists.



Good results from an incubator. White leghorns at feeding time at a poultry station.

or ten houses being erected immediately adjoining Pervomaysk. Zaitchik informs us that despite a tendency toward industrial and city life, there are also many who prefer to build their lives on the soil; these new homes confirm his statement.

SEVEN O'CLOCK. We are back in Simferopol, weary but happy. At last I have seen some of the Agro-Joint colonies in the Crimea. A day I'll always remember: the wide fields, the crops, the tractors; old and young, busy, creative, bringing the fruits of the earth to men's use. Just as we are finishing supper at the Agro-Joint house, we hear a considerable amount of activity from a room leading off the side porch. It is a lively meeting of the Agro-Joint staff. Discussions are being held under the direction of a young woman of about thirty years of age. Listen to her vigorous voice. Dr. Lubarsky translates. The eager young woman is urging the Agro-Joint workers and employees to co-operate with a group organized for raising funds for homeless children throughout the Crimea. Dr. Lubarsky introduces us to the speakers, who inform us that cultural and theatrical committees have been organized, have undertaken the responsibility for collecting half a million roubles for a child-care program in the Crimea. They are gathering together homeless children and waifs for placement in institutions and sanatoria; they have already raised two hundred thousand roubles. Agro-Joint workers are being urged to aid in a benefit performance being given in Simferopol, where there are fifty such children whom they hope to educate, to train for trades—even for theatrical and

other arts where the children show talent. Maybe there are undiscovered composers. Or painters of tomorrow. Or a Sarah Bernhardt. Who knows? But at least it is pretty clear that when these farmers undertake to raise a half million roubles for homeless children, things are pretty good with them. "Are they Jewish children?" I asked. Dr. Lubarsky explains that there are but few Jewish children among these waifs, thanks to the efforts of the Agro-Joint and those of the J.D.C. in the earlier years. In all Russia he tells us, not more than one child out of a thousand of these young vagrants is Jewish.

Returning to our hotel, we find it is not easy to thread our way through the crowded streets. Throngs of exuberant young people crowd the main thoroughfares of this town. We arrive ready for a good night's rest, and an early start the following morning. And the bumpy mattress did not interfere with my slumber.

June 8

A DELICIOUS enormous breakfast at the Agro-Joint house —fish, cheese, French toast, fried chicken, crab-apple jelly, sour cream, bread, and tea—and we are off again, accompanied by Dr. Lubarsky and Mr. Raskin (assistant to Zaitchik). Before leaving the city, Dr. Lubarsky insists that we must have a view of Simferopol from the hills surrounding the city. It is a lovely sight in the early morning hours—this city, clean and bright in the sun, nestling against the hills, with its whitewashed buildings, red-tiled roofs, poplar and acacia trees.

Raskin apologizes for a delay of a few minutes before

starting on our journey. We stop at the court-house; and returning to the car, looking very cheerful, Raskin explains that he has had a most successful interview with the Soviet judge; he has promised to review a case involving two young Jews from the Agro-Joint colonies who are being tried for responsibility in the death of a calf. The calf died of exposure, and penalties are very heavy for carelessness or irresponsibility in respect to livestock. These men had been convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Two years for being careless about a calf! That gives us a pretty good idea about Soviet policy in creating a great asset in livestock. Raskin has succeeded in persuading the judge that there were extenuating circumstances which should lessen the punishment of these two boys.

At one o'clock in the afternoon we reach a German colony, which Dr. Lubarsky is anxious for us to visit. We stop at the home of Dr. Susmanovitch and his wife, who four months ago came to Russia as refugees from Germany. At the instance of the Agro-Joint, the Government has brought in a number of German refugee doctors. Arrangements have been made for approximately forty more for whom the Government will provide posts in various sections in Russia, some to be placed in the colonies in the Crimea, others in the Ukraine and in large cities in the interior of Russia. Apparently expected guests, we are greeted heartily by Dr. Susmanovitch and his wife, and we are glad to meet him. These forty doctors—maybe they will blaze the way for thousands of Jews whose hope for life in Germany has been extinguished.

The good doctor shows us through the hospital, which is being renovated. In terms of anything that we have known in hospital care, sanitation, equipment, it is crude and inadequate. However, this young German doctor has ideas of his own and is bending every effort toward improving the standards of the hospital.

Their own home, adjoining the hospital, consists of four small rooms, and is as bright and cheerful and well kept as a young German housewife could make it under existing difficulties. We sit in the small living-dining-room. There follows an animated conversation in German between Dr. Susmanovitch, his wife, and Mrs. Falk. He tells how he had to leave Hitler's Germany, where his father, before him, had been a physician in Heidelberg; since his departure from Germany he has spent a year in Rotterdam in the Jewish hospital. There he received food but no pay and no funds for living-expenses. He waxes enthusiastic in relating the story of his decision to go to Russia, the help afforded him by the Agro-Joint, the joy which he found in his work, and his plans for the future. He emphasizes the sense of freedom which he felt on arriving in this colony in the Simferopol District. His wife interrupts him from time to time with happy remarks as to their hopes and plans. There is one tiny room which she has already prepared for her mother, a refugee in Paris. They hope to have her join them as soon as they are in a position to send money for her transportation; they have already saved the equivalent of fifty-two dollars.

Dr. Susmanovitch is earning five hundred roubles a month. His wife hopes soon to get a position in the kinder-

garten, where she will receive two hundred roubles a month. "We shall be able to repay the Agro-Joint for all of its advances and service and we are looking forward to a healthy, happy, self-respecting existence in Russia." Her brother, who had been a director and assistant to the famous Max Reinhardt, is planning to come to Russia to settle eventually in the Biro-Bidjan section.

In her vast kitchen—about as big as a small closet—she prepares a lunch of fish, cheese, eggs—and coffee which she brought with her from Holland. It is the first cup of coffee which we have enjoyed in Russia! We leave this happy, cheerful young couple, hoping that despite all the discomforts and handicaps, many sound young professional German Jews will be able to adjust themselves to life in this Russia which welcomes men and women who have technical training.

Now to the Agro-Joint colony in Ratenstadt in the Kolay District. There are in this district eighteen contiguous Jewish colonies, and I wish I could see every one of them. Before entering any of the homes in this colony, we stop in the fields, where we see in the distance a steel and wood structure, an apparatus for well-drilling. Two hundred and fifty wells have been drilled by the Agro-Joint, of an average depth of six hundred feet, from which up to a hundred cubic metres of water may be obtained per minute. Mr. Falk, an engineer trained in America, discusses technicalities with Dr. Lubarsky, Mr. Raskin and the workers. Mrs. Falk and I, however, more interested in households, human beings, and children, spend most of the afternoon in the Kolay District visiting homes, talking with brigadiers of

the vineyards and vegetable gardens, with the Agro-Joint agronomist, and many others. These agronomists are attractive. Young, bronzed, learned in the science of agriculture, they are important officers in Dr. Rosen's agricultural army.

Our first visit is to the Bender household, and again I am impressed with the orderliness and air of content of these settlers. Mr. Bender is called the brigadier of the vineyards and vegetables. In this district there are 25 hectares (61 acres) of vineyards and 10 hectares (24 acres) of vegetables. In all, we are told, there are 3,000 hectares (7,413 acres) of vineyards in the Crimean colonies. Over 7,400 acres of grapes. Try to walk around a plot which contains only fifty acres. Then you realize what 7,413 acres mean—more than ten square miles of grapes.

Bender, a hard-working member of the Kolkhoz, had to his credit last year 540 working days. His family, as a whole, had 690 working days, demonstrating again that skill, leadership and industry receive their due reward in the collective-farming scheme. "We are happy here," says Mrs. Bender; "in the city, where my husband used to work in the mills, he hardly made enough for our smallest needs. We have two sons; one is fifteen and the other thirteen, both in school. My older son was always sickly in town and suffered from malaria and tuberculosis. Now, thank God" (and her eyes fill) "he is entirely well. He works in the fields during his vacation—fresh air, wholesome food, and decent home conditions have made him a sound, healthy child. He is interested in electrical engineering, and he will work in the brigade during the electrifica-

tion of our colony; and, of course, if he has aptitude and can prove his ability, he will be sent to the technical high school." Little thrills run up and down me when I hear such stories. All my work of these last ten years for Agro-Joint means something. It isn't just writing reports, preparing cables, attending long conferences with Mr. Warburg or Mr. Rosenberg or Mr. Baerwald. It means Mrs. Bender and her two sons, life for them, an escape from the prison of the Ghetto, hope, fulfilment.

Little old Mr. Shandlenke was a tailor in Kiev. Now he has built his house with his own hands. He was the first settler in this district. Is he proud! And no wonder. The Shandlenke family had credit for 500 working days last year. They have two sons—one eighteen years old, preparing for the university, and the other twenty, the bookkeeper in the Kolay District Executive Committee. It is a consistent story. About one half of the children plan their future outside of the Kolkhoz, and the other half prefer to build their lives on the soil.

We walk through the streets of this colony and admire the fine buildings. The first, a long, low structure, was the first high school in the Agro-Joint colonies in the Crimea. It now has a hundred and twenty students up to the age of sixteen. Instruction is in Yiddish as well as in Russian. Near by is the framework of a good-sized dormitory building, which will be finished by the autumn, to house students coming from other settlements. High schools are growing rapidly in these colonies, so the Jewish parents can give their children opportunity for education in the farm districts. The desire for learning is great among these people,

and many families might have left these colonies had it not been for this far-sighted policy of the Agro-Joint. In many colonies special classes and reading-rooms for adults have been established. The language is Yiddish; the textbooks and library books are also in Yiddish. All these efforts stimulated by the Agro-Joint help to maintain Jewish culture and tradition among these Jewish farmers. We are shown the kindergarten and nursery under the direction of a teacher-nurse; fifty children, up to the age of eight, are fed and cared for daily, while their mothers work in the vineyards.

We enter the co-operative store. I am disappointed at the meagre supplies on the shelves, and wonder at the earlier statements made to us that farmers are able to buy many of their requirements in these stores at low prices. The shelves contain some canned goods—for the most part varieties of fish, bread of a poor quality, a few bolts of material, and cigarettes, which we purchase for fifteen kopecks, but which are not up to the Russian cigarettes that we bought in Moscow. They taste like birch-bark. "No," it is explained, "these co-operatives cannot supply all the requirements of the farmers. In fact, a few years ago only about a tenth of their needs could be purchased in these stores. Conditions are changing rapidly, however, and now almost three-fourths of the demand can be supplied through this medium. The stores are not well stocked now, but come here in the autumn, after the harvest, and you will see plenty of stock, clothing for the men, women, and children, shoes, canned goods, sugar, salt, kerosene." Schools, nurseries, vineyards, co-operative stores, medical

stations, houses, electricity. These modern pioneers are creating all the apparatus of a decent life.

"It is getting late and we are expected at the home of Dr. Herman Epstein," explains Dr. Lubarsky. "He has only recently come from Leipzig and has settled in one of the German colonies here—Colony Naiman. I felt that you would be interested in seeing some of these German doctors and how they are living. We have taken in a number of doctors, not men of outstanding reputation, but young, able physicians who can more readily adjust themselves to conditions here in Russia. This is an experiment. Some are in the university in the Volga Republic; others are in the Agro-Joint colonies and in German colonies in the Crimea. The Agro-Joint does not employ these doctors. It is the Government that engages them on the recommendation of the Agro-Joint. The medical organization OZE in Paris has co-operated. The Agro-Joint supplies funds where necessary, for transportation and initial preparation and housing of these doctors. We have a small villa outside of Moscow where the Agro-Joint brings these young men and their families as soon as they enter Russia. We then arrange with the Commissariat of Public Health to place them where they can be most useful and most readily adjusted to their new surroundings. The Government employs them and pays their salaries. We have visés for an additional forty young physicians."

As we approach the home of Dr. Epstein, I am amazed at the size of the house and barns and the general air of prosperity. The Russian doctor who previously lived in this

house, we are told, had a large family. Although there are seven rooms, the Epsteins use only three. We are greeted cordially by Dr. and Mrs. Epstein. Mrs. Epstein lived in Vienna while engaged to Dr. Epstein and came to Russia to be married. Her new garden, she claims, is much prettier than the one she had in Vienna and she has spent a happy honeymoon in her new surroundings. The German refugee has his honeymoon in the Crimea. Isn't that rather exciting? She shows us the barns, the garden, the orchard, and the hen-houses. My amazement grows. The explanation is that this German colony, in which there are Lutherans, Catholics, and Mennonites, was formerly owned by wealthy kulaks. The remnants of this former prosperity remain. The Epsteins have a cow, twelve chickens, sixty chicks, a pig, and a number of pigeons. The Jewish refugee ministers to Christian patients. There is no sign of anti-Semitism. They are happy to have a good doctor; he is happy to take care of them. Childbirth is the same for Jew and Christian.

We enter a comfortable dining-room and enjoy a delicious meal of cold goose, smoked fish, salad, bread and butter. It's a regular feast. The butter Mrs. Epstein has churned herself. Considering the fact that she had never been on a farm before, her proficiency earns our exclamations, and she blushes with pride.

We question Dr. Epstein about his practice. "I cover fourteen colonies in this district," he tells us. "One half of these are Jewish colonies; the other half are German, Tatar, etc. My patients usually call for me in their wagons and bring me back. The hospital is quite well equipped, and all maternity cases are brought here. There are no

deliveries in the homes. Births have averaged three a week for the past three months, forty in all." Not much race suicide here.

But there were also ten abortions during the same period. I inquire about this. The Government health authorities, I learned, although sponsoring education in birth control and permitting abortions, insist on due and ample cause for performing these operations—the health of a mother, or of both parents, economic status, etc.—a most interesting sidelight on Governmental policy in Russia.

"There have been no epidemics," continues Dr. Epstein, "such as diphtheria or grippe for some time. There has been some malaria, but no dysentery."

Regretfully we say good-bye.

OUR NEXT visit is to the Agro-Joint agronomist, Idelson, head of the Kolay District, a specialist in vineyards, who supervises the work of six colonies. We meet also a young German who has been here for a year. He is now a brigadier of the vineyards. His wife, also an agronomist, works in the Colony Mayfeld, where they have their home. He is planning to bring his mother, who is still in Germany, to Russia through the Intourist, the Russian travel agency.

We inspect the vast fields of grape plants. They are four-year-old vineyards. We have an excellent view of them from the watch-tower erected for the purpose of protecting the ripe grapes during harvest time. Idelson informs us that he expects from his first crop sixty tons of grapes and that future plans call for two hundred tons yearly. Dr. Lubarsky holds a lengthy conversation with Mr. Idelson.

Dr. Lubarsky is very emphatic and insists on a maximum yield of three hundred tons. Dr. Lubarsky is using American high-pressure business methods.

On one side of the street in this colony we see small partitioned areas of grapevines. Each family has been allotted an acre for its own small vineyard. And now we are conducted to one of the most impressive developments in this enormous range of Agro-Joint achievements in the Crimea—a vast nursery covering a hundred acres, for vineyards, fruit trees, and decorative plants. This nursery supplies most of the Crimea with young plants for grape-growing, for peach, apple and apricot trees, for maples, acacias, sycamores, and other varieties of decorative plants and trees. Twenty thousand fruit plants have already been taken out of this nursery and planted in the Jewish Kolkhozy in the Crimea. But the Agro-Joint good-neighbour policy, always stressed by our leaders in New York and by Dr. Rosen, does not limit these trees and plants to the Jewish farmers. The Tatars, the Germans, the Ukrainians, the Moldavians, all the mingled races, receive a share. Such are the ways of peace; not by eloquence, by daily conduct.

We had hoped to reach Eupatoria by nightfall, but there has been so much to see that our progress has been slow. "We shall spend the night at Jankoi and plan an early start in the morning," Dr. Lubarsky informs us. Nothing for the night, not even a toothbrush! But never mind. Before leaving the Kolay District, Dr. Lubarsky holds lengthy conversations with the chairman of the Kolkhoz with respect to the condition of the crops, plans for the

season, and general progress being made. Seeds, better and purer seeds. He lectures them. After answering many questions put to him by Dr. Lubarsky, the chairman counters with questions about electrification of this district. "Coming soon," says Dr. Lubarsky. "This is the greatest cry of our people here—electricity. They have been waiting eagerly for many years. The entire plan is being discussed in Moscow with the authorities there. The Agro-Joint will supply the technical engineers; the funds required for this electrification are expected from the local Kolkhoz or through Government loans. The Agro-Joint will help wherever necessary, and may also advance some portion of the funds. We had hoped to receive from the United States a large supply of copper wire, but this has not been forthcoming. It would mean a great deal in getting the plan under way."

