JAMES N. ROSENBERG

ON THE STEPPES

A RUSSIAN DIARY

WITH
A BRIEF FOREWORD BY
LOUIS MARSHALL



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ON THE STEPPES

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TO

B · H · R

FOREWORD

THE Diary which follows is a series of extracts from day to day notes taken in Russia during a month's visit to that country made chiefly for the purpose of surveying the agricultural work of Russian Jews there during the past few years.

In the Summer of 1921 the people of America, it will be well remembered, came to the rescue of famine stricken Russia. In that notable humanitarian effort under the leadership of Herbert Hoover, head of the American Relief Administration (*ARA*), the people of the United States expended some sixty millions of dollars. This money was in part provided by the Congress of the United States, in part by individual American gifts, chiefly by contributions from leading American Relief organizations.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (frequently to be mentioned in this book under its abbreviated title of *JDC*) was one of the American Relief organizations taking an active part in the work. It contributed about four million dollars toward that non-sectarian Russian famine relief in addition to many millions which it expended in Eastern Europe and Palestine.

The leading representatives of *JDC* in Russia dur-

ing the famine work were Dr. Boris D. Bogen and Dr. Joseph A. Rosen, both of whom were members of the staff of Col. William N. Haskell, Russian chief of *ARA.*

Upon the completion of the famine rescue work American Jews found it necessary to continue the help to their afflicted brethren in Russia. The reasons for this are well known to those who have had opportunity to realize the actualities of the Russian scene. During the Czaristic régime a handful of Russian Jews were teachers or professionals, another handful were farmers—their forbears having been permitted a century ago to till the soil—but the mass of the Russian Jewish population was and had for decades been herded within the Pale of settlement comprising a two-thousandth part of the Russian territory. There they were continuously the victims of oppressive laws, of persecution and pogroms. All other occupations and means of livelihood denied them, they had eked out a wretched, bare existence chiefly as petty traders or handicraftsmen.

The Russian revolution wrought a violent change. While the official anti-Semitism of the Czaristic régime disappeared, the revolution brought almost greater disaster to Russian Jewry. The economic policy of Soviet Russia has left no place in the Russian scheme of life for the petty trader, and scant room for the artisan or hand-worker. Government-supported coöperatives have driven out the middle-

man and destroyed the merchant, shopkeeper and tradesman; Government-owned industry, striving for large scale production, increasingly displaces the toiler at the bench.

What then was the Russian Jew to do? One of the chief results of the Russian revolution has been that the peasants, who constitute four-fifths of Russia's population, have been given the opportunity to occupy and till for their own benefit the land which during centuries their ancestors had worked for others as serfs. Title to the land remains in the Government, but its occupant may enjoy its usufruct so long as he and his family cultivate it and produce crops. Under this system for the first time in Russian history a peasant's life on the soil is opened to Jews in common with all other parts of the Russian people.

Russia has for generations been the granary of Europe. Her economic power is based largely on her agricultural prosperity. This opening to all Russians, irrespective of race or religion, of vast fertile areas has led to a tremendous and spontaneous movement to the soil even by the urban population.

Hence the Jews, driven by necessity, have welcomed the opportunity to attach themselves to the soil and to become peasants like their fathers of old.

Dr. Rosen had remained in Russia to complete the work of the *JDC* and had begun by 1922 to initiate constructive work. Coöperative loan establishments for Jewish handicraft workers and artisans

were restored. The ancient Jewish farm colonies, broken down through the revolution, were reestablished. Aid was given for the recreation of medical institutions and trade schools. Dr. Rosen, himself a noted agronomist, a Russian by birth, an American citizen of distinction, thoroughly acquainted not only with Russia's soil conditions and crop possibilities but also with her industrial problems, foresaw this great movement to the soil. He therefore devoted a portion of the funds of the *JDC* to help a few of the many Jews who desired to become farmers. The movement spread and Dr. Rosen introduced the modern scientific technique of large scale farming. As he had during the famine period been the one man chiefly instrumental in teaching crop diversification to the Russians by successful corn planting, so now, he brought the American tractor to the Russian steppe.

In 1924 the *JDC,* with great hesitation, voted $400,000 for a modest development of the agricultural activities. The work prospered beyond the most sanguine expectations. It had been thoroughly demonstrated that the most effective help that could be rendered to the Jews of Russia was to fit them for agriculture and the *JDC* determined to stand at their side. The undertaking grew to such proportions that by the Spring of 1926 fifty thousand Jews had, through the aid of the *JDC,* settled on five hundred thousand acres in the Crimea and the Ukraine. The cost of the work to the *JDC* up to that time had been

$2,300,000. American Jews were persuaded by the *JDC* to supply additional funds to carry on this and other reconstructive work for Jews in Russia, Eastern Europe and Palestine and they have responded generously.

It was for the purpose of surveying the Russian work that James N. Rosenberg, Vice Chairman of the *JDC*, who had from the first championed Jewish land settlement in Russia, was requested to inspect this splendid enterprise. He proceeded to Russia, where in company with Dr. Rosen and Dr. Bernhard Kahn, European Director, he had abundant occasion to behold the transformation of thousands of ghetto-dwellers into hardy farmers.

The book which follows does not purport to be a technical or scientific study. Rather it is a colorful record of the first hand impressions gained by Mr. Rosenberg in these unique surroundings. As such it merits careful perusal. The reader will be rewarded by beholding an inspiring panorama and by vizualizing the miracle of an indomitable people lifted out of the depths of despair by a gleam of hope and the healing breath of Nature.

LOUIS MARSHALL

New York, April 1927

ON THE STEPPES

CHAPTER I

APRIL 30

RUSSIA. The train crawls over sombre fields. No signs of spring. No hills; bare flat fields; winter's brown; patches of black forest. The people actually like those described by Tchekhov and Dostoievsky. Ragged old peasants, bearded young peasants, children with light blue eyes and flaxen hair. Buildings everywhere decorated for tomorrow's May Day celebration.

What a babel. . . . Sunday, the French language; Monday, German; Tuesday, Lithuanian; Wednesday, Latvian; Thursday, Polish, as we crossed the Polish Corridor; today, Russian. And everywhere a different currency. Valuta, a devil's invention.

MAY 1

WE ARRIVE at Moscow. This is the great day in Communistic Russia. Dr. Rosen and Ezekiel Grower * meet us. At the station, droshkas, beggars, moujiks;

* *Grower, a Russian lawyer, is counsel for the American Jewish Joint Agricultural Corporation (generally referred to as the "Agro-Joint"). This Corporation conducts the JDC agricultural work in Russia.*

porters carrying baggage. We drive to the hotel and are ushered into super-magnificent rooms. The only thing not modern is the bathroom, where there is a boiler that has to be set going with a wood fire to get hot water for a bath. . . . Breakfast interrupted by rushes to the window. Soldiers, thousands of them, marching. Crowds. We all have special passes for the Red Square. . . .

WE HAVE spent the morning at the Red Square. Picture a space in New York from Forty-second to Forty-sixth Street; from Fifth Avenue to Seventh Avenue, and you get the size of this square. It is surrounded by superb buildings. At the far end is the famous Byzantine church, Basile de Glira. To the right the Kremlin. We stand beneath Lenin's tomb, which is used as a reviewing stand. Who are the people up there? Stalin, the General Secretary of the Communist Party, is pointed out to me; he is the most powerful man in Soviet Russia today. He wears old clothes; a yellow silk muffler around his neck, and a sort of chauffeur's cheap cap.

The parade begins. Thousands of soldiers at attention. Khaki, like our doughboys, only they wear black boots. These fellows look like business. A dozen horsemen canter through the open space in the middle of the square. At their head is Voroshilov, People's Commissar for Army and Navy. Cheers.

Waves of cheers as in a Harvard-Yale game. Roar of the surf. The cheers roll back and forth. Music. The buzz and roar of airplanes overhead. Twenty, thirty of them in formation. Cannons boom. Twenty-one salutes. Voroshilov has mounted the reviewing stand. He speaks into a megaphone. There is an amplifier, too. His voice fills the great square. He is addressing the soldiers. The new ones are being sworn in. Grower tells me the main theme of Voroshilov's speech is that the Russian Army is not for aggression, only for defense. Splendid. That's what secretaries of war always tell the armies. He barks out short phrases. They are repeated by ten thousand voices.

Discipline; order. Five years ago these soldiers were barefooted and in rags, says Grower. Today they are spic and span. In the civilian crowd where I stand are scattered many officers. While Voroshilov speaks they stand at salute. The hands of five officers are raised near me. Motionless. Finger nails and hands clean.

For two hours the soldiers march by; unending lines; crack cavalry; a thousand strapping youngsters, students at the Military Academy who are learning to be officers; militia in shining black leather coats and black boots. Three millions of these youngsters are ready at all times for a call to arms, I'm told. The youths want to join the army; they are taught not merely military strategy, but are given a general and

political education. Coming into the army illiterate, they are first taught reading and writing, and the ideology of the Soviet Government; "the Liquidation of Illiteracy" is a prime plank in the Soviet platform. What will this mass of a hundred and forty million people do when it learns to read and think for itself?

MY MIND jumps back to breakfast. Louis, eighteen years old, is office boy for the *JDC*. He speaks English. At breakfast I had a little talk with Rosen about him. Five years ago Louis lived with his parents, his sister and grandfather at Ananiev, near Odessa. A good comfortably circumstanced Jewish family, a good home. Books. Music. Ananiev is a town of about twenty thousand, of whom ninety percent were Jews. Pogroms came. Many hundreds of Jews were slaughtered. Terror. They hide in their houses. Louis, thirteen years old, has managed to smuggle in a pistol. A great banging on the door of the house where they lived. Yells. Screams. Threats. Louis calls out: "You can't come in." A blind shot through the door. Grandfather killed. Louis shoots back through the door. Bang. Bang. Cross fire. The murderers run away. Louis saves the family.

Ananiev has become a town of some importance. It is the capital of the little autonomous Moldavian republic in the Ukraine. "An autonomous republic?" I asked. Grower explained. Within the boundaries

of Soviet Russia are some forty such states or republics, each speaking its own language and having local self-government. It's that sort of a possible Jewish Republic or State in Russia, we've heard about. I'll have to find out a lot more about this.

WE LEAVE the Red Square. Everybody buying a folder which costs ten kopeks—five cents. It is an advertisement of the passenger airplane service in Russia. They have organized an All-Russian society called "Friends of the Airplane." Air service from Moscow to Koenigsberg. The pilots are Germans and Russians. Some Liberty motors, but mostly German-made engines. Flights also from Moscow to Kharkov; Moscow to Nijni-Novgorod. This is actual service at present. They say they'll soon have service from Moscow to Batoum and Sebastopol and even to Teheran in Persia.

LOUIS COMES in. "Did you, yourself, see any people killed or wounded in pogroms?" I asked. "Who didn't?" he replies in a matter-of-fact tone. "In Elizabethgrad I saw three hundred dead Jews." "Where did you see them?" "In the streets, some in the hospitals, some in the houses." . . .

NOW THE workmen are parading past the windows of the hotel. Now boys on bicycles; now little boys

and girls, from seven to twelve years of age; thousands of them. The girls in blue with scarlet capes; the boys in blue with scarlet neckties. A big boy carries a red banner. They halt in front of the hotel.

The workmen are passing; tens of thousands. They divide into two great streams. One swings to the right of the Red Square, the other leftward into the Red Square past the Iverskaya Icon. Iverskaya Bogo Mater. So that's she! The Icon with magic curative powers. Who hasn't heard of her? She was one of the most famous ladies of Russia.

From my hotel window I see, on the great wall looking down on the Iverskaya, a sign painted in big letters. What does it say? It is translated for me. "Religion is opium to the people." It is the celebrated placard about which everybody who goes to Moscow tells you.

BEFORE this Icon thousands of people used to kneel, face downwards, on the cobblestones of the square. Rich men used to pay tens of thousands of roubles to have the Icon brought to their homes. That's over. The demand for visits from the Iverskaya is done for. Today only a dozen ragged old women are kneeling before the Icon at the door of her chapel.

A THIRD stream joins the parade. Workmen, Communists, young Communists, boys and girls with red

bandanas on their heads. They don't march like the crack regiments of two hours ago, but they are not less impressive. . . . Trade unions. Institutions. Clubs. Children's organizations; all with scarlet bands and gold letters. . . . More soldiers in khaki. Blue-green caps. . . . Thousands of banners. . . . The parade goes on without let-up until six o'clock.

WE TAKE a drive. What is this magnificent building? It was formerly a club for the nobility, I learn; now the headquarters for the All-Soviet Council of Trades Unions are established here. The old order is past; the new rules of Russia have taken their places and their palaces. Another palace, formerly of Serge Alexandrovich, uncle of the Czar; now it is the head office of the Moscow Soviet. The Hermitage, once a smart cabaret for the rich, now is a club and home for peasants who visit Moscow. For peasants? I learn very quickly that the peasants are shown all possible consideration by the Government. Hotels have been established for them in every large city; even in the small towns. No wonder. They are eighty percent of the population. The famous summer palace of the Czar is now a hotel for peasants. I am to see it. It is in the Crimea on the shores of the Black Sea.

We pass two former monasteries. They are clubs or administrative buildings for workmen. The houses of the nobility, their clubs, their places of amusement,

are used as offices for governmental departments, workmen's and peasants' organizations, for the labor unions. . . . We drive past a *kosher* Jewish restaurant. . . .

The stores were closed this evening, it being a holiday, but they were all lighted and the shades were up. The shop windows are fairly attractive. Most of the important stores are either Government owned or Government supported workmen's or consumers' cooperatives. A few of the larger shops are privately owned. Not many. . . .

As WE motored through the city, there were at least a dozen radio concerts in the squares, thousands of people listening. The radio is used to a tremendous extent, not only in the cities, but in the villages and smaller towns, for education, music, entertainment, and always for Soviet propaganda.

The streets are fairly clean; the crowds gay, orderly. Most of the people decently dressed. Costumes fantastic, but few signs of poverty.

Food at the hotels costs about as much as in New York; in the stores or markets food is, however, cheap and plentiful.

Last evening at the cafe in Riga the orchestra played "Rose Marie." Everywhere, from Italy to Latvia, the orchestras have played American jazz. We

seem to have left jazz behind. The radio concerts and the bands during the parade played no American tunes; at least, I recognized none. . . .

WE GO to see an open-air pageant, representing the history of the revolution and the relationship between the workers and the peasants. Four thousand people are to participate in this performance.

Another great square, the Kalantchevskaya. Tens of thousands of people. Only one auto, besides ours. It is used by the Chief of Police.

Seven powerful searchlights suddenly concentrate their rays on a stage about three hundred feet in width, with tiers of steps rising to a height of some thirty feet. At the top and back are three screens for movies. Above them a huge picture of Lenin. This sudden illumination is extraordinarily like the raising of a curtain. Several hundred young men, nude, but for a loin cloth, represent labor in the factory, at the forge, in the shop. Great rhythmic movement of masses.

With megaphone and amplifiers a stentorian voice announces what the pageant is about. Then, while these rhythmic mass motions of the actors go on, a great burst of music from the radio, accompanied by a vast chorus. The stage includes not only the raised platform, but a considerable space on the square in

front of the stage. The Metropolitan Opera House dwindles to the size of an intimate theatre. The thing is scaled like the Coliseum or the Baths of Caracalla. The first act is finished. Darkness.

The searchlights dart over the heads of the crowds. The booming voice again. Chaikin, our guide, tells us this is to be a dance of the peasants. The theme,—the brotherhood of peasant and soldier. Propaganda.

Music. Lights. Chauve Souris on an inconceivably larger scale. Boys and girls in peasant costumes are dancing on the stage. A thousand of them, I think. The soldiers dance with them. Singing. Music. Troops of soldiers, several companies. Darkness again.

The third pageant. Transportation. On each side of the stage are driveways descending rather sharply. Down the left one come rickety peasants' carts drawn by horses, lickety split. The carts have various things in them: wheat, maize, merchandise. The drivers in peasant costumes whip their horses. Down the right side come motor trucks, automobiles, horns blowing, the trucks loaded with boxes. Signs in great Russian letters on them. Shoes, cotton, machinery. Here is a stage, not merely with human actors, nor even with men and beasts as in the circus, but with men, beasts, radios, motors, cinema—all the engines of modern industry. P. T. Barnum would have liked to run a show like this.

A pause. The crowd moves back. They tell us that larger pageants are coming. But it wants only a few minutes to midnight, and we are going to the midnight mass at Christ Church. Religion. I've heard so much of the suppression of religion in Russia that I particularly want to get there and see the church and the crowd with my own eyes.

THE CHURCH is in utter darkness. Surely nothing's going to happen. It wants only five minutes to twelve. Dense, silent crowds in the plaza, but no lights in the church. We ascend stone steps. So many people, you can hardly breathe. All quiet. All darkness. Like pebbles in the surf we are swept into the church. It was Immanuel Kant who said that religion is opium to the people. It is from him that the Russians got those words which are placarded near the sacred icon. Are the crowds here mere sightseers or are they worshippers? I don't know. But they are silent; there's something devout about the stillness of the vast gathering. The church is packed beyond the doors. My ribs are almost pushed into me. A path opens. Back. Back. The priests are coming.

Out at last. We watch a great procession follow the priests, who carry torches which shine on their splendid robes. Home.

It took me a long time to go to sleep. A thousand

impressions of the day flashed through my mind like a kaleidoscope. The radio in the square still played with undiminished ardor. As I fell asleep, the air was full of a tune that gave my heart an extra beat. The tune on the radio was "Yankee Doodle."

CHAPTER II

MAY 2

A DAY of continuous meetings at the offices of the Agro-Joint. These offices are in a handsome house, formerly the residence of a wealthy Russian. Where is he? Vanished.

The meeting of chief interest was with the physicians. Twelve of them. Leading Doctors from Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, etc. They are a relief committee of Russian Jewish medical men. They report as to the work which, under their direction, has been done for the Russian Jews through the use of the funds supplied by the *JDC* these past five years . . . they describe results accomplished, needs for the future . . . problems, hopes . . . difficulties.

A fine meeting. Fine men. Straightforward. Direct. Simple. Not a word of begging for future aid. Sober statements of fact. Their whole emphasis on the thought that the Russian Jew must learn to rebuild his own life. Self-help. The names of these men. They ought to be set down. For these physicians are devoting their lives to this work, without pay, without reward. Drs. Bramson, Gran, Pevzner, Chanis, Levin, Bomash, Vermel, Serebrianny, Lesnick.

They make brief addresses. Most of them speak in German so that I can understand. The others speak Russian. Grower translates. Does it well. But that's a poor way at best to communicate thoughts. Oh, for a magic language. If we could all speak one language, there'd be less misunderstanding, less prejudice, less war.

Here's an outline of the Doctors' reports.

THE Soviet Government gives medical service to the workmen, the peasants, the soldiers. Most of the Jews do not come within any of these categories. The Jews are declassed. They are mostly small traders. Necessarily so. For in the days of the Czars no other livelihood was open to them. A few became professional men, a very few became rich. A hundred thousand were farmers—descendants of those Jews who a century ago had been permitted to go upon the soil. A goodish number are petty artisans, tailors, blacksmiths, house-painters, carpenters, etc. But the vast bulk have been, and still are petty traders, herded in the ghetto. These men are still trying to ply a trade. But the Soviet Government has no use for the paltry trader. He does not fit into the Government's economic scheme. The Government supports coöperative enterprises in which it has a large stake. Hence the trader has no chance. Worse than that he is declassed. . . . That's not a religious or racial thing. All trad-

ers are in the declassed category. It is a matter of economics.

What is the result of being declassed, I ask.