DUSK HAS come by the time we arrive in Jankoi; we had been expected early in the afternoon. While supper is being prepared, we make a hurried tour of workshops and the factory. Jankoi has been for many years, and especially in the early years of Agro-Joint development, the hub of all activities in the Crimea. We know its history. From this centre shipments of lumber, wooden doors, window-frames, are sent to the colonies for the building of homes, schools, and community centres. From here tractors, reapers, combines, farming implements and tools of all kinds go to the colonists. Here young men from various parts of Russia have been trained as mechanics and sent to the colonies as skilled workers and instructors in

the use of machinery, in repairing tractors and tractor parts. Here it was that Mr. Rosenberg and Mr. Warburg in 1926 saw the work in its earlier stages.

Jankoi has a splendid history of service. The factory and shop are long, low buildings, well constructed, with many large windows, good equipment, lathes for making machinery and parts; a machine shop for repairing tractors, automobiles, and trucks; a well-stocked storeroom of spare parts, nuts, bolts, nails, shafts, fenders, pistons, springs. It is a businesslike and efficient organization. We see the card inventory system, the record of repair orders, the books showing the progress of students in the workshops and training courses, the record of accomplishments of workers in the factory, the output of the factory. It is ten o'clock. I'm almost starved. But Lubarsky is merciless. We have to examine the Diesel engine supplied by the Agro-Joint which furnishes the power for the machine shop. We see the smelting and foundry shops, the forging and blacksmithing shops, the factory for making knitting machines which are supplied to the colonists for winter work to help to increase their earning capacity, to keep them busy when the fields are frozen. The auto repair shop services two hundred cars and trucks in the Agro-Joint colonies.

Exhausted after an overcrowded day packed with new and overwhelming scenes of activity and progress, we climb into a little house on wheels—a sort of lunch wagon. Supper at last. We are joined by the heads of the several departments and a representative of the Komzet. The conversation is almost entirely in Russian; my curiosity sated

for one day, I do not urge translation. We learn, however, that a large part of the discussion between Dr. Lubarsky and the representative of the Komzet has to do with plans for electrification. This project is in everyone's mind, on everyone's tongue! Supper over, we are conducted to our sleeping-quarters in the house of one of the supervisors, located in the midst of a large lumber yard. In crude but clean surroundings we take a well-earned rest.

June 9

FACTORY whistles screaming. Lumber carts thundering over cobble-stones. Drivers shouting at horses. . . . I rub my eyes, it is half past six in the morning, and another busy day.

My diary tells me this is Sunday—otherwise we have no way of knowing. After a hearty workman's breakfast, we start our last day in the Agro-Joint colonies. Such a few days! Never to be forgotten, all these sights of teeming life. We will not have time to go to Eupatoria. That is too bad—Mr. Rosenberg loved Eupatoria and its irrigated orchards; I counted on seeing them. We head westward; then south on our return trip to Simferopol, through another section of Agro-Joint colonies. It is not difficult to distinguish Agro-Joint settlements as we travel along these flat stretches of the Crimean steppes. We see them outlined against the sky, little human gatherings in this vast land, rows of long whitewashed houses, scarlet tile roofs, all surrounded by rows of trees and fruit orchards.

We pass through colonies of other racial groups of

Russia. One colony comprises seven distinct nationalities. These neighbours of the Jews in Agro-Joint colonies—Germans, Tatars, Russians, and all the other varied racial groups — know what the Agro-Joint has brought to the Crimea. They wave us cordial greetings. There are smiles, bows. It is plain that they are not blind to what has been done for them not only through direct assistance—fields ploughed, tractors loaned, wells drilled—but through the knowledge and guidance brought by Agro-Joint agronomists.

WE STOP off at the Lunacharka colony, which is ten years old. Here are forty-five families. The chairman of this colony, Comrade Goranovitch, is extremely proud of the orchards, containing, in all, fifteen hundred trees—apple trees and pear trees. The chairman accompanies us to the pastures where, under the care of a patriarchal Jewish shepherd, who steps right out of the Old Testament, selected Merino sheep are grazing. They produce an excellent and superior quality of wool, readily marketable. The demand for this type of raw material is very great in Russia. In all there are twenty-five thousand sheep in the Jewish colonies in the Crimea.

As we approach the Saki District, the skyline reveals hundreds of tall poles and connecting copper wires—*electricity, power!* Then round, wide structures that look like large tanks appear on all sides and spread out over the ground—*water, irrigation!* Dr. Lubarsky solves the mystery of the numerous white tanks. They are irrigation stations. Water was discovered by Dr. Rosen's engineers in

this section of the Crimea; the Kushinsky Valley had been a desert. In the course of Agro-Joint routine work wells were being drilled for water and an underground stream was located, thereby opening up large territories for settlement. Dr. Lubarsky explains: "We drilled thirty-seven wells and put in six-inch pipes; we set up motors and pumped for hours and days. The level of the water did not go down. This proved there was a considerable quantity of water. We followed up the valley and were overjoyed to find that we could develop an irrigation project in this valley which would enable the settlement of an additional fifteen thousand people, with a comparatively small investment. Seventeen wells have been drilled here, operated by electric power coming all the way from Sebastopol on the Black Sea." Dr. Lubarsky explains the details. He refers to this Agro-Joint achievement as if it were merely an incident. To me it seems better than oil-wells. Fifteen thousand people where yesterday was a desert. Rich land, wanting only water. Modern machinery. Waters gush forth. I think of the Old Testament. Here is a sort of modern miracle.

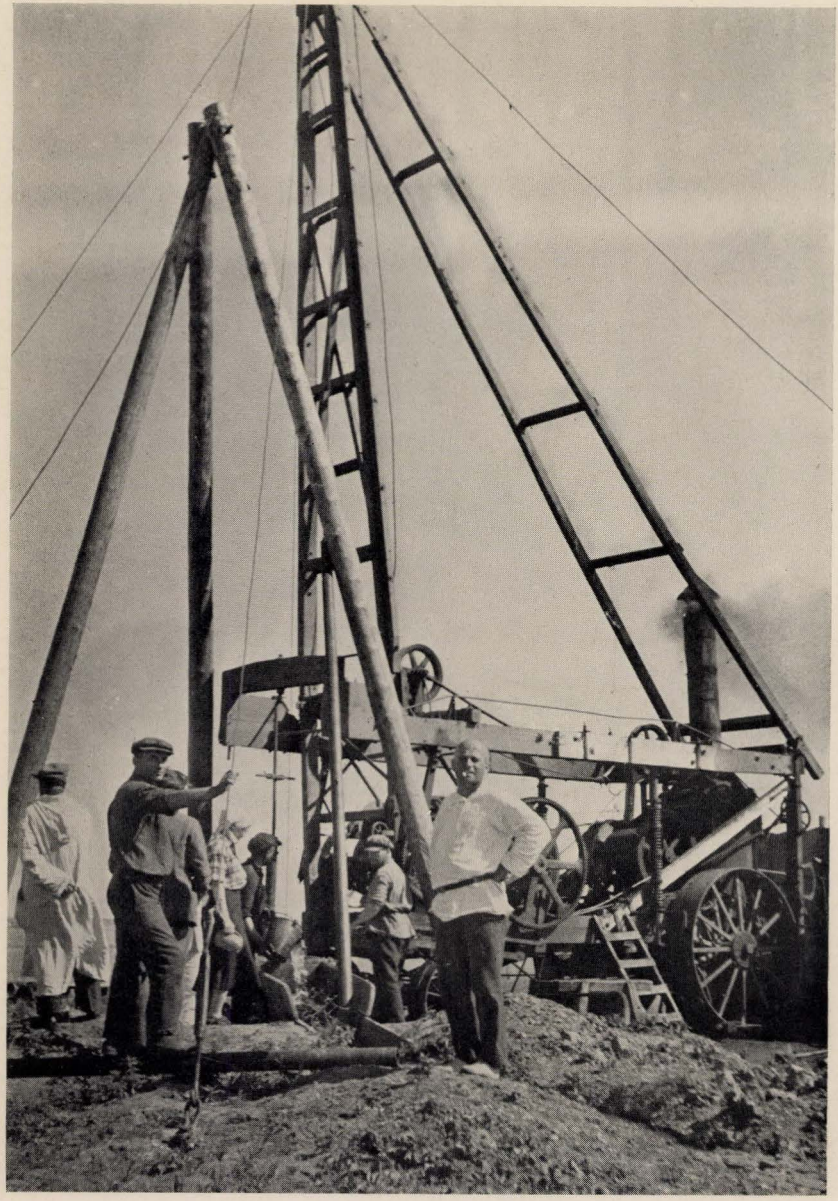
There are five colonies in this section, on three thousand acres of land, which promise to be the most prosperous in all Crimea, with the rich, black soil under irrigation. On all sides new orchards of apples and apricots, large valleys of vegetables—tomatoes, onions, cabbage, peppers, cucumbers, carrots.

We see no workers in the field, however; no one is operating the wells. It is a rest day in this district. Rest days in the colonies do not always conform with

national rest days, but must depend on local conditions and requirements. Spring planting is done; it has been hard work for long hours. Dr. Lubarsky calls on one of the engineers, who willingly offers to show us how these wells operate. We enter one of the round structures and inspect the valves and electrical control switches. From the safety of our concrete platform we gaze down to the floor of the well. The young Jewish engineer descends by a series of iron ladders and turns on the power. The water, we are told, lies another fourteen metres below this surface. We leave the power station to see the results—water, ammunition against drought and famine, comes rushing out of iron pipes into grooves dug out of the fields to afford directed irrigation. Water gushing through the wooden troughs carrying life to distant fields, orchards, and vegetable gardens. How much water, Mr. Falk asks. A volume of fifty thousand gallons per hour is pumped from each well to a thousand acres of irrigated soil.

We are astonished at fields of wheat standing strong and erect, as high as a man's head. It is destined for the Moscow market. Irrigated wheat is almost a unique phenomenon in any country. We are shown open hotbeds where the young plants are nurtured by electrical heat conducted through underground pipes. They have harnessed modern science to create healthy life. That's better than using science for cannons, poison gas.

Another Agro-Joint colony, the Yiddishe-Poyer (Peasant). It is four years old, has 148 families, and 180 small children. Quite a number of them were born here. What sort of people will they be? These children, free of perse-



Drilling the well.



A modern miracle — the waters gush forth . . .



. . . into the troughs that will irrigate
thousands of parched acres in the Crimea.

cution, have a real chance in life. This colony has 1,380 hectares (3,410 acres) of unirrigated land growing wheat, barley, oats, corn, sorghum, and miscellaneous products, including medicinal herbs; and 360 hectares of irrigated land, on which there are vegetable gardens, wheat and alfalfa fields. The alfalfa seed was brought from the United States. Dr. Rosen goes to many lands for seeds, plants, machinery. Dr. Lubarsky tells me about the grapes from France.

The chairman of the Executive Committee informs us that the earning norm in this Kolkhoz is twenty-five per cent higher than in the other collective farm colonies. Many of the members have become specialists in agriculture, although they had been small traders, tailors, and shoemakers in the towns only four years before. Their elementary school has a hundred and fifty students; in the high school there are seven classes. They have a nursery and kindergarten with thirty young children.

This chairman, a young man in his early thirties, glows as he tells us that all the members and their families in this Kolkhoz work with joy. Everyone is cheerful and good-humoured and seems physically sound. Some of this good humour may be due partly to the fact that the entire colony is starting on a picnic. In the evening, artists are coming to entertain with music and special performances—all this as a bonus to the members of this Kolkhoz for their hard, fruitful labours.

On to the Molotova colony. En route we pass several Agro-Joint settlements — one, the Voyanova, where, Dr.

Lubarsky explains, are settled Jews who had emigrated to Palestine, but later returned to Russia to begin life anew in the Crimea. This colony is four years old and is distinguished from the other Agro-Joint colonies which we have seen by a type of dormitory dwelling, with many families under one roof. The Komzet, it appears, decided to cut overhead expenses by erecting these community dwellings instead of separate, individual houses. Under this arrangement there is no individual ownership of livestock or gardens. In earlier years, we are told, the "Commune" attempted to fix equality as the basis of compensation for all workers. But this plan was changed owing to the more recent policy of the Government to pay workers for qualitative and quantitative labour in order to encourage greater productivity and skill. An interesting change. Men are not yet born equal. No amount of politics can make a vagabond equal to a hardworking sensible man. I am not impressed by the "Commune" type of housing for farmers and I feel that each family would prefer its own home.

Here we see a larger tractor station for the repair of tractors and instruction in the use of machinery tools. Equipment of all sorts; young men hard at work, hammering, riveting, oiling, repairing. Then an Agro-Joint experimental station for vegetables. An open-air hotbed, electrically heated by underground wires; a large hothouse of tomato plants. This hothouse is made, not of glass, but of cellulose substance covering a framework of wire mesh. In the experimental station ten different varieties of tomato plants are being grown under various conditions, as to kinds and quantities of fertilization, etc. Everywhere we

find experimentation to improve crops. Dr. Lubarsky informs us that there are only two major electrically heated vegetable experimental stations in the U. S. S. R.—one is in the Dniepostroi, with power coming from the Dnieper River; and the other is this one in Molotova, with power coming from Sebastopol.

Unfortunately, time does not permit more than a glance at the Tchebotarka Agricultural Technicum. We drive through its spacious, well-kept grounds. Dr. Lubarsky manifests great pride in this institution, which was established by the Agro-Joint in 1925 with an initial investment of five thousand roubles. It seems that Agro-Joint did many pioneering jobs—the technicum is only one of them. Now this institution is entirely supported by the Government, and has an annual budget of two hundred thousand roubles. Here, in this Agricultural Technicum, three hundred boys and girls receive regular training in a three-year course, and more recently short-term courses have been established. These young students learn not only the general principles of agronomy—grape-culture, poultry incubation, electrification, irrigation, care of livestock—but are trained for leadership in the daily life of the soil. It is one of the best agricultural schools in the Crimea.

Our itinerary calls for our reaching Yalta on the Black Sea by the end of this day; we start back to Simferopol.

Our trip through the Agro-Joint colonies in the Crimea is over. I am sorry that the guiding spirit of the whole magnificent experiment is not with us; that we cannot tell Dr. Rosen what new horizons he has opened up, not only for the hundreds of thousands of new Jewish farm folk,

but also for us who had only viewed the thing from afar, as a record on paper. With all my knowledge of the work, never before did I have a true appreciation of this accomplishment. Truly it is a great piece of human engineering.

We say our farewells to Dr. Lubarsky, Mr. Zaitchik, and Mr. Raskin. "We are most grateful," they tell us, "to our friends in the United States. We hope they will not forget their fellow Jews in the U. S. S. R., and we hope they will continue their help and interest. Conditions are changing here in the Crimea. The tendency is toward intensive farming, which means man-power and consequently increased settlement activities. Extensive farming on vast acres of wheat and barley, where machinery plays an important part, does not require large numbers of labourers; but the growing interest in intensive farming, such as poultry- and sheep-raising, vegetable truck gardening, vineyards and orchards, will make it necessary for the Agro-Joint to bring many more people to the farms. We hope the generosity of American Jews will enable us to carry out these projects."

TRIP TO THE BLACK SEA—THE RIVIERA OF RUSSIA

June 10

WE LEAVE Simferopol for Yalta on the Black Sea in the Agro-Joint car, accompanied by the secretary of the Crimean office, Tovarisch Mogarichov, the chauffeur Frank, and Miss Epstein. We have our first view of the Black sea just before reaching Alushta, once a famous resort for the privileged classes under the tsarist régime. It is one of those hairpin turn rides up a great mountain. From its peak we see the purple and emerald of the Black Sea spread out before us. Why black? Why not purple? The highest peak in the chain of mountains that extends across the southern Crimea looms over this town—Chatyr-Dag. We have only started on this surprisingly beautiful tour of the playground of the former nobility and aristocracy, and it does not take long for us to realize why this southern coast of the Crimea has been called the "Riviera of Russia."