A trader is sick. He has to be operated for cancer. What happens? The peasants, the workers fill the hospitals. No room for the trader. He is of the declassed category. As in all other matters, be it housing, taxation, schooling for the children, so in the matter of medical help the declassed trader comes last. Hence the need of private medical help for these Jewish traders.

We examine statistics . . . they are analyzed. Result. . . . Twenty percent of the funds for the medical relief for Russian Jews come from the *JDC*, the remaining eighty percent the Russian Jews themselves manage to gather.

We discuss medical help to the farm colonies—the old colonies and the new . . . then comes a report as to the magnificent fight these doctors have waged against the loathsome disease favus. Favus. The very name is scarcely known in the United States. Twenty thousand Jewish children cured. . . . Ten thousand still to be cured and favus will be stamped out. There's a job worth doing. Favus is cured with the X-ray. Seventy-three Russian doctors have been taught the technique. The *JDC* has supplied the machines and apparatus.

Dr. Gran reports. . . . In the last three years one

hundred and fifty medical institutions were organized or recreated. . . . One and a half million treatments to patients. Half a million a year.

A report as to the work of *OZE*—(a Russian Jewish medical organization). *OZE* has established a hundred medical institutions through the aid of JDC.

I ask whether the work in these various institutions is non-sectarian.

That is the case, I find. The institutions established by us are always located in the congested Jewish localities. About twenty percent of the patients are non-Jewish.

We are now giving but five thousand dollars a month toward the work. The sum ought to be doubled.

LUNCHEON with Dr. Urisson, a brilliant, delightful Moscow lawyer. He has twice visited the new Jewish farm colonies. Asked him a lot of questions. Result. On his first visit he saw many colonists, just newly arriving. While the young men of the families were full of hope and ambition, the wives were very unhappy, downcast and frightened. Their new surroundings terrified them. The children removed from towns and villages out on to the vast steppes were lonesome and scared. A crop which had already been planted under Dr. Rosen's direction was growing, but had only started. They lived under the sun and rain, with

scarcely any shelter, many of them without a roof overhead.

When he arrived at the colonies for the second time six months later, the change, he says, was nothing short of miraculous. They lived in staunch houses, generally having four rooms, built of the local clay made into bricks, with roofs of corrugated iron or tile. The houses were neat and clean. The children were fat and rosy. The wives were no longer weeping. They were busy in the house and in the field. The wheat was much higher than Dr. Urisson's head. In some of the colonies, particularly Chaklai (Hebrew for "Worker on the Soil") the wheat was of such fine quality that it was sold and used for seeding purposes only. This crop had grown from seed furnished by the pure-bred multiplication seed station of the *JDC* created by Dr. Rosen in 1923. . . .

Here is something Dr. Urisson saw with his own eyes. In June he saw no Jews praying. In October he saw them at their prayers. They had their Torah. (Hebrew Scroll of the Law.) They had no synagogues, but in some of the houses a *minyan* * gathered, and he saw these minyans at prayer in October. "And," said he, "I saw this in every colony."

In June the colonists whom he met asked him only: "When will we have a roof over our heads?" In Oc-

* Religious quorum of ten adult males.

tober they said: "When will a synagogue be built for us; when will schools be built; when will we have libraries?" The youngsters want a club and many books.

MAY 3

VISITED the Schukin and Morosov museums of modern art. These, before the revolution, were two private homes of wealthy Russian collectors. The houses are now museums and the pictures state property. What became of the former owners, I wonder? These are the finest collections of modern French paintings, I fancy, in the world. Adolph Lewisohn has one or two fine Gauguins. I seem to recollect one good Gauguin in the Metropolitan Museum. Here are two rooms full. The impact tremendous. Gauguin will rank as one of the world's great colorists. The finest examples of Matisse, large numbers of them, were also there. So, too, Picasso in all his stages; Derain; a whole room full of superb Cézannes, showing his whole development. One entire room full of Van Goghs. . . . Workmen studying the pictures. . . . arguing about them. Workmen in coarse blouses and heavy boots, arguing about Gauguin. Wish I could understand 'em.

WE GO to the Russian Church on the Red Square. The

name "Red Square," by the way, is not new. This has been called the "Red Square" for centuries, because of the red buildings surrounding it, I'm told. The square is well named. Blood has been spilled freely here for generations. I see the stone block on which Ivan the Terrible entertained himself by daily head-choppings. . . .

MET several leading Zionists. I asked them what they thought of the agricultural work. They heartily approved; said it was fine work and important. To one, who stressed the need of our helping the Jewish artisans, I pointed out that the artisans' kassas re-established by *JDC*, have sixty thousand members, or co-operative loan establishments. As each member is head of a family having five persons on the average, I pointed out that three hundred thousand Jews, artisan's families, a tenth of the Russian Jewish population, are being helped by the *JDC*. The Russian Government is now giving two millions of dollars of credits to these kassas.

LATER . . . A long talk with Mr. Sack, head of the *ICA* * work in Russia. He gave me the following data:

Prior to this year *ICA* sent some five hundred families into the old colonies, but settled no Jews on any new lands until this year, during which it is settling

* Jewish Colonization Association founded by Baron de Hirsch.

three hundred families, at a cost of two hundred thousand dollars, in the Ekaterinoslav district close to the old Ekaterinoslav colonies. *ICA* for the first time has introduced tractors in its agricultural work.

ICA now has invested in Russian kassas about three hundred thousand dollars; *JDC* one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The kassas are doing splendidly, says Sack.

I MET two Jewish lads, who told me that recently a petition had been presented to the Russian Government signed by ten thousand Jewish children asking that permission be granted them to learn Hebrew in the schools. Such instruction is forbidden on the ground that it is a means of teaching religion in the schools, which the Soviet Government does not allow.

AN EVENING meeting with the leaders of the Moscow Jewish community, lasting until long after midnight. Told them how we are planning to spend $1,500,000 in Russia this year—viz., $1,000,000 for colonization; $350,000 for artisans, kassas, tradesmen, trade schools and developing workers in hand crafts; $150,000 chiefly for palliative and medical work. All sorts of people at this meeting. All shades of opinion. While some differences were expressed as to details, all agreed that at least two-thirds of all *JDC*

funds applicable for Russia should be spent for the agricultural work.

MAY 4TH, 5TH, 6TH

LONG meeting with Smidovitch. He is Vice-President of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republic and is therefore, it goes without saying, a very important figure. He is Chairman of the Komzet—the Government agency for Jewish land settlement.

Mutual greetings were agreeable but brief. We got to business promptly. We spoke German. Discussed the colonization work in general terms. Soon S. inquired whether there was anything I'd like specially to ask about. I replied that one of the chief purposes of my visit to Russia was to understand the Government's attitude toward the Jewish colonization.

S. stated: "The Government supports our work; our experience satisfies us it is practical, effective and constructive. It is more expensive for Jews than for other nationals to settle on the land because the others are mainly peasants having equipment—cattle, etc., also experienced in farming. We cannot and do not favor the Jews above the others who want to go on the land. Nor can we permit Jews or anyone else to settle on any lands except those which are unoccupied. There is, however, still plenty of such land —fertile and accessible." Here he paused and then spoke with considerable emphasis:

"Self-determination is a thing others preach; we practice it. We have many—almost forty—autonomous states within the Soviet Union; we encourage groups, according to nationality, to develop along those national and cultural lines they wish to pursue. Such a State would already have been permitted the Jews just as to other groups, but for the fact that the Jews are scattered and form no cohesive territorial body. Jewish colonization is carried on in the Crimea and Ukraine, because it has not been deemed by us practical to have the Jews go to far distant places like Siberia, as they would fear to go so far. It is our policy in supporting the Jewish colonization work, which we wish to press forward with the utmost energy, to make, so far as possible, a compact group of Jews. I do not mean crowded areas, but groups which are territorially near one another." Here he illustrated his ideas by reference to large maps.

"There is still room," he continued, "for several thousand families in the Ukraine, but hardly more because we do not give land where it makes any controversy or bad feeling among the Christian peasants. There is, however, considerable fertile land in the Crimea, particularly a splendid tract of about a million acres, which has been inspected by Dr. Rosen and his agronomists, of which we are prepared to grant a considerable portion to Jews. For later development we have set apart a vast tract sufficient for the settle-

ment of not less than forty thousand families of Jews around the Azof Sea. This is peculiarly fertile land, but drainage will be necessary and this will cost money which at present we cannot afford to spend."

Dr. Rosen here explained that he well knew this land, that it is extraordinarily fertile, but that there would be heavy expense for its drainage, "It is," said Rosen, "wonderful land, but we're not ready for it. In the Azof district there would be intensive cultivation on small tracts."

S. then discussed the manner of life on the farm, and advised us to be careful that the Jews' grade of living be similar to that of the non-Jewish peasants as to size of houses, etc., so as not to engender jealousy. He asked especially that we study the question of housing. He said he wanted to emphasize that prompt colonization should proceed on as large a scale as possible. "The limiting fact," said he, "is not the land, but the money; but the desirable lands will not wait." To his urging that the work be speeded, I replied that, anxious as we were to see the work go forward on a substantial scale, it would not do for us through misplaced zeal to undertake more than could be carried out successfully. I then asked: "Have you found that the Jews are making good farmers? Are they doing good work on the soil?" "Splendid," he replied, and the look on his face gave emphasis to his words.

I ought to describe Smidovitch. He is not a Jew; he is a man of about sixty, white-bearded, white-haired, vigorous, strikingly handsome, with keen, expressive eyes and a noble head. He is a member of a distinguished family of Russian intellectuals, among whom are prominent Russian authors.

Having in mind the two lads who are circulating the petition for leave to teach the Hebrew language, I told S. I'd like to ask a question as to religion. His eyes sparkled. "That is my particular affair," said he. He explained that the *CIK*, i. e., the Central Executive Committee, which is practically the ultimate controlling body governing the whole of Soviet Russia, has designated him as a committee of one to see to it that there is no religious persecution.

"Worship," said he, "is not persecuted or forbidden. I wish you would make that clear in America. It is my personal task to see to it that nothing is done to offend religious feeling."

"What, then, is the philosophy of your Government in regard to religion?" this gave me the opportunity to ask.

He answered as follows: "The Church is completely separated from the State. We hold that in the Czar's government religion was used as an instrument of oppression. This we will not allow. No steps are taken by the Government to suppress any religion, but there is and can be no state religion, and, above all,

I wish to impress on you that in the Soviet Russia of today there are and can be no grades of religion. One religion is just the same as another so far as the Government is concerned. Even the people living in the far eastern Asiatic portion of Russia, who still pray to wooden images, are let alone."

He then introduced the subject of Zionism and said: "We will not allow the Zionists, any more than any other group, to use their beliefs as a cloak for political action; this is a strict governmental policy. When Patriarch Tikhon some time ago attempted to interfere in state matters, he was put into prison."

I asked whether the Government permits Zionists to emigrate to Palestine. He assured me most positively that the Government permits such emigration and does not put any obstacles in the way of emigration to Palestine by those who want to and can go there, but that the Government will not tolerate the creation of a restless emigration mood amongst those of its citizens who have no such possibilities.

He said, in answer to a question of mine, that the teaching of Hebrew language and literature is not prohibited. He offered as proof of this the fact that the Habima Theatre, which gives performances in Hebrew at Moscow, is not only permitted by the Soviet Government, but even supported by it. He also pointed out that Hebrew books are now being published in Soviet Russia. "But," said he, "so far as

the teaching of Hebrew becomes a means of teaching religion, that is prohibited. We do not allow religious schools to any sects or groups. If parents want to teach their children religion, they are allowed to do so, but schools for the teaching of religion are prohibited. This is a matter of Government policy. There are many Yiddish schools. There is absolute freedom to establish Yiddish schools and to teach anything there except religion. In such schools one hundred and twenty-five thousand Jewish children are today being educated."

He told me that he had planned going to the colonies with us, but could not get away. Asked me to come and see him again after I had visited the colonies, and said this to me: "Please make a note of any complaints or criticisms that you find, and tell me about them." He then invited me to meet Kalenin, President of Soviet Russia. Kalenin, who occupies an adjoining room, had, however, gone out.

THEN to the adjoining office of the Secretary of the Komzet, Merejzin, a well-known Jewish Communist. He stated that, outside of Soviet Russia, a feeling prevails that the economic condition of the Jews in Russia is getting better, and that therefore no outside help may be needed. There has been improvement in Russia, said he, but there still is extreme poverty among the Jewish masses. For instance, in White Rus-

sia, where about five hundred thousand Jews live, thirty-one per cent. of them literally have no work and no income. What it means to be a trader can be gathered from the proved fact, he declared most positively, that on an average they are not earning more than twenty roubles a month. The Jewish artisans are in terrible distress, he declared. About two-thirds of them are in the needle trades, which are almost ruined by the large Government factories. Many of the new agriculturists come from the artisans' groups.

He showed us multi-colored maps and told us that the Government has assigned for Jewish settlement in the Krivoi-Rog district forty-four thousand dessiatines (about one hundred and twenty thousand acres); forty-two thousand dessiatines in the Kherson district; eleven thousand in the Zaparozhe district. It is a pity, said he, that for lack of funds the good lands cannot now all be settled; for if these lands are not settled soon they will be occupied by others.

Merejzin, like Smidovitch, declared that the Government is anxious to settle the Jews in compact groups, so that they may in time come to have the same autonomy as other nationalities have. They could have their own schools, judges and courts, their own local government, administration, etc., just as is the case with the Germans, Tartars, Poles, Turkomen, etc.

As we concluded our talk Merejzin took from a

drawer of his desk a red-brown book and handed it over to me. "This is," he said, "the diary of Dr. Friedlaender,* who was killed by bandits in the summer of 1920 while in the Ukraine on American relief work. It was found recently and brought to me. I am very pleased to hand you this book, and hope that if Dr. Friedlaender's family consents it will be made public, for it should be of interest to American Jews to read the diary of this noble man who gave his life for his fellow beings."

WE VISIT one of the two Moscow Jewish coöperatives. Leading Moscow Jews conduct it. Dr. Fuchs, a dignified lawyer about seventy years old, who presided at last evening's meeting, is chairman of this coöperative. He is also head of the Moscow *Kehilla.* (Jewish Community Organization.)

They started to give me generalizations. That wasn't what I wanted. So they gave me one of their men who speaks German, and I peered into every corner of the establishment. I stopped in a little room where I saw a bent, bearded Jew, about fifty years old, handing cotton stockings over a counter. "What's it all about?" I asked. So I got the story, step by step.

This man is named Kogan. Formerly a wealthy dry goods merchant. During counter-revolutionary fight-

* Noted Jewish scholar representative of *JDC.*

ing, bandits took everything from him. He gets three poods (a pood equals 36 American pounds) a month of white cotton thread through the coöperative at about forty percent less than he could buy it in the Moscow market. This because the coöperative gets the merchandise directly from the Government. This cotton he has dyed brown, gray, blue. He has a little hand machine with which he makes stockings, takes them to the coöperative, which sells them for him, charging five percent commission. He gets three hundred roubles worth of cotton per month. The administrative expense of the coöperative for the handling of the merchandise is provided through the commissions it receives. It sells the goods chiefly to Government stores.

The coöperative is helped largely by loans from the Government banks. It has had and still receives substantial loans from the *JDC.* Kogan earns one hundred and twenty roubles a month. He, his wife and child live in one room. His machine belongs to him. He got it on credit from the coöperative, and has paid for it by degrees. There are five hundred members of this coöperative. This is a sizeable business. It has a turnover of two hundred thousand roubles a month, i. e., one million two hundred thousand dollars a year. The coöperative is owned by its members. Hence its profits augment the capital which belongs to them. As the capital is augmented, new

members are admitted. Two hundred applicants await admission, but cannot join until there is more capital. People are not admitted helter skelter. They must prove that they are capable.

I walked into their warehouse, a room of about twenty by fifteen feet. Saw finished goods and raw material. Large sheets of white celluloid; celluloid combs, leather and leather goods; low shoes, something like moccasins; straps, belts, neckwear of artificial silk.

About twelve percent of the members are widows —the rest are fathers of families with an average of three children.

Local Jews deposit money in this coöperative at interest, which helps increase the available funds for the business. Quite a number of the members whom I saw were young men; enterprising, attractive young fellows. One of them had a particularly winning smile. I asked him his age. He said "twenty-three." I asked him how much money he was making. He said "One hundred and twenty roubles a month." I asked him whether he was married. He said, "Yes, two years ago." "Have you a child?" I inquired. "No," said he, smiling broadly. "No; but the only reason is an economic one."

Mr. Fuchs and other leaders hoped the *Agro-Joint* would carry a ten thousand dollar deposit with this coöperative. If we do this, said he, they could admit

many more members and could pay us six percent interest, and our money would be safe. I hope we make such a loan. We have taken far greater financial risks in Poland, Lithuania, Roumania, with our eyes open.

We visited homes of members of the coöperative. A typical instance: We walked a hundred feet through mud, filth, pieces of broken wood and stone, and stepped into a wood shed. Inside were two tiny rooms, in which live a family of six with two girls, one about seventeen, and one about twenty-three, who sat at little hand looms making stockings. The younger one was particularly attractive, bobbed hair, neat, clean, a pleasant smile, no talk of troubles or misery of life, full of youth and energy. Despite the squalor of the surroundings, it was an encouraging picture.

I must mention also a visit to a father and son; the father, a bearded Jew of about fifty-five, the son, about twenty-two, clean-shaven, attractive looking, operating a very complicated machine, while his father operated a little simple one. The father very proudly showed us how he had invented an improvement on the machine so that he could weave neckties with a complicated design. Rosen said to him: "You are cleverer than your son." He laughed and said: "Oh, no; my son is much smarter than I am."

THEN to a dormitory for some of the remainder of

the stranded Jews who were driven from place to place by war, revolution, bandits, and who finally landed at Moscow. Here, in a room forty by twenty-five, were twenty-six families, at least fifty children of varying ages, from a few months old to five years of age; pregnant women, sick old men, weeping babies; filth, misery; a hideous epidemic of influenza; smells, dirt; a hopeless picture; a glimpse of the aftermath of war.

"Let's get out," I said to Dr. Kahn.* "I can't stand it." Dr. Kahn remarked that this was nothing compared to the refugee camps in 1921–1922; took me into a corner where he had discovered a crib, and there in the crib lay a baby as beautiful as any of those whom the Italian Primitives painted as a Christ child. But when I think of the place I find it hard to remember the beautiful infant.

ON THE way back to the hotel we pass a great, forbidding-looking brick building. "That is the Boutirka," said Dr. Rosen. "It has for years and years been the prison to which political prisoners were taken on their way to Siberia."

"It doesn't look like a nice place," said I to Rosen. "It isn't," said he, "and I know. When I was fifteen years old I was a prisoner there for two months."

* Dr. Bernhard Kahn, outstanding leader in Jewish social service in Europe; Director of *JDC* activities in Europe.

"What for?" I asked.

"One day a schoolmate loaned me a book. I started reading it in school, holding it over my arithmetic book. The teacher caught me and took the book away. It had a sentence in it saying that the Czar Alexander was a drunkard. For having this book in my possession I was sent to jail for two months."

There's food for thought in that story. It gives us something of an insight into the Russia of the Czars.

AN HOUR at the Kremlin. Passed the building where Trotzky lives. Trotzky. The Kremlin. This was a real revolution—Trotzky living within the grounds of one of the Czar's palaces. . . . Guns and other trophies of the Napoleonic campaign.