From Alushta to Yalta, to Livadia, the summer palace of the late Tsar, to Alupka, and finally to Sebastopol, the landscape presents to our unbelieving eyes bountiful vineyards, exquisite gardens with rare specimens of flora, splendid natural brooks, stark mountain ranges, rolling hills sloping down to the Black Sea. The entire coast is dotted with lovely villas, large mansions and palaces—once

the property of the Grand Dukes—now used as sanatoria for the workers of Russia and their children.

Yalta, the watering-place of aristocrats, is now the famous recreational and recuperative centre for the proletariat. The palace in Livadia has been converted into a rest home for workers and more particularly for the peasants. We find these people taking full advantage of the airy rooms and summer-houses, walks, and gardens.

We stop in Alupka and visit the castle of the famous family of Count Vorontzov. The founder of this family's fame was a woman—Princess Vorontzov-Dashkov, first President of the Russian Academy of Arts and Sciences, founded in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Near Balaklava in the Crimea is the Vorontzov Ridge of the famous "charge of the Light Brigade." Built in the early nineteenth century by an English architect (Count Vorontzov was a distinguished Ambassador to England and an admirer of English culture), it is in "fine Gothic-Mauritanian style." Mauritanian? It sounds queer. But that is what my diary says. It is now a museum, with a picture gallery containing Italian, Dutch, French, and Flemish masters, a library of rare sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English and French books, and species of tropical plants in enclosed gardens.

We lunch on the shore of the Black Sea in the restaurant Foros—formerly a church, a splendid example of Byzantine architecture, built by a Greek merchant in honour of Tsar Nicholas II. While on a trip to Yalta, several guests of the Tsar, riding in a carriage preceding his, were killed in an accident, and the Tsar ordered that this church



Garden of Agro-Joint Headquarters, Simferopol.



A nursery class of youngsters born in the Agro-Joint colonies.



A vineyard worker in the Kolay district in the Crimea.

be erected on the site of the accident, as an expression of his thanks for having been spared.

In the evening we arrive at Sebastopol, the famous Black Sea port. We have an hour to spend in the city before our boat sails. We visit a museum housing a panorama of the defence of Sebastopol during the siege of 1854 by the English, French, Italian, and Turkish armies. There is a splendid vista of the entire city and its harbour from the turret of this building.

ON BOARD the S.S. *Abkhasia,* which sails from Batoum in the Caucasus to Odessa. It is an interesting experience. Our cabins are comfortable, though small; food and service are poor. There are four classes of passengers: first-class cabins contain two berths; second-class four berths; third-class six berths; fourth-class passengers sleep on the decks. Huddled on bundles in which they carry their possessions, or sleeping on the bare wooden planks, they are a dirty ragged crew, mostly barefoot or swathed in burlap, wearing layers of old patched clothes, torn sweaters, and sheepskin coats.

ODESSA

June 11

WE DISEMBARK at 7.00 A.M. in Odessa and are met by Dr. Grower. Very elegant, we ride in a Lincoln car belonging to the Intourist Government service. The Hotel London, which has a fine site on the Black Sea, is the best hotel we have stayed at, with comfortable rooms, high ceilings, and baths. What a luxury to have a real bath in a real bathtub—and *hot water!*

Odessa is a well-planned, cosmopolitan city, formerly a prosperous port, with wide avenues and boulevards—a city whose glories are memories of the past. Some of the many mansions and houses have been converted into apartments and Government buildings. There are miles of houses in a bad state, windows broken and the stone crumbling.

The inhabitants are extremely proud of their Opera House, modelled after the Paris Opéra.

Greeted by Dr. Solmon Roisman, head of the Agro-Joint activities for the Odessa District, we start immediately to visit the workshops, factories, and medical centres.

During breakfast Dr. Grower reviews for us the contribution of the Agro-Joint toward industrial training and the absorption of Jews into productive labour in the U. S. S. R. This is interesting because the general impression is that the

Agro-Joint has concerned itself only with farm settlement. That is far from the fact. The Agro-Joint has penetrated into the whole body of Jewish life in Russia.

Dr. Grower talks proudly of Agro-Joint achievements; he has statistics at his fingertips:

"From the very inception of the activities of Agro-Joint, it concentrated its attention not only on farming but equally upon the great need existing in Russia for the training of Jewish youth to enable them to become skilled labourers. Former Jewish technical schools were re-established and new schools organized.

"From 1924 to 1930 the Agro-Joint assisted 84 institutions, of which 57 were technical schools, and 27 short-term training courses, usually for a one-year period. These schools and training courses have graduated 4,500 young men and women, all of whom have been absorbed into the economic life of this country. They are self-respecting, skilled workers, most of them in metal-working industries, others in woodworking, printing, mechanical shoemaking, and other trades. During this period the Agro-Joint made available for scholarships 415,000 roubles, for building repairs 242,600 roubles, for machinery and equipment 350,000 roubles. In all for prof-technical activities, the Agro-Joint made available during this period 995,000 roubles. In addition, the Government and other organizations invested in these schools. The total sum thus invested exceeds 6,800,000 roubles."

Dr. Grower refers to some notes.

"Just to give you a few small examples, Agro-Joint imported during this period 60 lathes, turning lathes, milling machines, and others; 32 sets of American locksmith tools; 700 complete sets of drawing appliances; sewing and shoemaking machines; machine measuring apparatus for mechanical laboratories; complete mechanical equipment for workshops, mostly metal work; complete equipment for a shoemaking factory.

"During recent years all of these technical schools have been taken over by the Government of the U. S. S. R. and have been absorbed into the general system of prof-technical training, which has been developing in Russia on a very large scale.

"In 1932, with these constructive undertakings firmly established, the Agro-Joint devoted its attention to the deplorable situation of the Jews in the small towns and villages, for the most part families of the outcast lishentzy (non-productive elements, denied civic and political rights), who in tsarist times had been for many years herded into these ghetto villages. These people require at least an elementary education and training before they can be admitted to the normal prof-technical schools.

"We hoped to prepare these people through short-term courses of training in concentrated centres, and the cities of Dniepropetrovsk, Kiev, and Odessa were selected for this work. It is for this reason that I have planned our tour so as to visit these cities, which are among the greatest industrial centres of

Russia. Since the State budget could not be counted upon in past years to aid these completely untrained Jewish masses, the Agro-Joint had to assume almost full responsibility for the expense involved. During the years 1933 and 1934, over eleven hundred of these absolutely untrained people have been graduated from these training courses as qualified workers and are immediately employed in the large Government factories. The cost of training these students was 960,000 roubles, or about 850 roubles for each individual. When you realize that each person thus graduated acquires a trade and becomes economically independent and obtains all of the privileges that go with citizenship in this country, the investment is not so large.

"We are trying to convert these courses into permanent functioning institutions. Since the Agro-Joint is unable to supply the full financial budget for these purposes, we have been endeavouring to conclude agreements whereby the Agro-Joint will furnish short-term loans and will supply necessary equipment and living-quarters for the students. In some cases, dormitories have to be built; in other cases we remodel buildings, all of which remain the property of Agro-Joint. These investments in machinery and equipment enable the factory unit in which the training courses are located to earn sufficient income; eventually a substantial part of the cost of these courses will be met in this way. At the present time the Agro-Joint has five locations for this type of tech-

nical training, all of which I hope to be able to show you in the next days—one in Dniepropetrovsk; two in Odessa, at Vinchevsky and the Yevrabmol School; and two in Kiev, the Ratmansky factory school and the shoemaking factory and tannery. This important work still requires the assistance of the Agro-Joint."

All these details I make note of. There are so many more, I have to ask Dr. Grower to stop. He is disappointed, he wants so much to have America realize at least a little of these far-flung activities.

Now we visit the Frigator plant. This woodworking factory was established with the assistance of the Agro-Joint, as an undertaking of the Jewish Mutual-Aid Society in Odessa, but in the last few years it has been taken over by one of the Government Trusts. Of the three hundred and fifty workers in the factory, half are Jews.

It has developed into a successful business. Starting with the manufacture of wooden freight boxes and chairs, it is now making iceboxes for restaurants and factory kitchens as well as for private homes. They hope to install equipment for the manufacture of electric refrigerators; the Agro-Joint has promised to import one such refrigerator from the United States and one from Paris as models for this ambitious scheme. This will then be the first electric refrigerator factory in the U. S. S. R. How these men think of so many things seems marvellous to me. Here is an undertaking only five years old, and they have already arrived at plans for electric refrigeration. The

head of the Government Trust in Moscow expects to have a thousand employees in this plant in the near future, working in three shifts to meet the ever-increasing demand for this factory's products.

The Agro-Joint, we learn, has entered into an agreement with the factory authorities for the establishment of short-term training courses, and there are now fifty-four students receiving elementary instruction and training in this first year's experiment. On all sides we see the young people, alert and willing. In age they range from seventeen to twenty-six years; a few of them are over thirty. These young men and women are most of them children of declassed traders, many of them orphans. Some can barely make themselves understood in Russian and exhibit a striking lack of any previous education, although most of them have had the compulsory four years' schooling. They all come from the smallest town of the former Pale.

"They receive not only technical training," we are told, "but also a general education in the Russian and Yiddish languages, mathematics, technology of wood, some literature and draughtsmanship. Here these young people, many of whom, in spite of their extreme youth, have reached the depths of utter despair and have lost faith in mankind, others of whom have led irresponsible 'hobo' lives, are transformed into self-respecting competent industrial workers. Their program of study includes two hours of theory each day, and six hours of practical training in the shops. They are paid two roubles and eighty kopecks daily from the time they enter the training courses. After a few months' training, however, they are paid on the

basis of their output, and a good worker may earn eight to ten roubles daily on a piece-work basis. For the most part they become regular workers after two and one-half or three months in these shops. An outstanding feature of this training is the combination of theory and practice under one roof."

I talk with some of these young people, and am particularly impressed by one young man of twenty; picked up in the streets of Odessa, a homeless, shiftless hooligan, he was thought impossible to reform. He is now one of the best workers, has organized a local branch of the Ozet, and is active in local Soviet social life.

Many of the young people, we find, are extremely interested in Biro-Bidjan and hope to be able to pioneer in building up this new territory for Jewish settlement.

We proceed to the Vinchevsky Technical School, which had its beginning seventy years ago as the "Trud" Society and trade school for the developing of professional and technical instruction among the Jewish masses in Russia.

Before the Revolution it was supported in part by the Jewish Colonization Association, founded by Baron Maurice de Hirsch. It developed as a progressive and well-managed school for carpenters, foundrymen, and locksmiths, with evening courses in drawing, geometry, arithmetic, and technology.

Up to the time of the Revolution, five thousand young Jews had been taught trades in this institution. After the Revolution the new régime recognized the value of this school and co-operated with the Agro-Joint, which during the years 1924 to 1930 granted substantial financial sup-

port as well as equipment—machinery, lathes, electrical apparatus.

I am much impressed with the atmosphere of orderliness and cleanliness in this technicum. We visit the workshops for foundry work and metal-cutting, the power station, the technological and electro-technical laboratories.

This year the graduating class has fifty-four students who have completed their three to four years of training and education. The students admitted to this school have had far better elementary training than those in the short-term courses in the Frigator.

Here the students come mostly from small towns in all parts of the Soviet Ukraine, some of them from collective farms; some are the children of artisans and factory workers. They are, on the whole, better dressed and neater than the students found in the short-term training courses, more orderly and better disciplined, showing better family background. Approximately two thousand students have been graduated from this technicum during the last fifteen years. In the trade school and short-term courses connected with the technicum another three thousand young people have received training.

Again in the short-term training courses, the student body is composed of a large number of orphans and waifs, many barely literate and some totally illiterate.

Mr. Fabricant of the Agro-Joint office in Moscow had spent several days in these schools, studying the courses of training and the progress of the students. He says of these young people:

"When one is present in their classes and sees that they can solve quadratic equations and compute the volume of a pyramid, while in the shops they have familiarized themselves with the most complicated machines and behave like regular workmen, all this seems a sort of miraculous metamorphosis. In the social-humanitarian sense, it would probably be difficult to find a more effective transformation.

"The most important thing here is not the professional and technical training they receive, but the social and psychological rebirth they undergo."

AFTER THIS we have an opportunity to see also another type of activity for years supported in large measure by Agro-Joint, the Medical Aid Societies. For many years the workshops attached to these medical societies furnished the principal means of their support. Recently, however, the workshops have been taken over by Government Trusts and co-operative societies, and the Medical Aid Societies themselves are rapidly becoming absorbed into the framework of the Russian Red Cross.

We have an interesting talk with the head of the Medical Society in Odessa and with Dr. Adisman, an outstanding scholar and a fine gentleman, who has done much in a volunteer capacity to organize and advise on medical sanitation and the general health problems of Odessa. This particular Medical Society has been experiencing difficulties through the loss of revenue from the workshop formerly affiliated with it. After long discussions between the heads of the Agro-Joint in Odessa, the Medical Society, and the

Vinchevsky Technicum, it is arranged that the factory will send its workers to this society for medical care and will pay the Medical Society for such services on a per-capita basis. "A fine piece of business accomplished today," says Dr. Grower, "and one which will go a long way in maintaining the splendid work of this institution."

The building and its equipment are primitive to the eyes of those accustomed to the finest hospitals in the world, but an inspection of the laboratory, the dental department, the eye-nose-throat clinic, the diathermal and surgical rooms, convinces us that progress is being made and that the basic essentials of medicine can be provided. Dr. Roisman points out that most of this equipment has been supplied by Agro-Joint. He touches the X-ray apparatus, quartz lamps, dental chairs with deep affection as he explains that but for the substantial contribution of Agro-Joint in the early years of these activities, it would have been impossible to have established these medical associations through which tens of thousands of lives have been relieved. In how many directions the Agro-Joint has rendered service! Every day adds its score.

Thus another busy day—and in the evening Dr. Grower decides upon a trip to Arcadia on the coast, just outside of Odessa. We walk along stretches of sandy beach, over jutting rocky crags; we enjoy watching the working people of Odessa who have come out here by trolley to bathe, row on the Black Sea, and dine. It is pleasant to sit in the moonlight on the open veranda of the restaurant and listen to Dr. Grower's reminiscences. He has a vast range of recollections of his early days in Russia: we learn much about

the status of the Jews under the Tsar, the yellow tickets, the restriction on Jews in St. Petersburg and Yalta and other important Russian centres, the details of the Beilis ritual-murder trial in Kiev, the habits of the last reigning family, Rasputin and the scandals which attended his era of influence, the terrible oppression of the Jews—and then of the present emancipation of the Jewish population in Russia.

June 12

I AM awakened by marching and singing in the streets —young men and women in sweaters and shorts, healthy specimens, on their way to the State's one-day rest homes. It is the 12th—that means no work for the majority of Russia's working people. But for us Dr. Grower and Dr. Roisman, hard taskmasters, see to it that no time is lost and we plan an early start!

We visit the Yevrabmol and learn something of its history. The name is composed of the initials of the Russian words meaning "Yev---Jewish, Rab---worker, Mol---youth." The Yevrabmol came into being in the year 1919 during an epoch of hunger and destitution and in the midst of the devastating raid by bandits who were preying on the Jewish townships in the Ukraine. What days and nights of horror! Over two hundred thousand Jews, it is said, were murdered in that period. The Yevrabmol befriended many Jewish young people, homeless and destitute as a result of pogroms, and in addition it served as a place of refuge for pogrom victims fleeing from the former "pale of settle-

ment" in the Ukraine. Surely it is something worth while to help these victims of age-long tragedies to a decent life.

During the period of its existence since 1919 the Yevrabmol has changed its form, has passed successively through the stages of a club, an artisans' co-operative, a home for Jewish youth, an artisans' craft school, and an industrial school. Since 1930 it has existed as a school-factory for industrial apprenticeships. Under the charge of the education system of the People's Commissariat for Heavy Industry, it is today a non-sectarian school of national significance to the Ukrainian Republic.