BOUGHT a cap at a department store; the kind you can buy for not more than fifty cents in a cheap Third Avenue store in New York. It cost me three dollars and fifty cents. That tells the story of the shortage of woolen goods in Russia. Everywhere they tell me of the need of woolen and cotton goods, and of credits to help buy goods. The rates of interest are frightful. At the coöperative which I visited, interest on Government bank loans is at twelve percent per annum; this is one-third of the normal rate, which is from thirty-six to forty-five percent per annum.

CHAPTER III

MAY 7TH

LEFT Moscow at four o'clock yesterday. We are riding through the long, wide, rolling, grassy fields of the Ukraine. A gray day, which accentuates the two predominant colors—emerald of fields where the young spears of wheat have just broken through the ground, and the purple-brown black of the rich stretches of plowed fields. Emerald and purple-brown. This, Dr. Rosen tells me, is the black soil of the Ukraine. It is like the Minnesota and Saskatchewan regions I believe.

We roll on for hours. Here and there, in a bit of lowland, a few poplars just budding into leaf. Now and again little white villages with thatched roofs. These are the typical villages of the Ukraine. "I suppose," said I to Grower, "that seventy or eighty percent of the people in these villages cannot read or write." "That," said he, "was the case before the revolution; but one of the chief aims of the present Government is to teach its youth to read and write. I am convinced that today over fifty percent of the boys and girls in these villages can read and write."

We arrive at Kharkov, stay there an hour. Motor

ride. Hired the only motor at station. Flower shops, cinerarias, hydrangeas; gay windows, purple, crimson and white. That's what struck me chiefly. Flowers for sale in a city decimated four years ago by famine. Life resurges.

As we went through the fine, large, railway station where many people were eating at tables covered with white linen, Rosen said: "You should have seen this place when I was here four years ago. Filth, vermin; the railway station a centre for refugees from all quarters; dead men, women and children lying on the floor; stench; loathsome and horrible sights. I tell you those were things a man can never forget."

We drove through the city. New buildings erected since the revolution. Lenin everywhere. Lenin in stone and bronze, on posters, photographs, walls, in shop windows. Active, busy crowds on the streets poorly clad. Here, even more than in Moscow, men's dress varies. Sheepskin boots, feet wrapped in burlap; blouses; Tolstovkas; queer caps; funny overcoats with big Astrakan collars; nothing like European dress.

Four years ago, Rosen tells me, great posters were on the walls, bearing the signature of Rakowsky, then President of the Ukraine, which said that persons caught attacking anyone would be shot at sight in the street. Four years ago, bandits were everywhere,

streets were unsafe. Today the flower store with purple cinerarias. Radios, too, propagandizing.

Speaking about propaganda: There is in Moscow an eastern university attended by Japanese, Chinese, Mongolians, Hindus, Buriats. The students sent by various organizations in their countries come to Moscow, where they absorb Communistic theories and the Communistic conception of life. There is another university like this for the western nations, and various academies of social science. There are schools of social research which instill the political and economic ideology of Soviet Russia.

I SHOULD have mentioned that yesterday Rosen, Kahn and I visited Larin. Larin is a man of about forty years of age. He is a Jew, the head of the *Ozet*, a non-political, social, Russian Jewish organization supporting the Jewish movement to the soil. Chiefly, its activity is in the centralizing of public opinion in favor of land settlement. A year ago the *Ozet* had twenty thousand members. Today it has fifty thousand. That gives you an indication of the Russian Jewish enthusiasm for the march to the steppe.

Larin, who, until two years ago, took no interest in Jewish affairs, spoke enthusiastically of the agricultural work as the one outstanding opportunity for the Jews in Russia. He, too, brought up the subject of a Jewish State, and repeated what Smidovitch had

said about self-determination, and stated that if, in the course of the next five years or so the spontaneous movement of the Jews to the soil continues and grows sufficiently, he believed that there would be an autonomous Jewish district.

I have inquired from Grower, and from others, what this business of autonomy means. It does not mean what English and American statesmen and lawyers conceive to be sovereignty. Sovereignty, as we think of it, consists in the power to tax, the power to raise an independent army, to legislate independently, to regulate foreign relations. While the autonomous Russian districts or republics have jurisdiction over various local matters—schools, roads, building, etc. —they have no power to raise an army, deal with foreign relations, nor to tax, not even for local purposes, except with the consent of the Central Government.

New York State has independent power to tax and has her state militia. New York State is a genuine independent sovereignty. The Federal Government in the United States, as one of limited powers, has only those aspects of sovereignty expressly granted by the Constitution. The Russian autonomous districts or states, on the other hand, have only those limited powers which the Central Government grants.

While there are in Russia six main republics, namely: R. S. F. S. R. (Russian Republic); U. S. S. R. (Ukrainian Republic); B. S. S. R. (White Rus-

sian Republic); Transcaucasian Republic; Usbekistan (in Asia) and Turkmonistan (also in Asia)—which have certain limited powers of sovereignty—the remaining thirty-two so-called autonomous republics and districts are, not only in practice but also in theory, mainly local districts with purely local functions. For instance, the Crimean autonomous republic (Grower gives me the published facts) has a population of 592,926. The Karelsky autonomous republic has a population of 242,681. The Adigueysky autonomous district has 111,701 population. The Nakhichevan autonomous republic has only 90,310. Occupied as these autonomous republics and autonomous districts are by special racial and national groups, it is the purpose of the Central Government to permit to these autonomous republics and autonomous districts local jurisdiction and control of the administration of those matters which relate to internal national life. Limited as are the powers of these states or districts, the rights granted to the diverse racial groups to speak and teach their own languages, establish their own schools, maintain their own culture and to conduct local self-government are deeply cherished and are, as I gather it, a fundamental element in the present Russian scheme of government.

I MUST ADD that I also discussed anti-Semitism with Merejzin. Merejzin was formerly a school teacher.

His room is like a schoolroom and his words are precise and carefully weighed. He said that there is little anti-Semitism among the workmen; among the peasants, who for generations were taught anti-Semitism by the former Government the situation is somewhat different. "Such a state of mind," said he, "cannot be stamped out within a few brief years; but the Government does all it can not only to prevent anti-Semitism, but to stifle all persecution of any religious or racial groups."

"The fact," he remarked, "that there is no state religion, that there are no grades of religion, is bound in time to allay anti-Semitism." Is it? It's a nice question for the future. A land without the curse of anti-Semitism? I wonder.

MAY 8th

BANG! BANG! I rub my eyes. It's quarter past three of the morning. The porter on the *wagon-lit* is knocking at our door. I jump into my clothes. We watch the slow dawn rising over the steppes. We ride along for three-quarters of an hour. Black soil. One church and one building. The only houses in forty-five minutes. This, says Rosen, is a part of the million acres Smidovitch mentioned. There's enough land here for twenty-five thousand families. It is now state land.

ON THE STEPPES

WE ARRIVE at Simferopol, capital of the Crimea. Hotel Leningrad. To bed. Three hours' sleep. Breakfast. Then to the Jewish hospital, reopened with *JDC* funds in 1923. Simferopol has one hundred thousand inhabitants, of whom about twenty-five thousand are Jews. A special local Jewish medical committee has an income of about one thousand roubles a month from local sources. Three years ago the people collected nothing for their own needs. They're progressing, that's plain. We are giving them but two hundred roubles a month.

To the *Agro-Joint* local office. I begin to approach the real workshops for the land settlement work. Two large rooms. Walls covered with maps, diagrams, charts, plans; specimens of soils.

Dr. Rosen spreads a map of the Crimea before us and gives us a little talk. This is its substance:—

The first Crimean settlements began in 1922–1923. Nineteen groups—seven hundred families took over abandoned Government-owned estates with buildings, wells and implements. They occupied these tracts on short term leases granted by the Government. These tracts contained about sixty thousand acres of land. This was the beginning of the Jewish movement to the soil.

Later, at our request, the Central Moscow Government granted these lands on a "toiler's usage" basis. "Toiler's usage" means the kind of title all

Russian peasants in Russia now have, i. e., the use and usufruct of the land, so long as the family continues to work it; so long as a single member of the family—even an adopted one—remains alive, tills the soil and produces crops.

Jankoi, a town of about ten thousand inhabitants, is substantially in the centre of these settlements, and indeed of all our Crimean work.

The later settlements have nearly all been on land which has no buildings thereon. This has made the later work more expensive, for the chief item of cost is in the erection of houses and stables. But the later settlements have one advantage over the earlier ones. The later ones are not scattered but on large tracts. Thus there is a twenty-five thousand acre tract in the fertile triangle between the two main railroads crossing Crimea. This tract lies about nine miles south of Jankoi (it is known as Tract Two).

Group or Tract No. 3 consists of land set aside for 1926 settlement. These lands lie due west of Jankoi about twenty miles, and form a fairly compact area—a parcel of about sixty thousand acres. Between the lands of Groups 2 and 3 lies a large fertile piece of state land set aside for Jewish settlers. This will consolidate these two groups.

On this 1926 land, Group 3, three hundred and fifty families in all will have been settled this year.

There is another section close to the Black Sea in

the Eupatoria district of the Crimea containing about thirty thousand acres. From one hundred and fifty to two hundred families are being settled thereon this year (1926).

The 1925 tracts all have their water supply. In the 1926 land the water supply is now being provided either by drilling artesian wells or digging wells. The nineteen original settlements all have adequate water supply.

There are then in Crimea three distinct groups:

1. Nineteen settlements on former estates with about seven hundred families on sixty thousand acres;

2. Six villages on the 1925 tract with three hundred and eight families on twenty-five thousand acres;

3. 1926 tracts now being settled. When this settlement work is completed there will be in all about fifteen hundred families in this group. They will occupy about one hundred thousand acres.

The main crop on all three groups is winter wheat and winter barley. They all grow corn, Sudan grass, which has proved very successful in Crimea, sunflowers, a rather important crop, some fruit; grapes are being started extensively. All keep cattle. This is diversified farming, not grain farming pure and simple.

Here in Simferopol there is organized standardized

production of doors, windows, etc., also a nursery for grape cuttings which are being started here in Simferopol for later transplanting.

We drive to the lumber yard. Levin, a trained agriculturist, a genial, weatherbeaten farmer, chief of the Crimean district, tells me that here in these gay crowded streets through which we are passing four years ago people died of starvation, fell dead in the streets before his eyes; that in sections around here as much as fifty percent of the total population died during the famine before the American Relief Administration commenced rescue work. Now the place is humming with activity. We pass the market. Booths. Market women. Hucksters. Tartars. Music. Singing. . . .

The lumber yard. First the power plant. Two motors, kerosene driven.

"Our object," says Levin, "is to standardize doors and windows, etc., so as to reduce building costs to the lowest possible amount."

We enter the saw mill. The lumber comes from a forest in the Briansk province, a thousand miles away furnished by the Government. There the lumber is cut by our own organization, shipped here by carload at greatly reduced rates given us by the Government.

They are making doors and windows. There is a

big placard in Russian letters on the wall. I asked what it means. "Time is money," was the translation. Sounds like the U. S. A.

They have modern machinery. Costs have been reduced by fifty percent. We see the thing right through to the strong, heavy doors. No cheap-jack work. These are doors that will stand for years. The inside doors lighter, but also substantial.

I see the completed window frames. The windows have an upper sash for ventilation by opening a small pane. Fresh air in winter, too. A hobby of Dr. Rosen, to teach the Russians the value of fresh air.

This is one of nine similar shops in the Crimea and Ukraine. Some of them are much larger than this. This shop produces in a month doors, windows and trim for three hundred and fifty houses.

The roar of saws, motors. The clean smell of fresh wood shavings. Planing, hammering, sawing. This factory does not get the rough logs, but boards twelve inches wide and twenty-four feet long. . . .

When we got to Simferopol this morning a fourteen-year-old Jewish lad, Boris Jermanski, greeted Dr. Rosen as a son does his father. Later I got the story from Levin. The boy was eleven years old, with a sister and widowed mother. A year ago he scraped together enough money to come to Simferopol. He went to Dr. Rosen. "What am I going to do? Here I am, the head of the family. I must have a job."

He got it. Now he supports his mother and sister, and is being trained to be a good carpenter.

TO THE plant nursery where sixty thousand grape cuttings have been set out for transplanting next year in the colonies. The cost, about six to seven roubles a thousand. These cuttings were put into the ground this spring to make good roots for the colonists who are to plant them in the vineyards next year. Many of these cuttings are in leaf.

Scientific discussion in Russian between Rosen, Lubarsky * and Levin. Sorry I cannot understand.

This one group of cuttings will supply vineyards for thirty-six acres. This means sixty thousand litres of wine. In three years the plants on this field with its sixty thousand cuttings, which now occupy about an acre, should produce fifteen thousand gallons of wine, which should mean forty-five thousand roubles, or twenty-two thousand five hundred dollars. So Lubarsky calculates. Dreams? They'll come true I believe.

Quite likely these grapes will be shipped to the Black Sea and sold there at high prices, he adds. Sold to the rulers of Russia—the peasants and the workmen. The Black Sea; we're going to see it. . . .

This grape industry is a side issue; but by no means negligible. Up to now only twenty-one acres of the

* S. Lubarsky, chief agronomist of the Agro-Joint.

lands of the colonies have been planted with grapes. The industry is only beginning.

Now to the loan kassa which the *JDC* re-established in 1923 with a loan of three thousand dollars. Later the *ICA* helped and now is a creditor for eleven hundred dollars. This kassa now owes us two thousand seven hundred and fifty roubles (about $1,350). The large business this kassa is doing results chiefly from Government support. The balance sheet, which I examined, shows that on May first this kassa owed the Government one hundred and forty thousand roubles. I gather statistics. Here they are:

The members, on the first of April, 1926, numbered one thousand seven hundred and five, of whom fifteen hundred were borrowers in April.

The turnover is three hundred and twenty thousand roubles a month.

Individual members can get a maximum credit of six hundred roubles; groups of coöperatives may borrow up to a thousand roubles. The average loan is one hundred and fifty roubles per month.

Monthly interest, two percent. Most of the kassas in Russia are still obliged to charge three and one-half percent interest to meet their administrative expenses, but this one has been able to reduce the rate to two percent per month.

The total loans in the month of April were two

hundred and twelve thousand roubles. The share capital of the members amounted to thirty-eight thousand roubles in April.

A busy place. Interesting faces. The president of the kassa, blond, blue-eyed. I am struck by the physiognomy of the Jews here in the Crimea. They have not at all what we regard in New York as the typical Jewish face.

Come five borrowers. The first drives a droshka. He gets a loan to repair his harness. Sixty-four roubles.

The next a sandal-maker. He gets a loan of one hundred and fifty roubles to buy raw material.

The next, a shoemaker. He gets four hundred roubles to buy leather.

Another applicant for a loan. He is a mechanic, and takes a loan of a hundred roubles to buy steel and iron. A superb-looking young fellow.

Now comes an old man, a tinsmith. One of the prophets. His face dark olive. A long white beard. Great sorrowful eyes. All the sufferings of a thousand years are in his face and rest on his bowed shoulders. He gets a loan of a hundred roubles.

Some of the borrowers are artisans' coöperatives—a wood-working establishment with twenty members and some modern machinery; a small shoe factory with ten members. . . .

I meet Gelman, the man who started the kassa. He

was a responsible bank officer before the revolution. He devotes all his time to this kassa; it is due to his ability that this kassa has made so great a success.

Awaiting the start for the colony at Zemledeletz—landworkers. Two auto loads—ten of us. Watch the people passing on the street. Costumes of the comic opera. Men with funny little, tight-fitting, brightly-colored caps, embroidered blouses, high boots. Little caps with red, gold, blue, green, purple—no two men dressed alike.

While we wait Dr. Kahn talks about the Crimea. I quote him:

> Look at the map of Russia and you will see the part of Russia called Tauri. Iphigenia in Taurus, Jason and the Golden Fleece, fugitive Persians after Marathon; the Scythes. It is an ancient land, with Greek, Persian, Armenian, Bulgarian and all sorts of strains, some running back to long before Jesus. Near Sebastopol in the so-called Kheronese, only some thirty miles away from here, are ruins where excavations were made; gold and silver in early Greek design were found; also beautiful, multicolored glass. Even the Jewish inhabitants in this country today are of varied strains. We have here Ashkenazi Jews; also the Karaim, a Jewish sect founded in Persia by the Rabbi Anan about

750 A. D. This was about the time when the Khazar rulers and population in the Crimea were converted to Judaism. Rabbi Anan and his followers believed only in the Holy Writ of the Bible (hence the name "Karaim"—"Kara," like Koran, meaning "the writ"), and ignored all commentaries or explanations of the Talmud,* taking literally the laws in the Bible that are sometimes explained symbolically. For instance, the Jewish law that no Jew can eat milk and meat reads in the Bible: "You shall not boil the lamb in the milk of its mother." The Karaim observes the law literally. Before the war these Karaims were well-to-do. They were large business men, trading especially in tobacco, fruits and wine. As members of the bourgeoisie, they suffered terribly through the revolution. They had always been treated by the Russian Government not as Jews but as a separate group, and had had all the political rights and freedom of non-Jews. They did not mix with any other Jewish groups. Their number in the Crimea was about ten to fifteen thousand. Another group of Jews in this section are the Krimchaki. They have lived with and among the Tartars on friendly terms for over six centuries. They speak the Tartar language. They numbered about fifteen thousand. They, like the Tartars, suffered

* The body of Jewish civil and canonical law, not in the Pentateuch.

terribly through famine, and about one-half of them died out.

Thus Dr. Kahn.

In this country, too, there has been plenty of fighting. Balaklava—The Charge of the Light Brigade—"Into the valley of death . . ."

The procession starts. . . .

HERE WE are. Our first colony. So at last I see for myself.

The Zemledeletz colony is composed of two groups. One calls itself the Zemledeletz Colony; the other calls itself the Rosenwald Group, as a tribute to that modest, good, generous, big man, Julius Rosenwald.

We enter the first house we see. This is my introduction to the home of the Russian Jewish colonist. The home of Chatzkel Tohne is spotless. Our host's welcome is open armed. Three rooms. Father, mother, two children—one a daughter of eighteen, the other a widow, with her child—live here. Two sons live in their own homes nearby.

The room in which we sit is whitewashed. In a corner is a wooden case with a Hebrew inscription reading "*Agro-Joint* Drug Store." Most of the houses,

I learn, have an *Agro-Joint* Drug Store with iodine, castor oil, aspirin and other first aid medicines.

Chatzkel Tohne came with his family from the Kherson district, and was the organizer of this colony. He is a leader. We talk German. He beams upon us. He pours out his enthusiasm from a full heart. I ask him an unnecessary question: "Are you happy here?" He is surprised at my inquiry. His keen old eyes shine. "Why not?" he answers. "Of course, I am happy."

"But have you no fear of pogroms?"

"At first we were afraid. It was a new country. But now we are old settlers. We are at home. We have been here nearly three years. We get along well with the Tartars. Why should we be afraid?"

Chatzkel took us to the new cellar he is building in which to keep meats, vegetables, potatoes. I climbed down. It was six feet deep and the rich black soil was still to be seen down at that depth. When I say "rich black soil," I don't pose as an agronomist, but I've run a garden for over fifteen years. Anyway, it doesn't take an expert to tell the difference between a thin, sterile, sandy soil and a black loam.

Others join us. They point out a stone quarry three hundred yards away. That's a great asset. They're mighty proud of it. It means more to them than a lot of securities in a vault mean to you and me. It

means solid homes, substantial durable stone houses.

Chatzkel was a peasant all his life. He comes from the old colony in Kherson, Novy Berislav. His son, dressed neatly, American fashion, appears. His handclasp is the firm, hard grip of the man of the soil. He crunched my fingers.