With the active support of the Agro-Joint, it is a well-equipped, industrial-educational institution: two cabinet-making shops, a boiler-making shop, and a metal-foundry with thirty-five turning lathes, mostly imported by Agro-Joint, two milling machines, two planing machines, and four electrical welding machines. For several years the annual output of the school-factory has exceeded a million roubles, and it produces many types of machinery which formerly had to be imported—such as turning lathes, pipe-cutting lathes, boring machines, as well as tractor spare parts. This tractor business is important. The Agro-Joint alone has about a thousand tractors in Russia. All together there are at present over two hundred thousand tractors in operation in that country. These tractors get hard use, and repair parts are vital.

Since 1930 Yevrabmol has concentrated on training skilled workers for heavy industry and has graduated 688 apprentices as turners, fitters, millers, planers, draughtsmen, electric welders, cabinet-makers. The students in the

training and apprenticeship classes have come from eighty different localities throughout the Crimea and Ukraine. I am surprised to find a fairly large percentage of girls and young women in these machine-shops and woodworking plants—they are not afraid of hard work.

In talking with these students, they tell me that many of their friends and relatives in the small towns from which they have come are most anxious to learn skilled trades and are awaiting eagerly an opportunity to enter the Yevrabmol. Again I find that many of these young people are either orphans or at least fatherless; many of them do not even remember their parents, who perished chiefly during those 1919 days of banditry. Without a past, they have been helped to a decent future!

Mr. Fabricant tells of some intimate talks with some of the students:

> "Here at the Yevrabmol is a student who has just entered the school. He is a big fellow, his face is completely earthy in colour, his eyes are inflamed, he squints upward at me in a hostile manner, like a trapped animal; his boots are a most complicated affair, made of bits of leather, rags, and pieces of string; his clothes are in tatters. He has been here several days, but he is not yet fit to work—he sleeps, or catches up on sleep, rather, and eats (they give him, for instance, three normal breakfasts as one meal). 'Who are your parents?' I ask. He glances at me with astonishment and says: 'I don't know my parents.' 'With whom did you live, then?' 'No one,' he

replies. 'Did you ever go to school?' 'No, never.' He used to sleep in hallways, sold cigarettes, played cards and drank in the famous catacombs on the Moldavanka, and had some nickname such as 'Jap.' I've seen students here and in factory schools who, as soon as they were enrolled, were sent to hospitals; they came quite ill, hardly able to stand, with high fever, and asked to be accepted in the schools."

There are other types of students, many young workers who had toiled for years without industrial training. Through Dr. Grower, as translator, I talk with one young man of about twenty-five. He had worked in a cabinet-making shop, a straw-hat factory, a confectionery shop, a tannery, and finally served in a cavalry regiment for two and one-half years. And he had now decided to become a skilled worker and learn a definite trade. One of the girl students, who had worked as a dock hand in a port, could not even read the signboard over the institution when she came to the Yevrabmol.

We are told by Dr. Grower that none of the students is under seventeen years of age. I point out a youngster who seems a bare twelve and insist that Dr. Grower must be mistaken. He explains, however, that a good many of these children are physically underdeveloped—their growth has been stunted by years of privation and starvation.

It is emphasized that this re-educational work is not merely a matter of vocational and technical training. It goes far deeper. The school aims to eliminate, in these students and apprentices, many of their former living-

habits and customs, and to convert a semi-savage horde of vagrants into active workers of the State Industrial Systems.

This tremendous task requires a capable administrative and pedagogical staff, and after talking to the teachers and heads of departments, we realize that their work can only be done through a fanatical devotion to the cause in which they are labouring. Despite the lure of better salaries in the Government factories, many of the instructors, themselves graduates of these schools, prefer to remain at their posts and help in the development of these young people.

We are told that the Yevrabmol graduates are very much in demand by Government industrial enterprises, and the alumni of the institution can be found in responsible positions in many Government factories.

Teachers here have an intimate knowledge of the human material with which they deal. Mr. Fabricant, who personally attended theoretical lessons of fifteen different groups in this institution, relates:

> "Class No. 13 is noisy and turbulent during the lessons, no matter what subject is taught. The teachers are hard put to keep the class in order—not because the students are rowdy or disobedient, but because of the deep-rooted habits of their former vagabond life. Should a pupil at the blackboard hesitate for an instant in answering a question put to him by the teacher, there is a babble of shouts from all sides: 'I know!' 'I can answer!' All through the lesson there

INSTRUCTION AT YEVRABMOL TRADE SCHOOL

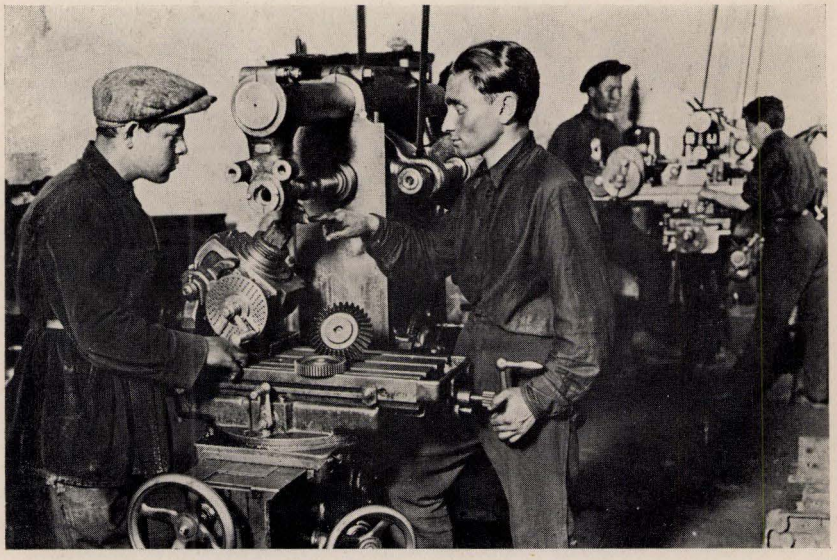


The instructor discourses on the theory of locksmith work.

INSTRUCTION AT YEVRABMOL TRADE SCHOOL



The theory is put to practice by a classroom of eager Jewish young men and women.



An instructor explains the intricacies of a milling machine.

is a din of voices of eager pupils prompting their classmates, the teacher shouting at the top of his voice, vainly struggling to subdue the tumult and hubbub.

"In all this there is nothing vicious. It is an expression of eagerness for knowledge and of the keen competition among the pupils.

"The instructor has to deal with a unique audience which is very different from other school classes. These young people, hardened in a bitter struggle for life, accustomed to shift for themselves under all sorts of circumstances, unprotected from a very tender age, acquired habits of the gutter. In spite of all this, they grasp quickly and are pathetically eager to learn.

"The amazing result is that this unruly class No. 13 holds a leading place in regard to progress made by the pupils both in theoretical knowledge and in practical work."

This classroom work is supplemented by practical work in the shops, where the major attention is devoted to the construction of tools and machine parts and the various links in the processes of production. What the student has learned in the classroom is applied to his actual work in the shop. It takes students about four weeks before they can turn out the simplest work. Gradually, however, they produce more and more complex implements and tools, and at the end of six months they are able to turn out a complete boring machine.

At last, exhausted, we are forced to leave this exciting school, Yevrabmol.

WE RETURN to the hotel for luncheon and to complete arrangements with the Intourist guide for a visit to the mechanical bakery, the proudest of Odessa's most recent mechanization achievements. It is a large, clean, airy building, and, in general, working conditions are good. Perhaps our health authorities might not approve of the charwomen in bare feet, the bakers with ungloved hands, the unwrapped bread loaded on trucks, the yard where piled manure has not been collected for some time. But certainly the general standard in this bread factory is far higher than in many countries of eastern Europe. The regulations for visitors to this factory include the donning of white coats, and thus, despite the manure-heap, the sanitary amenities are upheld!

We have completed our sightseeing in Odessa and prepare for departure. Dinner in the garden restaurant of the hotel affords us a glimpse of several of the stars of Russia's moving-picture industry, not exactly like our Hollywood actresses, but certainly better dressed and better-looking than the average Odessa citizen. As for the famed beauty of the Russian women, I did not see it.

We catch a train for Kiev, and although there is no wagon-lit, we are grateful for a soft car instead of a hard one (a soft car has mattresses and pillows, a hard car has only wooden benches). In a soft car providing for four people we do not have to include strange bedfellows. There are no false standards in the U. S. S. R., we are told; no bourgeois conventions. Men and women are assigned accommodations in the same compartments. (As a matter of fact, I had been told before going to Russia that this custom

existed under the old régime and is not a Communistic innovation.) There are four in our party—Dr. Grower, Mr. and Mrs. Falk, and myself. At least we had a compartment. Still a bourgeois, I prefer my privacy.

KIEV

June 13

LATE RISERS on these trains suffer inconveniences. Dr. Grower wakes us at eight o'clock to announce that there is already a long line of passengers registered with the train guide for use of the washroom. Despite hasty preparations, we arrive at Kiev before my turn comes. I have no great regrets.

Vladimir Lesnick, head of the Agro-Joint for the Kiev District, meets us at the railway station. He is about four and a half feet high, not very impressive at first, but soon we learn that he is one of the outstanding Agro-Joint personalities. We go to the Hotel Continental. Although this is an excellent hotel, "built in fine Ukrainian-Mauritanian style," we must resign ourselves to inferior rooms on the top floor. The best suites are being reserved for Foreign Minister Beneš of Czecho-Slovakia and his staff, who are expected today or tomorrow, and Kiev is in a gala mood. The previous day witnessed the anniversary celebration of the defeat of the White Terror in Kiev; thousands of Ukrainians have flocked to the city to participate in the festivities. Always there seems to be something going on in Russia: the streets are gaily decorated with flags and red bunting, and our hotel seethes with people, with hotel

clerks frantically preparing for the renowned foreign visitors.

Settled in our rooms, we receive the representative of the Komzet and the chairman of the National Minorities, who are to accompany us during our visits to the schools and factories in Kiev.

We proceed immediately to the Ratmansky School, formerly a Jewish artisan school built by a Mr. Brodsky, a sugar king of pre-revolutionary Kiev. During the war it was used as a hospital. In 1923 the Agro-Joint allotted funds for the restoration of this school, and it has now been functioning for thirteen years.

This school-factory manufactures tools, implements, and machinery for woodworking machines. There are a hundred and twenty workers in the factory. Under an arrangement with the Agro-Joint, two types of training have been introduced into the factory: short-term training courses, including vocational training and instruction; and a more comprehensive training school for the younger people who require a general elementary education as well as theoretical and practical industrial education. There are two hundred and fifty pupils in the training school and a hundred pupils in the training courses. The Agro-Joint has bought a house which serves as a dormitory.

The Ratmansky school building is far superior to those we saw in Odessa. The classrooms are more roomy, the shops are larger and better lighted; the dormitories are more comfortable; discipline in general seems to be better.

However, the aim is similar to that in the Odessa schools:

to concentrate on character education, to give it as much importance in the training as vocational education.

Over ninety per cent of the students range from seventeen to twenty years of age, but the number of girls in this school is rather small—about ten per cent of the total. As in most of the schools, ninety-five per cent of the students come from the small towns scattered throughout Russia, and not from the city of Kiev.

The students in the dormitories are evidently serious young people. Many of them are reading; some are playing chess, one of the favourite pastimes of these young Russians.

We meet Tovarisch Caplan, a brilliant instructor in charge of the locksmith shop. His students, who find jobs either in the Ratmansky factory or in other factories, pride themselves, they have "worked under Caplan." We have an opportunity to talk with a number of these young people: as to their specialization, twenty-eight per cent are founders, twenty-two per cent are locksmiths, eighteen per cent welders, twelve per cent turners and planers.

Dr. Grower interrogates one young student who tells us his parents were murdered by Petlura's bands. But now that is a past age. He is absorbed in his work and proud of his progress. His eyes glow as he shows us the metal calipers he has made. For our benefit, he takes them apart and carefully assembles them again. I think back to the lad in 1919, an infant, his parents murdered. Somehow the bandits overlook the tiny bit of humanity. What a drama —this life of Russia in the past twenty years!

From Ratmansky we go to the dental supply factory.

Here we see the direct result of the training received by the young people in the courses and shops. We meet five young men and women, all heads of the departments in this factory, and all graduates of the Ratmansky school. There are seventy workers here. The factory turns out a million and a half dental drills a year; it hopes to increase this number materially after the new factory building has been completed, and later they intend to manufacture their own machinery for these dental tools. These machines, extremely delicate, must be of high precision; those now used in this factory were imported from Switzerland. We are interested to learn that the profits of this factory are used through the organization Ozet for medical-sanitary activities in the Jewish colonies.

They hope, with the future help of the Agro-Joint, to establish a trade school here for the declassed Jewish youth from the small towns. Always they hope. No sooner does a group make a start than they give a helping hand. They "hope" to build, to establish, to enlarge, to improve—this is Russia today. But Dr. Grower can make them no promises for assistance at this time; there are no funds available.

OUR NEXT visit is to the Kiev Polyclinic, an outgrowth of the former Jewish Medical Aid Society, which has recently been absorbed into the Russian Red Cross. We are told that the Russian Red Cross is now a member of the International Red Cross. Under an agreement with the Agro-Joint, this Polyclinic treats the needy Jewish population of Kiev either free of charge or at substantially reduced rates.

Over and over again we find the equipment labelled "Agro-Joint," everywhere we find this evidence of the contribution by American Jews to the Jewish people of Russia.

This is an excellent medical institution. Dr. Rutenberg, its director since 1928, takes great pride in showing us the fine laboratories, clinics, X-rays, mud baths, showers, gynecological and dental departments. We meet, also, his staff of specialists—fine, intelligent, efficient men. The waiting-room and many of the corridors are crowded; three hundred thousand visits are made by the Kiev population annually!

WE SPEND a very pleasant evening in the new Kiev Stadium. The park contains a club-house, a restaurant, and a theatre, as well as the huge stadium. In the theatre we are entertained by a vaudeville show of mediocre quality—Spanish dancers, an American coloured jazz singer, and a Russian comedian—all very new to the Russian masses, who seem to enjoy it vastly.

On our way back to the hotel we are suddenly confronted with a phenomenon quite novel to us Americans—an air raid! Sirens howl, whistles screech, lights go out, everything is dark and mad with noise. Blackness and dreadful shrill clamour. I am terrified until I discover it is a "sham." We are stopped by the police on the street corner. The crowd is having a splendid time, there is singing and dancing. Overhead the tail-lights of aeroplanes look like stars. It is all over in three-quarters of an hour; we return

to the hotel. I hope I shall never have to witness a "real" air raid.

June 14

WE START our tour by visiting a lumber mill which was originally established and supported by the Jewish Mutual-Aid Society in Kiev. This woodworking shop does not compare in any way with the Frigator school-factory, nor, for that matter, with the shop which we saw on the outskirts of Moscow. Its products do not arouse my admiration for workmanship, and they will probably not improve until the mill builds apparatus for drying the wood. It is now making cabinet furniture, for the most part chairs, desks, and canvas-covered cots out of raw wood, of doubtful durability. On the present basis of operations, this particular shop will never be highly successful. Dr. Grower takes notes. If I get to Kiev again, I expect to see a much better shop.

There are eighty workers in the mill, and although the training courses are not yet fully organized, they have admitted twenty-three students. One of the great problems here is that of living-quarters for these students. The Ozet has been making efforts to acquire a building for this purpose, but final arrangements have not been made. The mill has been taken over by the Ozet and all of the students are being trained for eventual settlement in Biro-Bidjan.

We engage the head of the beginners' department in conversation. He is enthusiastic about his plans for work in

Biro-Bidjan and tells us of the efforts he is making to equip himself for usefulness in that section. He is twenty-two, a graduate of the technicum, and is now studying engineering at the university in Kiev. He expects to leave for Biro-Bidjan as soon as he has finished his course at the university, and is proud of the fact that most of the pupils under him are eager to become pioneers in the development of Biro-Bidjan. All of these young workers, between sixteen and eighteen years of age, are filled with hope and zeal.

The enthusiasm for the development of Biro-Bidjan as a homeland for the Jews seems to have the intensity and fervour of a Jewish nationalist ideology. Whether or not religion appeals to them, they are deeply determined to aid in the building of a great Jewish state in Biro-Bidjan. For those who are unfamiliar with this name, Biro-Bidjan is a vast area in far eastern Russia, deriving its name from the tract which lies between the rivers Biro and Bidjan. It is an area large enough to support, as I am told by those who have studied the project, a population of at least three million people. Here, under the leadership of Kalinin, President of Soviet Russia, an autonomous Jewish state has been created. Kalinin, a peasant formerly, though not a Jew, regards the work of the Jewish peasants as a great accomplishment and strongly champions the Biro-Bidjan project. Its development means that just as various other racial groups in Russia have autonomous states, subject of course to the final sovereignty of the Soviet Government, so the Jews are being granted the right to create such a state. Dr. Rosen and others have been in Biro-Bidjan; the Agro-

Joint is investigating the possibilities of aid in this momentous task. It is too early to state what Agro-Joint can or will do. But it is a matter of absorbing interest to those of us who have seen the work of the Agro-Joint to think about the possibility of Biro-Bidjan as a land for those Jews of other lands whom persecution drives to emigrate and who are seeking a useful, self-respecting life in new surroundings where they are treated on terms of equality with all others.

"OUR NEXT visit," says Dr. Grower, "will be to a workshop which the Agro-Joint has been supporting for several years for the express purpose of giving occupation to middle-aged Jewish men and women, former traders and pedlars." We make a hurried trip through the various departments. In a small dark wooden shack old rags are being separated, carded, and prepared for weaving. The air is stifling, filled with small particles of dust and wool. We can scarcely breathe, and hurry into the weaving shop, where we are introduced to one of the skilled workers who, we are told, was at one time the owner of this factory. Now working at one of the knitting machines, he has been most useful in training some of the old Jewish men who have had to remake their lives at the age of sixty.

Dr. Grower points out two men at the knitting machine who are Sabbath-observers and refuse to work on Saturdays under any circumstances. So the Jewish religion is still alive in Russia. Indeed, I saw a good many evidences of this fact. They disregard the sixth day of rest and keep their calendar religiously.

It is for these types of unskilled, untrained older Jewish people that this factory has become of great importance. When Dr. Grower first visited here several years ago, sixty-three out of sixty-five workers were entirely disenfranchised. There are now two hundred workers here in the carding, spinning, weaving, and knitting departments. The atmosphere is quiet, rather depressing in fact; the work goes very slowly. There is no effort made at speed, there is nothing of the inspiration of the steppes. But there is a livelihood for these older people. At least they are no longer outcasts. Over a period of years thousands of these declassed lishentzy have been aided by the Agro-Joint through the Jewish mutual-aid societies and have been given an opportunity to become full citizens, with the privileges and rights that accompany productive work.

IN THE afternoon we have our first real view of Kiev, scene of bitter warfare and civil strife during the Revolution. Kiev witnessed a period of German imperialism, nationalist insurrection under Petlura, riots of peasants under Makhno, an uprising by Ukrainian workers. There were some thirty different governments within a year or more. Nearly all of them agreed on one platform—murder and pillage of the defenceless minority, the Jews. Is the reason, I wonder, for anti-Semitism that tyrants and oppressors need defenceless victims?

Kiev, now one of the most important industrial centres of Russia, is beautifully located on high bluffs overlooking the Dnieper River. It has again become the capital of the Ukraine—replacing Kharkov.

We cross a bridge to Slabodka, a suburb of Kiev, and have a view of this lovely city.

We visit the famous Kievo-Pechersky Monastery and the catacombs. The monastery dates back to the eleventh century and is of Byzantine and Ukrainian-Baroque style; burned, restored in the eighteenth century, it is now maintained as a museum. The main Church of the Assumption exhibits many of the rich gifts granted by the tsars and nobility: gold and silver chests, bibles, priests' robes, ornate altars.

We come to the catacombs, the smaller one a kilometre long—the larger, almost two kilometres. The Intourist guide shows us the tombs of saints, wherein lie the "mummies" exhibited as miracles for peasant pilgrimages. Now it is explained to the peasants and workers that these "mummies" were preserved by the natural properties of the caverns. There are endless numbers of horrid cells, shackles, hundreds of skeletons—alleged victims of the priesthood and the nobility. The guide proclaims that these things are exhibited to convince the workers and peasants of the perfidy and cruelty of their former masters.

As we walk through the courtyards, Pauline Falk is approached by a young Russian. Dr. Grower translates. This enthusiastic member of the proletarian State asks quite seriously, seeing that we are Americans: "When is America going to have its revolution?" Not "whether," but "when?" It is a foregone conclusion—"Everywhere revolution is inevitable!" he claims. But Pauline believes in capitalism and the existing order; she smiles at the young revolutionist.

June 15

THE SHOE factory, Ukot. We are struck by the intense activity. This large and well-run institution is controlled by the Government Trust.

The head of the factory conducts us through the various departments and insists that we must start at the very beginning of shoe-manufacture. We see the leather being prepared and shaped, the shoe moulds and lasts, the machines for shaping the soles, the leather-fitting machines, the sewing machines, the tacking and nailing apparatus, and finally the finished product in rows on shelves. They are trying to learn American methods of mass production; there is a great shortage of shoes.

A businesslike young woman in charge of the training courses here is a graduate of the technicum. She explains that this institution includes elementary courses of training and education, regular short-term training courses, as well as a higher school, a so-called technicum. The Agro-Joint has supplied all of the machinery for the training courses. She tells us how athletic games, football, volley ball, hiking, are encouraged.

We visit the dormitories. It is a pleasure to enter these students' rooms. They are large and airy, with as many as fifteen cots. The boys' rooms are neat and show the result of basic habits of cleanliness and order. Their clothes are carefully hung, their towels are on their individual pegs, a glass and toothbrush are provided for each of them. Five years ago most of them had never heard of such a thing as a toothbrush. And the rooms of the girl students are a revela-

tion. Small rugs beside the beds, chests of drawers, hand-made doilies, vases with artificial flowers! This effort to beautify their surroundings is another step I have noticed quite often.

Most of the Ukot students have come from dirty, small, ugly shacks, and these high-ceilinged, well-lighted rooms, with good beds and clean bedding, with wardrobes, curtains, and even flowers, must have a great educational and cultural effect. There is no problem in keeping these young people away from the streets when they are given these pleasant surroundings for study and leisure. If only those who have supported this work could see all this, I am sure they would be happy to realize what their generosity has meant in recreated human beings.

THIS IS developing into one of the most pleasant days spent in Russia. Guests of the Russian Red Cross, we start from the office of Dr. Kouchnir, chairman of the Ukrainian section. From the dock on the Dnieper we take a large motor-boat (manned by two Russian sailors and *two* captains) and are off on a three-hour boat trip to a floating sanatorium maintained by the Red Cross for sufferers from nervous disorders. I am surprised to learn that one of the captains is a Jew. I had decided he was a Ukrainian Cossack, with his fierce expression, large, long moustache, and walrus-like head. But that reminds me to mention that many of the Jews I have seen have no Semitic features—they are blond or red-haired.

At last we see a three-deck excursion boat, anchored in the midst of healthful surroundings—long stretches of

beach and thick groves of pine trees. We are shown clean and comfortable cabins, shower-rooms, electro-therapy rooms, and quartz lamps.

The sanatorium's chef outdoes himself. Our lunch is worthy of description—eight varieties of fish, baked, creamed, smoked; chicken soup; chicken and rice; wild game, small delicious ducks; salad; cheese; ice cream; strawberries and cream; layer cake and coffee—and fifteen bottles of Crimean wine from Jewish vineyards, including Madeira and Port; and Slivovitz, a plum brandy; and Benedictine! This is the old Russia and there should have been a gay, wild party . . . but we only sipped.

We bid our hosts a reluctant farewell; on the return trip our Jewish captain shows his marksmanship by bringing down a wild duck.

Back to the hotel and hurried preparations for our train trip to Dniepropetrovsk.

DNIEPROPETROVSK

June 16

WE AWAKE to find layers of thick dust covering our suitcases, clothes, and food-baskets. Our throats and lungs ache, it is a long, hot day. Dr. Grower tries to "lighten" the hours with rather dreadful tales of pogroms, horror, and misery in the Ukraine of the past, many of them his personal experiences. In 1919, returning to his home in Poltava, he was caught between White troops and Denikin bands. He lived in hiding for days in the midst of scenes of horror, half crazed for fear his family (who miraculously escaped one of the severest pogroms) might be exterminated. The opportune arrival of the Red army saved many Russians, Jews and non-Jews, from torture and death. He could compete with Scheherezade of *A Thousand Nights and a Night* in relating tales of his life and experiences during those terrible times.

We reach Dniepropetrovsk. Now we understand why this is called the City of Steel and Iron, the Pittsburgh of Russia. Here are thirty great metallurgical and machine-manufacturing plants and large numbers of factories and mills. We are met by Dr. Boris Chanis, handsome, grey-haired, in charge of the Agro-Joint activities in this district, and also by Moses Itkin, head agronomist of this section.

Hotel accommodations are primitive—no baths, no restaurant, one sheet on the bed, no extra covering, but at least no tiny unwelcome visitors.

In the evening we are invited to dine at the home of Dr. Chanis. His wife, an intelligent and charming woman, is a bacteriologist in the Dniepropetrovsk branch of Kiev Research Institute. Most of the women have serious occupations, I find. The Chanis household is managed by a "Nanya," a Russian peasant cook and nursemaid, who for many years has cared for the family, including two sons—one studying in the university, the other in elementary school. It is not unusual, when all members of a family are usefully employed or occupied, to find domestic help, another surprise in the land of Communism.

June 17

THERE ARE annoying delays this morning. Our plans call for a trip to Dnieprostroi, the site of the gigantic dam across the Dnieper, and to the tremendous power plant. But our passports, we discover, have not yet been registered and we cannot go to Dnieprostroi without them. At every hotel, in every city we visit, passports must be surrendered for registry by the local Soviet authorities. We hurry to the building of the Soviet Central Committee. The proper official is not at his desk. Much discussion. We are taken to the office of the Secretary, a busy, steely-eyed young person. There ensue lengthy explanations. At last the annoyed Secretary stamps our passports and we are off.

We breakfast at a small, grimy restaurant—beset by many flies—on little rolls, "begels," bought by Dr. Grower at the street corner. I have small appetite.

But all this is soon forgotten: at Dnieprostroi we, together with ten other sightseers, are guided by an engineer through the awe-inspiring and imposing spectacles of the immense power plant (furnishing 900,000 horse-power) which harnesses the Dnieper rapids. The dam, 2,500 feet long and 175 feet high, is the great dam created by the genius of a Russian, Professor Alexandrov, and carried out under the supervision of the American, Colonel Cooper.

From Dnieprostroi we go to the town of Zaporozhye. This ugly little town, thanks to its proximity to Dnieprostroi, is becoming an important industrial centre. There are in evidence on all sides new factories, new apartments for workers, streets being repaved, all sorts of new construction.

Here we are met by local representatives of the Red Cross, who conduct us to a polyclinic, where again the Agro-Joint has furnished the equipment and apparatus. A rowboat takes us across the Dnieper to an island on which a one-day rest home has been established, with tents, pavilions, kitchen and dining-room, volley-ball courts. This recreation centre is in its infancy, but has splendid possibilities. Many governments could learn something from Russia about the building of such places.

June 18

ANOTHER rest day. For us again a rather arduous program has been mapped out. We plan to drive to Stalindorf, seventy-five miles away on bad roads, to see some of the Agro-Joint colonies in the Ukraine and to compare them with those in the Crimea. Mr. Itkin tells us something of the Agro-Joint achievements in the Ukraine. Agro-Joint has established there 127 colonies, which have 7,500 families or, in all, 20,000 persons. These colonies cover about 350,000 acres. The farmers own 5,000 horses, 20,000 cows and calves, 8,500 pigs, 3,000 sheep, 25,000 chickens —a fair-sized family of livestock, considerable wealth here for people who a few years ago were outcasts.

More: in these colonies there are 1,500 acres of grape vineyards, 900 acres of orchards, 48 truck gardens under irrigation, 16 poultry farms, 2 incubator stations. And 35 small industrial establishments for knitting stockings have been set up, furnishing work for 700 women in these colonies during the winter months.

And still more: Mr. Itkin informs us that plans are being made for the electrification of 42 of these colonies this year!

Unfortunately for us heavy showers prevent our carrying out our trip to the Agro-Joint colonies; we must be satisfied with Mr. Itkin's summation of the work in the Ukraine colonies. But the people rejoice in the rains.

We proclaim a holiday. After an excellent lunch at one of the restaurants in the park on the Dnieper, Dr. Grower, Mr. and Mrs. Itkin, Pauline and Myron Falk, and I attend



Tractors on the Steppes.



Tractor Shop-yards at Jankoi.

a football game, unusual for New Yorkers in the middle of June. I find, however, that it is not football as we know it, but soccer. We see a game between two famous teams, Dniepropetrovsk versus Nicolayev. The crowds are enthusiastic, but do not measure up in gaiety or intensity of interest to our football fans in the States.

In the evening I am elated to learn that we are to see one of Eugene O'Neill's plays in Russian. From the translation given us of the title of this play, I expect a performance of *The Emperor Jones* and anticipate a thrilling experience; but as the play unfolds, I discover that it is *The Negro*, which I saw many years ago in the Provincetown Playhouse in New York.

On our way back to the hotel, we stop off at a Park of Culture and Rest to watch the factory workers at play. The games, unknown to me, require strength and skill.

June 19

DR. CHANIS arrives early. We visit another training school in a machine factory in Dniepropetrovsk. We find Dr. Chanis very popular with the young people in this school, many of whom he personally picked up in the small towns and districts of neighbouring provinces. He talks with a number of them. The story is always the same: either their parents are not known, or they are orphans, or they come from destitute families in the small villages, where they used to serve as middlemen between the peasants and the town population. With the new order, re-

adjustment of their lives within the confines of these villages is practically impossible; they may eke out a miserable existence, living off one another and never earning more than a few kopecks here and there. Dr. Chanis emphasized the importance of enabling the Agro-Joint to remove the younger element from such life and to bring them into productive work through the workshops and training courses.

We listen with interest to a conversation between Dr. Chanis and one of the young men, which Dr. Grower translates: "How are you getting along?" Dr. Chanis asks. "Fine, but I do not wish to go back to the Kolkhoz. I want to go on with my studies. I want to be an engineer and I must attend the university." "But, young man, you agreed when you came here that you would return to your Kolkhoz and bring the benefits of your skilled labour to your collective. You must live up to your agreement." Our young friend is downcast and we remonstrate with Dr. Chanis. He explains, however, that if this embryo engineer acquits himself creditably and shows ability in the Kolkhoz, he will be recommended by the local chairman for a scholarship to the university. This is the usual procedure and those who are fortunate enough to secure recognition for industry, ambition, and intelligence receive stipends from Government funds during their course at the university,—a praiseworthy practice, higher education for those who are deserving of it.

A new building is in process of erection. This, together with fifty thousand roubles allotted by the Government for equipment, will increase the number of students from 160

to 400. They plan also to provide new dormitories. Again hopes, plans, expectations, and accomplishments.

WE ARE cordially received by the head of the Department of Local Industries for Dniepropetrovsk. The Department of Heavy Industry is controlled from Moscow, but lighter industries—certain types of machinery-manufacture, shoemaking, linen-weaving—are locally supervised. Our host, an intelligent alert non-Jew married to a Jewess, has interested himself in the undertakings of the Agro-Joint.

He takes us to a club-house, an immense building occupying an entire square, for the forty thousand workers of a large metallurgical factory. The building, of good design but poor construction, erected in 1928, is already showing signs of deterioration. Inside, however, I admire its fine library, with eighty thousand volumes, its cinema and lecture halls, and the impressive Board of Directors' room. The Board is composed of the heads of various factory departments. Here are held important meetings of the famous "Triangle," well known in Russian industrial management—the technical head of the factory, a representative of the local Soviet cell, and a representative of the trade union—which decides the destinies of the workers, the policy and administration of factory affairs. Here also the workers meet and under the supervision of technical specialists and professors of cultural subjects receive education in science, mathematics, literature, geology, metallurgy, not to mention the universal Communist ideology.