In the blue distance the mountains that rim the Black Sea lift their heads. The colony has houses on two sides of the street. The street is almost as wide as the Champs Elysées. On each side are seven houses. Six more are being built. Last year there were none. These settlers then lived in the old estate buildings. Fruit trees have been planted along each side of the road, as well as young evergreens, cherry and apple trees, lilacs, etc. They are interested in the aesthetics of life. That's a mighty good sign.

"We are building a school now," Tohne Junior tells me. "Up to now we have had no time to do so. But the children—they must learn."

Along comes a young colonist, fifteen years old, from Kiev, brown and strong.

Signs of all kinds of active work. Tree planting, plowing, tractors. No work, however, going on today. Why not? Because it is the Sabbath, is the answer. But at the loan kassa in the city, which we left an hour ago, the Jews were busy at work. There's something to think about. Will the ancient religion of our

forefathers gather renewed strength in the fields?

The only help these settlers still need is for building purposes. The typical house here is about thirty-one feet long.

We go into another house. Two families live here. There is a piano. A blond baby is lying in a bed, asleep. This house belongs to one family, but they are accommodating another until its house is completed. Rosen explains that his house building program requires two families to live in one house during the early years of farm life. "Housing is our biggest item of cost," he explains, "so we must crowd the settlers at first. At that they live much better, two families to the house, than they did in the cities and towns."

I asked several other settlers about progroms.

"Crimea is a good place," they said, "and we are not at all afraid. We get along with the Tartars."

There are thirty-four families in the Zemledeletz colony. Of these, fifteen families belong to the Rosenwald Group. The colony has over twenty-four hundred acres of land. Everybody knows which portion of these acres he owns. It's not a collective or communistic plan. They started it so. It didn't work. This colony is only three-quarters of a mile from the railroad—the main line—Moscow-Simferopol.

When Dr. Kahn was here a year ago they were all

huddled in the ruins of the old estate buildings. Since then these new houses, now eighty percent completed, have been built. Progress. . . .

Just as we are about to leave we are caught in a spring shower. It comes ripping over the steppes, mauve and violet. The farmers are overjoyed. We brought them luck. And now we must remain with them a little longer. They insist on our coming into one of the houses. They serve tea and jam. The rain beats down. Other colonists visit. A sociable group. A chat. Nice people. Worth helping. They are helping themselves. They tell me why they have come to the soil. The same story every time. . . . can't support life in the town. . . . can't make a living. . . . on the soil they have their chance.

A rainbow. The shower is over. Handshakes. We leave them. The motor shoots us across the steppes. Good-bye to Chatzkel. Will I see him again?

I WISH I could describe the steppes. They are not flat, like a table, but rolling lands. Think of a green ocean on a windy day, and you have some conception of the vastness, the billowiness and the extent of the rolling, endless steppes. Here and there a building juts into the horizon, for all the world like an absurd tiny boat on a great majestic and silent sea.

We pass by a tractor. Not one of ours, but one bought by a group of these colonists out of their own

savings. Their own plowing finished, they are earning money by plowing the land for neighbors.

FROM Zemledeletz to the next colony, Avoda (Hebrew for "Labor"), is thirty miles. On our way to Avoda we pass countless acres in which the winter wheat is a foot high; also, we pass by a herd of fifty head of cattle, mostly German reds.

There are forty families in Avoda (it is a 1924 settlement) and they have three thousand acres. They formerly lived in an old barracks. Now they, too, are putting up their own houses.

Here are quantities of building blocks, tiles, a new well just finished, a pump not yet installed, vineyards. This business of wells has been well handled. Each colony gets one well. We sink these wells with an American Keystone drill. And we save a lot of time and money. Digging a well by hand is the labor of months. By machine the months become mere weeks, sometimes only days.

There are about two or three families to a house here; for the houses are larger than those in the Rosenwald group.

One of the colonists joins us. "Why are you building such a big house?" I ask. "I have saved the money; why not? It gives room for an extra family. And we have plenty of stone for building," was the answer.

The next house, too, is a big one, a two-family house. It is thirty feet wide by fifty-four feet long, built of stone, an interesting stone, composed of sea-shells, corals, molluscs. Part of this house is to be a stable. The roofing material is of cement made into tiles by the colonists in the short winter days when work in the fields has ceased.

The solidity of building and the extensive planning are impressive. These men are not building for a brief tomorrow. But are they building too well? What will the Crimean Government have to say? Will it object on the ground that the houses are too good, too large? Lubarsky gives me the answer. The Crimean Government, he tells me, is adopting this type of structure as a model for the Tartar settlers. A good idea. It will raise the Tartar peasants' standard of living.

Talk with the owner of another house now in process of construction. It looks as if it would take three months to finish it; the owner says the job will be done in two weeks.

I asked a twelve-year-old boy—one of a half a dozen healthy, brown, splendid young specimens—where he came from. He said from Kiev. "Want to go back?" I asked. A grin from ear to ear. My question is not taken seriously.

The man who is building the fine five-room house comes from Pavlograd near Ekaterinoslav. I asked

him whether he would like to go back. He tells me he has a good house at Pavlograd but he would not go back . . . not for anything. "Here I have a chance to make a living," says he. "There——" and the Jewish shrug of his expressive shoulders speaks volumes.

They are building twenty houses here this season in Avoda. A fair-sized building, one of the old estate structures, is being moved and prepared for use as a school house and community building. Schools. The People of the Book.

I gather statistics. The families here have an average of forty acres seeded down to winter wheat and barley, from which each family ought to make at least fourteen hundred roubles this season, Lubarsky tells me. That is without taking into account what the spring planting will produce. The crops are fine; they have fourteen acres of grapes. An average of from two to three horses and two to three cows per family. Two and a half years ago the whole colony had only ten horses; now they have about a hundred. This is the third year they have been on the land.

As WE drove from Avoda to Jankoi, I asked Dr. Rosen how the danger of famine is being guarded against. He explains that the farmers are being taught to plant crops in five-year rotation, so that no one crop is absolutely depended on. One-fifth of

the crop, furthermore, is corn, which is drought-resisting to a considerable degree, and African corn, milo maize and Kaffir corn, extremely drought-resisting, have been introduced. . . . A lot of planning in this work. Nothing haphazard.

A puncture. The third today. It grows late. Dusk over the steppes. We can't get back to Simferopol. Will we have to spend the night on the fields? Overcoats. Sweaters. The margin between steppe and sky fades to purple dark. My first day on the steppes is to be memorable.

But the puncture is repaired. Off again.

WE ARRIVED at Jankoi at nine P. M. There we spent the night.

The *Agro-Joint* Jankoi office here is another businesslike place. Samples of soils, seeds, maize, wheat, technical pamphlets, maps, diagrams of lands, detailed diagrams of tractors. Among the technical publications is a pamphlet on corn by Levin, our chief agronomist in the Crimea.

Lubarsky—have I mentioned that he is the chief agronomist of the *Agro-Joint,* a distinguished Russian expert?—points out that one of the great advantages of colonization in the Crimea is the diversity of racial groups living here. Esthonians, Greeks, Tartars, Germans, Czechs, etc., etc. Over a dozen nationalities. This is better than a region like the Ukraine where

the Jews are a minority and a unified group a powerful majority. One is used to small nationalities in the Crimea. . . .

I recall that Henry Sliosberg declared that Crimea is nothing but a sandy waste. It's pretty evident he never visited the Crimea—not the part I've seen. . . .

What a lot of incorrect statements have gone out about this Russian work. We have motored about a hundred miles today, and as far as the eye could reach, in all directions, were vast fertile fields either planted with wheat, corn, barley, rye, or lying fallow waiting plow and tractor.

SUNDAY, MAY 9TH

To THE barracks in Jankoi, to which the new settlers come. A large room with about twenty wooden cots; everything thoroughly clean. Saw some of the new settlers just arrived, not yet on the land. Eager, but scared. Scared; no wonder. It's a big adventure from village or crowded ghetto to the vast steppe.

Now to the tractor base of the Crimea. Covers a couple of acres. Wood, steel and iron reapers. Belenky, an American (Russian born), is here at the head of the tractor squad. He has just finished teaching a new squad of boys. He shows me new reapers. A week ago a hundred and fifty of them arrived. They are made in the Ukraine. Hardly any of them left

here at the base. Sold on long-term credits to our settlers. He shows me a lot of seed cleaners, quite big structures of wood, through which the seed is taken to be separated from the chaff. These also are made in the Ukraine. Then I saw a lot of our John Deere tractors. There are a hundred and ten of these throughout the colonies.

Three tractors being repaired by muscular young Jewish mechanics. These are the old tractors which have worked for three and a half years. Eighty-six of these. They are still going strong. The new tractors are smaller but have more power. Our old tractors are called Waterloo Boy. They came from Waterloo, Iowa, from the same concern, Deere.

Steel tanks for kerosene. The tractors are started by gasolene, but kerosene driven. These tanks hold about two hundred poods, about eight thousand gallons of kerosene, and are taken into the fields.

Belenky shows me how the tractor boys live while out on the steppes; not in a house-boat, but a house-wagon, with two rooms, one six feet by six; the other six by ten. The tractors drag this house-wagon over the steppes and the boys sleep in it.

A stove; utensils; the paraphernalia of life; plates, cups, saucers. There are seven windows in this house. What an experience it would be to live with one of these squads for a month. . . . Drove a tractor. . . . Not difficult. Shakes you up.

Adjoining the tractor base is another one of these big, outdoor lumber yards, where frames are being made for windows and doors. The good smell of fresh-cut lumber. Here are hundreds on hundreds of doors and window frames.

A covered building, about sixty by thirty feet in size. That's not a small structure. Pace the distance and see. Here boys are taught how to repair tractors and parts. This is a good machine shop. One old tractor is being repaired; all taken apart; looks as if it were ready for the junk heap. But Belenky assures me there are another two seasons' good work in it. After that? Then the motor will be used for stationary work, for drills, vises, and the like. No; they're not wasting things.

An eight-horsepower Deutz engine furnishes power for the machine shop. Altogether, nine mechanics working regularly here. The rest, students.