There is also a nursery and mothers' room; the Soviets plan always for the children. "The children are the future

of the State." The women workers leave their children with the nurse in charge and after their day's work is over return for them with the assurance that they have been fed and cared for. Many women take advantage of the factory kitchens, which supply not only a midday meal to the workers at a nominal rate but also suppers to be taken home, thus sparing the women workers household responsibilities. The reasons for vast numbers of women in industry are obvious: crude living-conditions, economic necessity, ability to purchase commodities (food, clothing) at lower prices through the factory shops, the prestige which has become synonymous with labour in this country, and lastly the independence and release from household drudgery. To us, much of this is unfamiliar; it is far removed from the idea that the woman must keep to the home, or at least see to it that it is attractive and comfortable. We are assured that as conditions improve, women will revert to more home life. Will they? Or will the excitement of this independent life be the stronger motive? And is such a scheme of life good for the children?

THE REMAINDER of this our last day in Dniepropetrovsk is spent under the proud guidance of Dr. Chanis, in the local polyclinic and the Jewish hospital. The polyclinic is managed by Dr. Chanis, who gives it a great deal of time and close attention. He makes us examine every minutest detail. This is a small but adequate clinic, a two-storey whitewashed building, the halls, laboratories, and wards immaculately clean. We congratulate Dr. Chanis. It is a

fine hospital from the standpoint of sanitation and cleanliness.

Then on to the Jewish hospital, which to me has an interesting history. Almost demolished during the years 1919–22, it was rebuilt, repaired, and equipped with J. D. C. funds. Dr. Chanis persuaded the late Dr. Boris D. Bogen, then head of the J. D. C. relief activities during the famine period in Russia and a member of the American Relief Administration, to allot five thousand dollars for this purpose. This was in 1922. The hospital stands today as a monument to the judgment of both these men. Subsequently investments were made from J. D. C. funds by Dr. Rosen, but today it is entirely supported by the local trade union. By far the best equipped hospital we have seen, it has also a delightful atmosphere: pleasant gardens around which have been scattered smaller structures—a clinic, quarters for the doctors, and farther away the thatched stables, the barns.

Eight hours of sightseeing. The merciless enthusiasm of the directors! We have been forced to make not a casual, but an inch-by-inch inspection of these institutions. We return to the hotel tired out, to prepare for departure to Moscow—and the train leaves at three in the morning, a terrible hour!

June 20

ON THE train for Moscow. We are late risers this morning; even the rattling of the train does not waken us. Breakfast from our food-basket at midday. A long, hot, stuffy

trip. Dr. Grower and Mr. Falk play chess and drink Russian beer. "Not bad," says Myron. Dr. Grower wins the championship in three straight games.

I am amazed at some of the regulations that obtain in this country, or perhaps some of the Government employees feel they must be technical and officious. Dr. Grower has to deposit with the train guide, a woman, an important personal document as security for using the chessboard.

I ask Dr. Grower about the food-rationing system. We, as foreigners, have found no difficulty in securing food, not always too good, but usually plenty of it. I say that foreigners certainly are a privileged class in the U. S. S. R., as I had always understood that it was difficult for the Russians to obtain either sufficient or decent food. He explains that the Government has always made it a cardinal principle to provide to the best of its ability for the "workers." They are immediately eligible for social insurance, they have the advantage of buying food in co-operative stores at lower prices. Even though commercial stores are also Government-owned, the co-operatives minister especially to the favoured workers.

But now there is beginning to be enough for everybody. The ration system which has been in effect for many years is being eliminated. Rationing was necessary because of shortage of food, clothing, and general commodities in the earlier years, and also to prevent speculation. Early in 1935 bread cards were done away with entirely and there remained ration cards for only a few items, such as sugar, fats, meats, and fish. Dr. Grower adds that it will not be long before the double price system will disappear.

MOSCOW AGAIN

June 21-22

ALL OUT! The wheels grind. The train lumbers into the dark station. Moscow at four-thirty in the morning. At the Hotel Savoy accommodations are difficult to obtain, Moscow is packed. Our rooms are inadequate, we are without clean clothes, and our large bags, stored at the Agro-Joint office, have not yet been delivered. Pauline and I tackle the laundry problem; we start to do our own washing—soon our rooms look like a tenement backyard in the morning.

To the palace of Count Sheremetiev. What a place! The Count, loving the drama, built—a hundred and thirty-six years ago—a theatre with a movable stage and elevators to lift it. Yes, in 1800. The Count had his own private troupe of actors, almost two hundred slaves. His architect was one of his serfs; all of the furniture and decorations were made by his serfs. The Count must have had a gay life with all his serfs and slaves. The grounds of this estate, splendid wooded acres, have been converted into the usual Park of Culture and Rest.

Pauline Falk simply must have a shampoo, and there is a "beauty parlour" in the hotel. Neither hairdresser nor assistant speaks English. The only modern pieces of appa-

ratus are a tea-kettle for rinsing the hair, but which, of course, does not remove the soap, and a primitive hot-air blower which takes hours drying the hair. At last the shampoo is accomplished, and turns out to be not so very bad either.

The beauty shops in Moscow do a rushing business; crowds of young girls and women wait in line for hours. Tipping is outlawed as a "bourgeois custom"; theoretically, that is, for in point of fact I found all through Russia that waiters, porters, and maids expect tips and evince great disappointment and even indignation when they are not forthcoming. Communistic tipping struck me as amusing. Waiters, porters, and serving maids; they, if no one else, will help keep the world safe for capitalism.

Our energies are at a low ebb; it has been, after all, a strenuous three weeks; but we must not leave Moscow without visiting the Zags, the registry bureau for marriage and divorce. We sit patiently in the office waiting hopefully for marriages—a dull morning, it seems, for Comrade Cupid. At last our patience is rewarded: a middle-aged couple enters; they are asked a few questions, reply, and sign the register. They are married! Our guide explains that they have been married to each other before. They divorced, tried other partners, and now desire to be remarried. Another couple arrives, young, shy; nevertheless a sharp argument takes place: Will the young wife assume her husband's name? No. She prefers to keep her own. Why should she take his name? Is she his chattel? By no means, she insists. This is not a bourgeois state. She has a right to her own name. She refuses to yield. Refuses? He turns his

back on her. Is he going to walk out? She takes his name.

Our guide explains the marriage laws to us. The marriage is registered by the clerk in the Zags office on payment of a fee of two roubles. Couples may decide for themselves whether the wife will take her husband's name or retain her own. Either party may apply for a divorce, the other party is then informed. In the event that there are children, the mother usually retains the custody of them, the father being required to contribute one-third of his income for their support. If the man becomes ill or incapacitated, the woman must contribute toward his support, and vice versa. Thus responsibility does not end with divorce, which the Government authorities are trying to discourage. In the past, too simple regulations had an upsetting influence; the tendency is toward stricter regulations, among them consideration of a bilateral agreement, instead of unilateral action for divorce. But the one issue that stands out in the divorce laws—as in everything else—is that the State's chief concern is the children. The State does not aim to make divorce difficult; it is not ambitious to force two people, against their will, to live together. But it does compel both parents to care for the children they bring into the world.

From Zags to the Torgsin stores, shopping for Russian blouses, trinkets, souvenirs, ikons. The lack of travellers' cheques (stolen from Myron Falk on the train going to the Crimea) creates a problem. We go to the Gosbank to obtain money on a letter of credit. But for some reason his letter of credit is of no use to him. After much delay, however, and with the influence of the name "Agro-Joint,"

Myron at last manages to get three hundred dollars. The Gosbank has none of the grandeur of even our small banks in New York. The doorman is a splendid type, tall, with a long white beard, wearing his uniform with regal authority—but the informality of the clerks brings home to us the contrast of this financial order. The women are mostly middle-aged, a few of them in businesslike suits, but for the most part wearing layer upon layer of worn petticoats and skirts; the men in smocks or Russian blouses, trousers, old, worn, and unpressed. Though Russia pays its bills, Russian finance is not glorified in marble halls.

To MALAKOVKA, a suburb of Moscow, where the Agro-Joint Jewish refugee doctors from Germany are housed on their arrival in Russia, in a comfortable house, set in pleasant surroundings. We meet two of the newly arrived doctors, one of whom has brought his wife and child of six years. These young doctors who come to a new country with strange customs, standards, and philosophies after months of uncertainty and dread, are started off in an intelligent way. The doctors tell us that on reaching the Russian border they felt that once again they could breathe freely. This strikes me. Russia becomes to these men the free country; the pages of history have their surprises. "Equal opportunity to practise my profession," said the young physician. "An equal chance in a land where race prejudices are forbidden, are illegal. Equal opportunity; you Americans do not have to realize what that means. You breathe the air of freedom." "So do we now," rejoined the other doctor.

IN THE evening we see that lovely ballet *Swan Lake,* presented at a premiere of the popular Leningrad Ballet. In the audience are the American Ambassador Bullitt, the British Ambassador Chilston, Secretary of Defence Voroshilov, Secretary of Foreign Affairs Litvinov, Secretary of Education Bubnov, and the famous General Budenny.

Eleven o'clock. Back in the hotel, hurried preparations; our train to Leningrad leaves at midnight. Sadly, with real sorrow, we bid farewell to Dr. Grower, a delightful companion, a patient guide, a grand human being; good-bye, too, to Miss Epstein. Her devotion and her help in translating the spoken words as well as interpreting the unexpressed feelings of these splendid people have been invaluable to us. To meet these Agro-Jointers—Grower, Lubarsky, Chanis, Zaitchik, Itkin, Ratner, Lesnick, Roisman, their assistants, the teachers in the technicums, the doctors and agronomists—is to learn what men who are fired with a purpose can accomplish.

This time our railway accommodations are excellent; we have a comfortable wagon-lit, the best thus far in our travels through Russia. Our joy abates when we learn that for an overnight trip each passage costs forty-five dollars!

LENINGRAD

June 23–25

LENINGRAD. Mr. M. J. Ratner, assistant to Dr. Grower in the Agro-Joint office in Moscow, accompanies us. His thoughtfulness, his gaiety and his whimsical sense of humour make our visit to Leningrad stand out as one of the high spots of our Russian trip. For weeks I have heard Dr. Grower extol the glories of this city of palaces —the museums, canals, lovely parks and squares, the wide boulevards—what a gay place St. Petersburg must have been!

The proletarian State builds marvellous workers' homes; the State of the tsars created marvellous palaces. Long avenues line the banks of the Neva River. But the noble houses of the Grand Dukes, the magnificent apartment buildings, silent witnesses of bygone splendour, are closed, uninhabited, falling into decay. They are too large, too expensive to keep up. Those decaying palaces, how poignantly they write their history of an age past and gone!

At the Hotel Europeiska we meet our first setback. We pass through vast halls for forty minutes before we finally are able to make arrangements for rooms: upstairs, downstairs, no keys, wrong keys, rooms not prepared, rooms inadequate. The clerk knows nothing of the hotel accom-

modations, is inefficient (contrary to our previous experience in these large hotels in Russia), but not the least perturbed at our impatience. At last we get a suite—sitting-room, bedroom, and bath—at sixteen roubles, or about fifteen dollars per day. A cot is placed in the sitting-room for me at slight extra charge. There are no single rooms and we refuse to consider two double suites at thirty dollars per day for the three of us.

Our next difficulty is money. Or the lack of it, rather—an inconvenience even in Communist Russia. Once again Myron Falk tries to secure cash on his letter of credit—with no luck. We wire to the Agro-Joint office in Moscow for help, and at last we are off to the Hermitage, with its world-famous art collections.

Back to the hotel across a square formerly the Field of Mars, now the Square of the Victims of the Revolution—everywhere the new mythology! Around it the rows of pretentious palaces remind us of the Grand Dukes—how they tried to outdo one another. Where are they all—those Grand Dukes, their wives, picture galleries, mistresses, racehorses?

We hire a car, a good American Lincoln. Here on the Neva River is the famous Fortress of Peter and Paul, which contains a branch of the Revolutionary Museum. Its gloomy exterior confirms our guide's description of it, "the Russian Bastille," and near by is the Mohammedan mosque with its gorgeously coloured tile domes sparkling in the sunlight.

We come to the Island of Toilers, the famous summer resort of the wealthy in the days before the Revolution. It

is a vast park dotted with charming summer cottages and large estates. Most of these are now rest homes and sanatoria. There are also numerous recreation centres, outdoor restaurants and—horrified shades of past glories!—soda stands. Its site on the Gulf of Finland, the cool breezes and pleasant surroundings, have made this haunt of the aristocracy a haven for the workers of Leningrad.

And the city of palaces is also undergoing vast changes. New factories are being built; many of the heavier industries have been developed here: shipbuilding, metallurgical works, factories for the manufacture of electrical appliances and heavy machinery, locomotives, steam shovels, motors, tractors, cranes, derricks. The useful and the beautiful!

So, too, the beauty of the Cathedral of St. Isaac, now an anti-religious museum, has been spoiled by placards, statistical charts, and posters. The groups of workers who visit the cathedral concentrate not so much on the architectural and decorative features as on the anti-religious propaganda. The interior of this fine cathedral, the enormous vaulted central dome, the richly decorated pillars of lapis lazuli and malachite from the Ural Mountains, these still thrill me—in spite of the warning placards which scream the evil origins of such beauty.

Throngs of workers and their children are visiting Peterhof, the celebrated palace built by Tsar Peter in the eighteenth century. Here are the famous Peterhof fountains, here are terraces down to the sea where dozens of fountains (in various shapes—mushrooms, pyramids, frogs) spray their sparkling waters. On the banks of the sea is Peter's

miniature Dutch Palace—all for the delight of Peter's ex-serfs. What would Tsar Peter say, finding his gardens thus invaded?

Detskoye Selo, summer retreat of the last Tsar, who lived there almost continuously from 1905 to the time of the Revolution, now serves as a health resort especially for children. It is called the "Children's Village." The Alexander Palace in the Detskoye Selo retains practically intact the belongings of the last of the Romanovs. My first impression is one of astonishment that this royal family, one of the richest in the world's goods, should have lived in the midst of such mediocre and tasteless surroundings. The furniture, decorations, and paintings are second-rate, the place cluttered with useless, worthless trifles. The Tsarina's private chambers are laden down with photographs of forgotten men and women who ruled the world only a few decades ago. *Sic transit.* Yesterday, today, and what of tomorrow?

But I do feel as if I know and hold tightly to one thing. Palaces and princes may vanish—but to give these people, old and young, out there on the wide steppes under the blue sky, to give them a chance to plough, to plant, to harvest—that is worth while. At least to me that is worth while. And I feel the least bit proud. I have given twenty years to this Jewish work. But when I work to help these young people in the technicums, on the farms, in the factories, I forget whether they are Jews, or Catholics, or Russians, or Americans. They are human beings. Neglect them, starve them, persecute them, oppress them—destroy them. Or

give them a chance and in the sunlight, as in those fields of sunflowers in the Crimea, they grow strong, useful and happy.

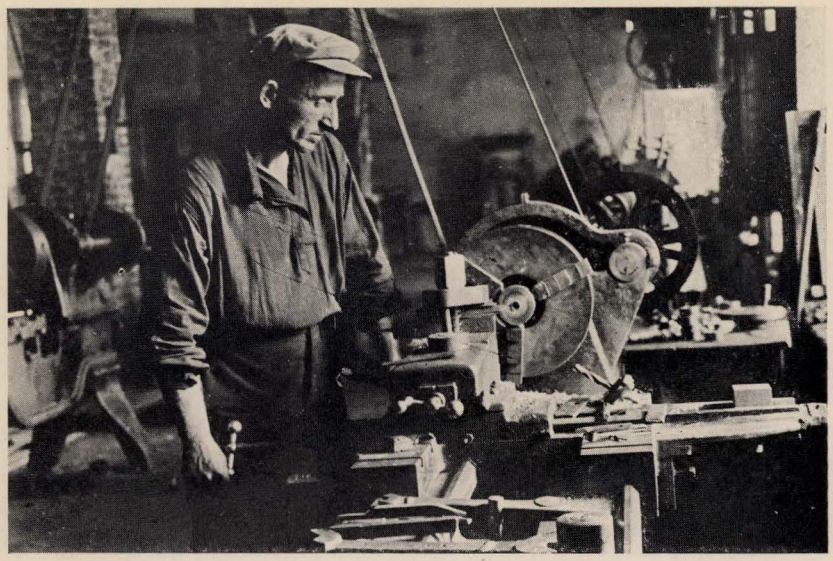
Our journey in Soviet Russia is finished. We travel to Helsingfors.

AGRO-JOINT

AGRO-JOINT

In 1924 the American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation, popularly known as the Agro-Joint, was organized by the Joint Distribution Committee (J. D. C.) as its operating agency in Russia. The aim of the J. D. C. in creating this child—the Agro-Joint—was to sound out the possibilities for bringing into productive occupation the unfortunate masses of the Jews of Russia, of whom there were approximately 2,700,000. Of this number less than 5 per cent immediately after the revolution were engaged in agricultural pursuits, 10 per cent in professional fields; 15 per cent were labourers, artisans, and handicraft workers—the bulk, or 70 per cent, were petty traders, herded into ghettos.

Thus the problem of the Jews in Soviet Russia presented a unique and special field for a well-planned effort to readjust large masses of people and to fit them into the new order of things in Russia. During the past fifteen years, under the economic system existing in Russia, the dreaded word to the Russian Jew (and for that matter to all the peoples of Russia) has been "lishenetz," which means declassed—one deprived of all rights of citizenship, because he is neither peasant, Government employee, industrial or productive worker. It was generally recognized,



A peddler who is now a skilled machinist.



A petty trader has become a horny-handed farmer.

therefore, that from the point of view of permanent rehabilitation, mass transition to productive occupation was the only solution of the problems confronting more than 70 per cent of the Jews in Russia. Opportunities for industrial work in 1924 were extremely limited. The training of Jewish youth for modern industrial factory work and mass settlement of Jews on the soil as farmers, it was felt, would, however, go a long way toward solving the Russian Jewish problem.

Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, a citizen of the United States and a well-known agronomist, had spent several years, from 1921 to 1924, studying the possibilities of a large-scale land-settlement program in Russia. He had been attached to the staff of the American Relief Administration, as a representative of the Joint Distribution Committee, during the years of the great famine in Russia. In 1921–23, under the leadership of Herbert Hoover, important American relief organizations became affiliated with the American Relief Administration for supplying food in Russia on a large scale—among them the Joint Distribution Committee, the American Red Cross, the American Friends' Service Committee (Quakers), the Knights of Columbus, and Y. M. C. A. In this capacity Dr. Rosen, as one of Mr. Hoover's aides, had ample opportunity during that period to study the needs of the Jews in Russia under the new régime, and to draw on his vast experience as an agronomist and expert in land settlement, in conceiving a program for the solution of their problems. The reports which he rendered to the Joint Distribution Committee roused the hopes of the officers and the Executive Commit-

tee to a point where it seemed fruitful to explore the possibilities of Jewish land settlement in Russia. It was decided, therefore, in 1924, to establish the American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation (Agro-Joint) to carry out experimentally a project for settling a few hundred Jewish families in the Ukraine. Under the direction of Dr. Rosen, the results of this experiment far exceeded all expectations. Hence it was decided to continue this effort on a more extensive scale.

In 1924 there remained only about fifteen thousand Jewish families settled on the land in Russia. Their farms had been largely destroyed by Denikin soldiers, by other White Russian groups, and by bandits during the Civil War. One of the first activities of the Joint Distribution Committee immediately after the famine period was to aid these Jewish colonists to re-establish themselves. In the autumn of 1924 the Agro-Joint entered into an agreement with the Government of the U. S. S. R., which was represented by the Komzet, the Government Committee for the settlement of Jews on the land. That committee was organized by the Government of the U. S. S. R. for the specific purpose of helping the Jewish masses to utilize the opportunities made available for the first time in the history of the Jews of Russia to settle on the land on the same basis and with the same rights as other dwellers in Russia. Under this agreement, with the full co-operation of the Soviet Government, the land-settlement program in several districts of the Ukraine was launched. Dr. Rosen selected a staff of capable young Russian Jews, graduates of agricultural schools. Tracts of land were selected and surveyed; large

portions of the land were immediately prepared, so that when the first group of settlers arrived in the Spring of 1925, they already had a grain crop and were provided with food for their families for the next year. Thus the nucleus of this great task was formed.

The next step was the planning of entire villages, the building of houses, schools, medical dispensaries, the drilling of wells, the granting of loans for seed, livestock, and farm machinery. From the very beginning of the work, every effort was made by the Agro-Joint to induce the colonists to take up or engage in diversified farming, such as vineyard-planting, fruit-growing, commercial truck gardening, poultry-raising, dairy farming.

It is difficult to imagine or form a concept of the extent of the organization which had to be built up by the Agro-Joint in an undertaking of such magnitude: an organization for the transportation and delivery of necessary commodities; a network of agricultural co-operatives to handle the the distribution of supplies and equipment; fixed regulations as to terms of the loans to be made to the individual farmer; limitations as to the use of Agro-Joint credits in money and in kind; the keeping of accurate records and accounts, etc. Staffs of Agro-Joint specialists were assigned to the various districts, to give technical instruction to the individual farmers and generally to supervise the work. Men and women who had never seen a tractor had to be made into farmers.

Circumstances dictated the early plans and program of the Agro-Joint. It was necessary:

1. To bring in a substantial number of tractors, machines, tools, and many other implements.
2. To secure a supply of the proper kinds of seed. Incidentally, the rotation and diversification of crops were recognized as of major importance in the solution of the famine problem of Russia. Dr. Rosen is known as an expert in this field, having made a special study of the comparative similarity of the physiographical conditions of soil, climate, and precipitation of certain sections in the United States and corresponding areas of Russia. The Agro-Joint has been instrumental in re-establishing in Russia, in the Ukraine, a network of pure seed breeding stations, which were later taken over by the Department of Agriculture of the Government.
3. To increase immediately the number of draught animals and dairy cows.
4. To secure the necessary materials for the repair and building of houses and other communal buildings.
5. To revive the former local Jewish mutual-aid organizations, in order to assure the active participation of the local populations in this reconstructive undertaking.

From this humble beginning and with an initial appropriation from J. D. C. of only $400,000 in July 1924, there developed one of the most amazing and perhaps the largest agricultural settlement achievements in the history of any

people—involving an investment of over $40,000,000 (not including the value of the land) the major part of which was furnished by the Soviet Government. The result: instead of being declassed pariahs, thousands of these settlers became full-fledged citizens of the country, enjoying for themselves and for their children equal rights with all other Russian workmen and peasants.

In a tremendous enterprise of this nature, affecting the lives of many thousand citizens of Russia, it is understandable that the full co-operation of Government authorities was essential; the program could not have been carried on without the financial aid and active co-operation of the Government. Through the Komzet, all possible assistance was rendered in connection with the allocation of fertile but idle lands for the Jewish settlers—land was supplied free of charge; greatly reduced rates of transportation, free tracts of timber for cutting, large cash credits were granted; commodities were imported free of custom and excise duties, etc. With respect to the financial participation of the Government authorities in this undertaking, the proportion of expenditures from Agro-Joint funds has steadily decreased, while the Government's participation through the Komzet, on the other hand, has increased. In 1924 the Agro-Joint supplied approximately 89 per cent of the funds, and the Komzet 11 per cent; whereas in 1934 the participation of the Agro-Joint was 24 per cent and that of the Komzet 76 per cent.

It is well known that the economic policy of the Government in recent years has been toward countrywide col-

lectivization of all agricultural elements in Russia, and this policy has been vigorously pursued. After a number of experiments by the Government, many modifications and changes have been made in policy, and today the land itself belongs to the collective, and the field work, ploughing, sowing, and reaping, is collectively operated. On the other hand, the homestead, including the individual vegetable garden and orchard, belongs to the private family, each of whom may also own its cows, chickens, etc. The individual homestead cannot be sold, but belongs to the individual family as long as that family occupies it productively; the house and belongings can be sold, however.

While the movement of the Jews to the soil was spontaneous, and was made possible by the policy and co-operation of the Government, the Agro-Joint exercised an enormous influence in directing the movement into efficient, sound, workable channels.

A FEW figures with respect to the progress of this land-settlement program may be illuminating:

How was the program of the Agro-Joint in Russia financed? Since 1924 the Agro-Joint has acted as the operating agency in Russia not only of the J. D. C., but of the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia. The J. D. C. appropriated for the land-settlement work in Russia during the period 1924 to 1928—when the program was taken over by the Society—and since that time in a reduced measure, a total of $5,880,000.

Why was the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia formed, and what were its aims? The

success of the J. D. C. effort in bringing large numbers of Jews to the soil persuaded a small group of some forty or fifty men in the United States to continue and further this activity. The Society, of which Mr. James N. Rosenberg is, and has from the first been, the President, received total subscriptions of $8,000,000 for the expansion of the Agro-Joint program of land settlement under the terms of a special agreement which was negotiated between the Government of the U. S. S. R., the Agro-Joint, and the newly organized American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia. This agreement called for payments of $1,000,000 annually over a period of eight years, beginning April 1, 1928 and ending January 1, 1936, against which five-per-cent interest-bearing bonds (payable in dollars) of the Government of the U. S. S. R. were to be issued for 90 per cent of the total payments made by the Society. The remaining 10 per cent was intended for non-returnable charges and administrative costs.

Thus from 1924 through 1935 the Agro-Joint, as the operating agency of both the J. D. C. and the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia, has expended up to $14,000,000 for this special project of settling the Jewish masses of Russia on the soil.

What has been accomplished during these past twelve years? In 1924 there were some 15,000 families engaged in farming in Russia. Today 50,000 families, or the impressive total of 250,000 Jewish men, women, and children have been settled on approximately 3,000,000 acres of land, chiefly in the Ukraine and Crimea. The Agro-Joint can claim credit for having furnished the impetus and

guidance for this vast movement, in co-operation with the Komzet (Government Committee for Land Settlement of Toiling Jews) and other agencies. Actually, about one-half of these 250,000 people were directly settled or aided by the Agro-Joint in varying degrees during the past twelve years; the other half have been helped in a large measure by Government agencies and also by such organizations as the Ica (Jewish Colonization Association), Ort (Society for the Propagation of Industrial and Agricultural Work among Jews), which has been substantially supported from funds of the J. D. C., and the Ozet (Society for Colonizing Toiling Jews in the U. S. S. R.).

The Agro-Joint has directly established 215 colonies in the Ukraine and Crimea, on which are settled 20,000 Jewish families, which on an average comprise five members to a family, resulting in the placement of 100,000 Jews in districts entirely operated by the Agro-Joint. These Jewish settlements are for the most part in compact, contiguous districts. In addition to these newly settled families, initial assistance was granted in the early years of the Agro-Joint to 3,500 Jewish families outside of the Agro-Joint districts; another 3,500 Jewish families were given incidental aid; and, in co-operation with the Ica, the Agro-Joint rendered substantial assistance to 10,000 families in the old Jewish colonies. It is interesting, also, that aid was given to 15,000 non-Jewish peasant families, neighbours of the Jewish colonists.

From the very beginning the policy of the Agro-Joint has been to encourage harmony and goodwill between the Jews and the neighbouring racial groups in these sections

of Russia. It has not restricted its aid to Jews, but has tried to promote co-operation and friendliness between Jewish settlers and their neighbours—Germans, Ukrainians, Tatars, and others.

Since 1924, 10,000 houses have been built by the Agro-Joint, 1,000 tractors were purchased in the U. S. and shipped to Russia, 700 tractor ploughs, 100 deep-well pumps, 36 combine harvesters, as well as a vast quantity of other machinery—road-graders, ensilage-cutters, reapers, silos, poultry equipment, potato-, cotton- and corn-planters, trucks, automobiles, and repair parts. The present value of these farms in the Agro-Joint colonies, exclusive of the land value, amounts to 40,000,000 gold roubles. The value of the 1934 crops in these Agro-Joint settlements is estimated at over 5,000,000 gold roubles. Since 1931 the Government has been supplying hundreds of additional tractors and combines to machine stations in the Jewish colonies.

In the briefest way possible, the above sets forth the accomplishments of the Agro-Joint in furthering the "forward-to-the-soil" movement of the Jews in Russia. The Agro-Joint did not limit itself, however, to this work, and as soon as the opportunity presented itself for absorbing Jews in the factory and in the industrial life of the country, the Agro-Joint was not unmindful of the hundreds of thousands of Jews in the cities and towns who, without productive occupation or training, were in a desperate plight. As early as 1924 the Agro-Joint had undertaken the task of of strengthening and developing various types of non-agricultural activities on behalf of these unfortunate people, such as the organization of Jewish medical societies, the

establishment and extension of trade schools, loan kassas, and Jewish mutual-aid societies.

For these various types of non-agricultural activities the J. D. C. appropriated, from 1924 to date, for expenditure through the Agro-Joint, about $1,800,000.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS of the Agro-Joint during the past twelve years can best be described by quoting Dr. Rosen's recent reports (to the Executive Committee of the Joint Distribution Committee and the Board of Directors of the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia):

> "To avoid any misunderstanding, I want to state from the very beginning that I have no intention of presenting the situation in Russia as a millennium. Life there is still very difficult, the standard of living is still very low; there is still a great deal of misery and suffering. There are still many ups and downs in the general line of development. The thousands of people whom we helped to settle on the land are not a lot of 'happy paysans'—they have to work very hard for a living. The thousands of 'lishentzy' whom we helped to learn a trade and to be reinstated in their civil rights, still have to struggle hard for their existence. The many thousands of young people of both sexes whom we have helped to become skilled workers and secure employment in the Government factories have still a long way to go before their standard of living will come up to a satisfactory level.
>
> "Nor has our own path while working in Russia

been strewn with roses. We have had our full share of troubles, disappointments, heartbreaks and heartaches, from without and from within. But looking back over the past twelve years and comparing conditions as they were at the beginning of our work with the present Jewish situation in Russia, and observing the situation in some other countries, we cannot help feeling keenly *what a tremendous change for the better has taken place for the Jews in the U. S. S. R. and what a potent part in the improvement of the Jewish situation the work of our organization has played.*

"Only people whose minds have been hopelessly poisoned by the virus of anti-Semitism can pretend to believe that the Russian Revolution was made by Jews. In a country with a population of 150,000,000 people or more, where the Jews numbered less than 3,000,000, of whom more than 70 per cent belonged to a class of small traders who obviously had nothing to gain and everything to lose from the Revolution, it is self-evident to any fair-minded observer that the Revolution was neither made by the Jews, nor for the Jews, nor against the Jews. Our people in Russia were simply caught between the milestones of history and were confronted by a dilemma—either to be crushed and turned into historical dust, or to extricate themselves by a determined effort of readjustment and readaptation to the changed conditions, no matter how painful and tortuous this process should prove to be.

"To those of us who have been in Russia or have kept in close touch with the situation during these

tragic years, it was obvious that Russian Jewry was unable to save itself without outside help. The Jewish masses in Russia were crying for help, and the leaders of the Joint Distribution Committee have answered this call, being fully aware of the difficulties, drawbacks, and risks of the enterprise.

"There was a fundamental problem in human ecology—mass adaptation of a whole stratum of the population to new environments created by a volcanic upheaval. In a problem of this kind and magnitude, it would have been impossible to accomplish any results without the active co-operation of the Government in the country. And here is where we had a tremendous advantage in Russia. In contrast to the passive resistance, not to speak of the active opposition of governments with which the J. D. C. has frequently been confronted in other countries, the Soviet Government has not merely actively co-operated in the work, but has actually taken the lead officially, recognizing the solution of the Jewish question as a State problem.

"At no time have the policies of the Government been directed against Jews as Jews. The ultimate object of its policies has always been a keen and sincere desire to improve conditions for the masses. Russia is today the only country in Europe

(1) where the Government is carrying on a systematic educational campaign against anti-Semitism;

(2) where spreading anti-Semitic propaganda is a criminal offence, punishable by exile and imprisonment;

(3) where Jews, as a nationality, enjoy actual and absolute equality in civil, political, and other rights with the rest of the population. In the Agro-Joint colonies Jews enjoy Jewish cultural autonomy; Yiddish is spoken in the schools and courts, thus transmitting Jewish national tradition to the younger generation through Jewish communal life, the study of Jewish literature, etc.

"The salient point about our work in the U. S. S. R. is the fact that whatever reconstruction activity we have taken up there

(1) has proved to be in the nature of permanent improvement, not a palliative measure;

(2) has outgrown our original expectation and, owing to the active co-operation of the Government, has developed on a much larger scale than we could have anticipated; and

(3) has, at a certain stage of development, been taken over by local Government agencies, fitted into the general structure of the economic and social life of the country, and continued on a larger scale at the expense of the Government.

"This applies equally to all of our various activities in the U. S. S. R.—such as land-settlement work, loan

kassas, trade schools, medical help, mutual-aid societies, etc. This was made possible only because of the wholehearted active co-operation of the Soviet Government, which has officially recognized the solution of the Jewish problem as an obligation of the State, and has participated in the expenditures to a much greater extent than the Agro-Joint.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED:

"A. We started our Land-Settlement Work in 1924 with an appropriation of $400,000, practically without any financial assistance from the Government, planning to settle, at the most, a thousand families on a few scattered tracts of about 50,000 acres of land.

(1) Today, there are in Russia over a quarter of a million Jews engaged in agricultural pursuits, occupying over 3,000,000 acres of land in Crimea, Ukraine, and White Russia, not including the Biro-Bidjan section where the Government has set aside over ten million acres as a Jewish autonomous region.

(2) The total investment in Jewish Land-Settlement Work in the Agro-Joint districts for the period 1923–34, inclusive, in round figures, amounted to:

	For a/c of Agro-Joint	*For a/c of the Govt.*	*TOTAL*
	Roubles	*Roubles*	*Roubles*
Returnable expenditures (loans to settlers)	20,000,000	15,000,000	35,000,000
Non-returnable expenditures (land surveys, water supply, public buildings, agricultural instruction, and administration expenses)	6,000,000	7,000,000	13,000,000
	26,000,000	22,000,000	48,000,000

"This does not include the expenditures of the Government outside of the Agro-Joint districts. In addition, the Government has already refunded to the Agro-Joint, in roubles, the full amount of the returnable, and a substantial amount of the non-returnable, expenditures incurred by the Agro-Joint prior to May 1928, when the American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia, Inc., took over the financing of the Agro-Joint Land-Settlement Work in Russia.

"It is of interest to note that by virtue of a decree of December 23, 1934 the Soviet Government, in order to strengthen the situation in the collective farms, wrote off all the indebtedness of all collectives incurred by them up to January 1, 1933. This, of course, included all Jewish settlers on the farms.

"The total amount of the indebtedness written off amounted to over 435,000,000 roubles; the amount written off by the Government for the Jewish collectives, including the advances made by the Joint Distribution Committee, the Agro-Joint, Komzet, and Ozet, equalled about 25,000,000 roubles.

"Thus the Government has already refunded to the Agro-Joint all the money (in roubles) advanced to the Jewish collectives out of the J. D. C. funds. On the other hand, the Jewish collectives will not have to make any payments to the Government. This will put them in a much stronger position and will enable them to use all their income for further developments of the farms, instead of using it to pay debts. This, of course, is a very great advantage.

"It is well known that the Government of the U. S. S. R. has issued to the Society interest-bearing bonds for the full amount advanced by the Society for returnable expenditures payable, as to capital and interest, in dollars in the U. S. A.

"The loans received by the Jewish collectives out of the Society funds were not written off at that time, but the Komzet is negotiating with the Narkomfin (Commissariat of Finance) to have this indebtedness likewise written off.

"B. Between the years 1923 and 1927, in co-operation with the Ica, we developed and supplied credits to a network of over 300 co-operative loan kassas for artisans and 'Koostary' (home industry workers) with a membership totalling over 60,000 households. Today, with the reorganization of the general credit system in Russia, all the co-operatives financed by these kassas have been absorbed in the general net of the All-Union Co-operative System financed by the Central Government Bank through its local branches, on a scale no private social organiza-

tion could ever have dreamed of undertaking. Both the Agro-Joint and the Ica have withdrawn their funds from these kassas practically without the loss of a single rouble.

"C. Between the years 1923 and 1931 we, again in co-operation with the Ica and the Ort, the Agro-Joint bearing the lion's share of the expenditure, helped to organize or re-establish and equip 42 Jewish trade schools and four farm schools in 33 cities and towns. We imported for these schools modern machinery, tools, and equipment for the amount of about $200,000. We have given them at various times maintenance subventions covering from 25 to 75 per cent of their annual budgets. We helped them to place their graduates, which, in former years, presented considerable difficulties.

TODAY:

(1) Practically all of these schools have been taken over by the various Government Industrial Trusts and Commissariats of Agriculture and Education. The trusts provide for the budgets of these schools, running into millions of roubles, augment their equipment, and, what is perhaps more important, are entering into contract arrangements with the schools for the training of skilled workers who are being taken on by the corresponding shops and factories, often prior to their graduation.

"A number of these schools have been transformed into so-called 'technicums,' a higher type of trade school preparing shop foremen, assistant engineers, and agricultural instructors. The institutions remaining Jewish, the language of instruction is Yiddish, the student body is composed of Jewish youths of both sexes.

(2) On the basis of the equipment supplied by us in former years to these schools, we have now organized in several cities short courses, for young people over age or lacking the preliminary training required for admission as regular students, in various trades such as metal-working, woodworking, electrical work, etc. In addition to over 4,000 regular students in the schools and technicums, several thousand youths are being taught a trade through these short courses.

"D. As early as 1922 the J. D. C., and afterwards the Agro-Joint, laid the foundation for medical work among the declassed Jewish population in Russia. Here was a tragic situation. The Government health service system was totally inadequate. Only industrial workers and farm labourers were able to get medical assistance. The declassed population, the category to which practically 70 per cent of the Russian Jews belonged at that time—among whom, in addition to the 'normal' extent of common sickness, specific troubles, as favus, tuberculosis, trachoma, were widely spread

—could get no attention whatsoever. With the direct and active participation of the Agro-Joint, medical aid societies were organized in 54 towns and cities of the Ukraine and White Russia, with a predominating Jewish population. We helped them to open ambulatoria, hospitals, summer camps for children; imported for them equipment and medical supplies; organized various enterprises and shops in conjunction with the mutual-aid societies in order to provide for them regular incomes.

"We invested altogether close to a million dollars in this work, and thereby helped to render much-needed medical assistance in millions of cases. Today, practically all these institutions have been drawn into the general system of Public Health Service. The number of declassed is rapidly decreasing and there is no need for a special medical service system.

"E. As early as 1923 the J. D. C. had organized a few mutual-aid societies with the object of giving employment to a limited number of déclassés. During the trying years of 1924–29 the Government sharply reversed the New Economic Policy inaugurated by Lenin in 1921–22—with the result that private business was completely ruined and thousands upon thousands of people who during the NEP period took up trading on a large or small scale, were outlawed and found themselves in the class of 'lishentzy' (a situation worse than a simple déclassé). At this time the Agro-Joint took an active part in the extension and development of these mutual-aid societies, par-

ticularly in the Ukraine. These societies, with our direct assistance, organized a great number of various co-operative shops where the unfortunate 'lishentzy' could be taken in, taught a trade and thereby not only enabled to earn a livelihood, but also placed in a position to apply for their reinstatement in citizenship rights. At various periods the number of these shops and enterprises of the mutual-aid societies ranged from 100 to 300, with the number of 'lishentzy' employed from 12,000 to 30,000.

"In 1923 the first two mutual-aid societies were started in Odessa and Kiev with initial loans from the J. D. C. in the amount of 5,000 roubles each. Today the turnover of the societies with which we are in contact amounts to over 5,000,000 roubles, and all their enterprises are being taken over by the corresponding Government trusts and the general net of co-operatives."

THIS REPORT compactly sums up the extent and the unusual success of the Agro-Joint work in Russia—a work that has been recognized not only by the Jews of the United States, as has been evidenced by their generous support, but also by outstanding Christian leaders. Among these Herbert Hoover and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., expressed their opinions in letters addressed to James N. Rosenberg, as Chairman of the Trustees of the J. D. C. for Agro-Joint in 1928. Mr. Rockefeller stated:

November 5, 1928.

Dear Mr. Rosenberg:

The Russian Jewish agricultural activities of your organization have had my consideration for some months. The matter is one lying somewhat outside of the general scope of my philanthropies, but I am glad to follow the leadership of my friends, Mr. Julius Rosenwald and Mr. Felix M. Warburg, who have contributed so liberally to this cause. I am therefore enclosing my check for $500,000.

The studies which my associates have made of the various statistics and data which your organization has submitted to us have impressed us all with the value of this activity as a notable and creative example of social engineering, and I hope that the efforts which your colleagues and you are making will assure a continuance of the success which has attended the work up to this time.

Very truly,

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR.

Mr. James N. Rosenberg, Chairman,
American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation,
74 Broadway, New York City.

Mr. Hoover stated:

19 September, 1928.

Dear Mr. Rosenberg:

I am obliged for your letter of September 5th. You need not have hesitated to request a statement from me as to the Jewish farm settlement work in Russia. For the past five years I have followed its progress with keen interest. It is one of the outstanding pieces of human engineering in the world today. The settlement of over 100,000 Jews on a million acres of land is a tribute to the practical idealism of the Jewish people.

There is no industry more important than agriculture. It has been cause for special gratification to me that the Jews of Eastern Europe should have turned to it in large numbers as soon as the opportunity presented itself to them to become productive and self-supporting tillers of the soil, because the director of the colonization work in Russia, Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, was during the famine period in that country a most valuable member of the staff of the American Relief Administration. I have watched with sympathy and admiration the fruition of his labors in building up these Jewish agricultural communities.

During the unhappy times of war and post-war stress, the Joint Distribution Committee, which represented the Jewish citizens of America, co-operated earnestly, effectively and generously in the various aspects of European relief work with which I was associated. I am indeed happy to commend to the attention of our fellow-countrymen the remarkable enterprise of Jewish regeneration on the land.

When Mr. Rosenwald made his large contribution some months ago, I wrote him expressing my admiration both of the undertaking and of his generosity. I should be quite willing, if Mr. Rosenwald has no objection, and if it would serve your purpose, that you should make use of the letter I then wrote him or of this message.

With best wishes for the continued success of your effort, I am

Faithfully yours,

HERBERT HOOVER.

James N. Rosenberg, Esq.,
74 Broadway,
New York City.

In an article which appeared in the *Survey Graphic* in January 1935, Mr. Edwin R. Embree, who is president

of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, and who is recognized as an outstanding authority on constructive movements for public welfare, stated:

"It has been my business for fifteen years to investigate enterprises which are using or demanding funds for public welfare. The tests which the philanthropic foundations apply to such appeals are (a) the basic quality of the assistance given, (b) the likelihood that the group helped during an initial period will become self-supporting as a part of a regularly established regime, (c) the efficiency and economy with which the agency itself operates. I have seen some spectacular movements for the public weal; the campaign of General Gorgas under the Rockefeller Foundation which wiped yellow fever out of its last strongholds in Brazil and Ecuador and ended once and for all this great scourge on both the American continents; the Hoover child-feeding programs which reclaimed a whole generation in Central Europe; the Rosenwald school-building project which brought into being over 5,000 school buildings for Negroes in almost every county of every southern state, establishing, in fact, the policy of public schooling for this great group of the American people.

"Even with such illustrious programs in mind, I have no hesitation whatever in rating the work of Agro-Joint as among the most brilliant and constructive of projects in public welfare. It is helping a great racial group to re-establish itself in self-respect and self-support. The work of the past ten years has transformed almost the whole of Russian Jewry from the ghetto-herded petty traders into horny-handed tillers of the soil or into equally rugged and self-reliant laborers in the factories."

Record of Expenditures of J. D. C. and Affiliated Organizations in Russia

1. *Direct J. D. C. Activities (Prior to formation of Agro-Joint):*		
Period 1914 through 1920—purely palliative relief	$5,750,000	
During famine period — August 1921 through December 1922—J. D. C. contribution to large relief program for purely non-sectarian relief, in co-operation with A. R. A., American Friend Service Committee, Y. M. C. A., etc.	3,827,000	
In addition, J. D. C. engaged in independent relief and reconstructive work and expended to autumn of 1924 for feeding, clothing, medical activities, and experimental reconstructive agricultural activities — prior to organization of Agro-Joint	4,500,000	
During 1925 through 1935 J. D. C. expended additionally	145,000	
		$14,222,000
2. *Agro-Joint Activities (as operating agency for J. D. C.):*		
From 1924 to spring of 1928 (when the Society was organized) J. D. C. made available to Agro-Joint for land-settlement activities	$5,880,000	
Apart from agricultural work, Agro-Joint expended over	1,800,000	
		7,680,000
3. *Activities of American Society for Jewish Farm Settlements in Russia, Inc.:*		
American Society, organized in November 1928, and operating through the Agro-Joint, disbursed the total subscribed to it over a period of eight years, namely		8,000,000
Total expended by J. D. C., Agro-Joint, and Society		$29,902,000

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As this book goes to press, over a year has gone by since the diary here published was written. Since that time the Torgsin stores have ceased to exist, ration cards have been eliminated, the rouble has been stabilized at about five to the dollar. Other changes, too, must have occurred; for life moves rapidly in Soviet Russia.

I wish to take this occasion to express my deep appreciation to Mr. Maxwell Geismar, of the Department of Literature at Sarah Lawrence College, for the splendid assistance he has given me in editing these diary notes.

GLOSSARY

AGRO-JOINT (American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation) operating agency of the Joint Distribution Committee in Russia. Organized in 1924 as an experiment in settling Jews on the land in Russia, it has developed into a giant project of 3,000,000 acres of land in the Ukraine and the Crimea populated by 250,000 Jews, former petty traders and unskilled workers who have been trained by Agro-Joint as farmers, and artisans.

AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE (Known as J. D. C. and "Joint") an outgrowth of three constituent committees, the Peoples, Central and American Jewish Relief, representing all elements of American Jewry, which organized to relieve the plight of Jews in the war areas overseas and in Palestine in 1914. The J. D. C. is the foremost American agency extending aid to Jews overseas, having expended more than $100,000,000 since 1914.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR JEWISH FARM SETTLEMENTS IN RUSSIA, INC., was organized in 1928 to help finance the expansion of the Agro-Joint's land settlement program under the terms of a special agreement entered into by Agro-Joint, the Government of the U. S. S. R., and the Society. For this purpose the Society, of which James N. Rosenberg is president, has received subscriptions from American Jews totaling $8,000,000.

ICA stands for the Jewish Colonization Association, established and endowed more than 40 years ago by Baron Maurice de Hirsch, of France, to train and settle Jews as farmers in its colonies in South America, Palestine and other lands. It is a partner of the J. D. C. in the American Joint Reconstruction Foundation which maintains cooperative loan societies in eastern and central Europe.

KOLKHOZ, a collective farm in the Soviet Union. Farmers who are members of a collective farm pool their agricultural equipment, labor, etc., and are compensated after the harvest on a pro rata basis depending on their individual ability, energy and skill.

KOMZET, a committee organized by the U. S. S. R. to help the Jewish masses in Russia to settle on the land on the same basis and with the same rights as other citizens of Russia.

ORT stands for Association for the Promotion of Trade and Agriculture, founded more than 50 years ago in Russia to train Jewish men, women and youths in vocations. It operates today 128 trade schools, 127 agricultural colonies, and 113 factories in Poland, Rumania, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia and France.

OZET stands for Society for Colonizing Toiling Jews in the U. S. S. R.

SOVKHOZY, State farms where workers are compensated on a flat salary basis. The Kolkhozy or collective farms buy their stock and draught animals, seeds, etc., from these farms.

TORGSIN, government-operated stores where foods, clothing and other necessaries not available to the masses could be purchased with foreign currency only. These stores have now been discontinued.

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