A storage room. Here are spare parts, nuts, bolts, nails, bearings, cranks, shafts, fenders, pistons, pins, connecting rods, magnetos, oil cans, springs, plow parts, etc.

A group of a dozen youngsters, ranging from eighteen to twenty-one years old, gather about me. Most of them come from little villages and towns. They were students at the *JDC*-supported Odessa Trade School. We have arranged with this school to have their students trained in our tractor courses. Want to

go back to the city? I ask them. I should say they don't. They want to live on the steppes and they want to work the tractors.

One of them introduces himself. A dark, sad-eyed youth. He has lived in London and speaks good English. His name is Schnitman. He was formerly mail clerk in the *JDC* Moscow office. He saw no future in such a life. Now he is a tractor mechanic. I ask him how the Jews on the steppes feel about pogroms. He says "The Jews who are on the steppes are organized, much more than they were before. They are stronger physically than they were before, and then they have help from the Government and they are not afraid."

"How long have you been working out here on the tractors?" I asked.

"About ten months."

"Have you found that any of the Jews want to go back to the cities?"

"There were some who had to do mostly with trade, and at first they were not happy. But now I don't think they would want to go back, because they have had a harvest and feel quite well; at least most of the Jews who came to the field about a year or two ago feel happy. I can't say anything about the new ones. At first they are afraid. But they work hard and feel they are getting ahead. I can give you an example of how they work in the Kherson district. Boys of

from ten to thirteen years old are working harder than grown men, just to fix up the houses and to learn the tractor work. They are only unhappy because they have no schools, so that in the winter time they cannot get any education at all; but mostly they are happy in the fields and on the steppes. The young fellows like it more than the old people."

"Do the Russian Jews want to come to the soil?"

"Certainly they do. They cannot make a living trading. The taxes are very high and they are declassed; and the coöperatives are also against them; but on the soil they feel they can make a living."

"Does one ask them to go?"

"No; they want to go. Lots and lots of them. They're crazy to get to the land. What other chance have they? Most of the Jews come from the villages and small towns where they can do no trading at all. Many of them are bootmakers, carpenters, smiths and such like—people who have a trade and know how to use their hands; but trade is no good for them. Government-owned industry drives out the artisan. But in the colonies quite some of them can continue their trades; shoemakers, tinsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, even tailors are needed in the colonies."

I asked Schnitman how he happened to be there. So he told me the story of his family. He is an only son, twenty-three years old, has two sisters, five and

ten years of age. The family lived in England, and the father was well off; had over ten thousand pounds sterling. In 1916 came an evil day when well-meaning friends persuaded the Schnitmans to return to Russia. In pogroms, revolution, attacks of bandits, they lost every last cent. "Everything?" I asked. "Nothing left," said Schnitman in a matter-of-fact tone. "And the family?" His eyes filled. "One of my sisters was killed in a pogrom. I managed to save the rest of my family by showing them English papers, so they thought I was a British subject. . . . It was a terrible time. With my own eyes I saw over five hundred men, women and children hacked to pieces with knives and bayonets. For two years, 1918 and 1919, it was a reign of terror."

As I said good-bye to Schnitman, he stammered, hesitated, and said: "Could I ask a question?" "Of course," said I. "These boys here in the tractor squad are afraid that when they have completed their course they will be sent back to Odessa. They don't want to go back. Can you say something to them?"

Dr. Rosen answered. He explained that the *Agro-Joint* could use only as many tractor men as are needed by it, but that in teaching these boys to operate tractors we were assuring them of finding a living in view of Russia's large tractor purchases. . . .

"What purchases?" I ask.

"Soviet Russia has bought sixteen thousand trac-

tors from Henry Ford. Partly on credit." . . . I wish that Ford might see the Jewish boys running the Ford tractors. . . .

THE BIG yard. The other ones seem small now. Piles on piles of cut lumber; tiles, roofing material, parts of plows, steel for reapers, barbed wire for vineyards, combined seeder-plow machines.

Another lumber yard. . . . In the one we just left were the cut boards. Here are the logs which were cut in our forest tract. The bark is off. Here the logs are being sawed into halves, then sent to the shop to be made into boards, door frames, window frames. Tried to get away. Late. But the manager of the yard wouldn't let us go till we had seen a log sawed lengthwise in half. He was terrifically proud of his new machine.

WE ARRIVE at Kadima (Hebrew for "Forward"). This is a colony of thirty-three families with eighteen hundred acres, two and a half miles distant from Jankoi. The people in this settlement came here late in 1924. They still live under badly congested conditions—the old buildings left over from the estates—but have made progress and are beginning to build new houses. We went into one of the two-roomed buildings there. In one, seven people sleep; in an-

other, eight. There was a wedding here last night. Must have been quite a party. People looked sleepy. Sorry I missed it. . . . Life goes on. . . . Weddings, births. . . . Wheat growing in the sunshine. . . . Seven children, aged from two to five years old, pile into the auto for a little ride.

In this colony they started with ten horses and ten cows. Now they have a horse, a cow and a calf for every family, and they have already bought a tractor of their own. That's something to record. Four families of the original settlers went back. We saw mostly women and children, as the men were out working in the fields.

This colony has its own flour mill. A bag of flour containing about three bushels costs about four or five dollars. They grind the flour for their neighbors and get paid for it. The flour bags have a poster on them, saying: "Flour from Kadima." They show us the flour. "This," says Levin, "is the finest quality." Rosen tests it carefully with a knife. His eyes gleam. "First class," says he. He examines it again. "No doubt about it."

There are two ponds on this land. Also, there is a special telephone line from here to Jankoi. Nothing remote about this settlement.

Here are great assets. Irrigated fields. They are very proud of their fifteen-acre irrigated patch—potatoes, cabbages, carrots.

THE SETTLEMENTS we have visited so far are all individually run; that is, each settler owns his own tract. We are now going to a tract called Tel-Chai ("Hill of Life") owned in common by the *Chalutzim.** On our way to Tel-Chai we stop at a new Russian non-Jewish settlement and go into one of the houses. It contains three rooms, one of them without windows. There, seven or eight people sleep.

If this is the Russian peasant's mode of life, we can't conform to it. Our settlers' rooms must have windows; windows that open and let in fresh air. Light and air are essential. We must reckon with and knock out tubercular tendencies of decades of ghetto dwelling. Besides, won't it be better to raise the Christian peasants' standards than lower ours? Our houses must be small—no bigger than those of the neighbors. But they've got to be light, airy, clean.

The Russian peasant is cordial. He, too, is a new settler. It is a new colony. The *Agro-Joint* has helped them.

TEL-CHAI is one of the most famous *Chalutzim* settlements. One hundred and fifty young men and women; all unmarried. This is the oldest colony in the Crimea; five thousand acres of land. They started in 1923. They not only work the land, but are entirely self-sustaining, and have several shops—tailoring,

* Young Jews preparing to go to Palestine.

shoemaking, blacksmith, tannery, repair shop, etc. Everything is made with their own hands. Of these one hundred and fifty people, of whom not quite one-half are girls, about thirty-five work in the shops.

At the beginning they had four pairs of oxen and four cows. They now own:

Twenty-five oxen
Eighteen horses
Thirty cows
Sixteen calves
One hundred and eight sheep
Eighty-five lambs
Seventy-five hogs
One hundred and twenty-five young pigs
Ten breeding sows
Three boars

and, to learn to plow in Palestine, they also have several camels.

We walk in and out of the various buildings. The blacksmith shop, with the forge, blower and anvil. Then the machine shop, which they made with their own hands out of iron junk and scrap.

They take us into the cheese-making room and cut generous slices of cheese for us, which we eat with relish. Then down into the cellar, where they keep the cheeses refrigerated. The *Agro-Joint* has employed a special instructor, Prof. Truvald, a Danish specialist

who has been in Russia for many years and is a graduate of the agricultural college in Kharkov. He travels from one settlement to another, equips the cheese-making creameries and gives instruction. The young man in charge here has been trained by this expert.

A sewing shop; girls at work, needles flying. A young fellow in an adjoining room, resting after strenuous work, is lying on a couch reading a book on "Capitalism and Socialism."

Into the laundry. Even here complete Communism exists. Everybody's clothes are washed here, and anybody can use any article of clothing without consulting the previous wearer. Wouldn't suit me.

There is a little infirmary, with medical supplies of various kinds; nobody in it.

The dormitories, containing many books and pamphlets, as well as the dining room and club room, with their benches and long boards; all white-washed, spick and span. Windows open everywhere. Sunshine in the rooms; no musty smells.

They have a dramatic club of fifteen people and give plays in Hebrew. Recently they produced a play of Jacob Gordon, the American-Jewish playwright. Their language in daily life is Hebrew. No objection by the Government.

Near the colony of Tel-Chai is a Tartar church, a small mosque, its slender minaret pointing to the sky.

The *Chalutzim* tell me they get on pleasantly with the Tartars.

Hay stacks. Four of them. Great mounds. Thirty feet high. This is money in the bank. Fodder for the animals in winter. They're prosperous, these young Zionists. They're hardy, healthy and happy, these boys and girls. I wish Dr. Weizmann * could see them, and their fields and homes and herds.

MAYAN (Hebrew for "Source"): This is the Zionist colony to which the *Chalutzim* come from Tel-Chai when they marry. At Tel-Chai the life is a strictly celibate one. When two young people in Tel-Chai want to get married they leave Tel-Chai.

There are few people here with whom to talk. They are out in the fields working. The houses are of an old estate; quite some building work going on. Book shelves with a large assortment of books and pamphlets in Russian and Hebrew, and many signs of intellectual and religious, as well as farming life.

There are about fourteen couples here with a thousand acres. . . . Leah, a superbly beautiful girl, nine years old, with black curly hair, watches us out of lazy, golden-black eyes. She wears absurd, big, Russian peasant boots and a soiled linen smock. In her arms she carries her darling, a three-weeks-old lamb. A lamb as black as ink.

* Dr. Chaim Weizmann, World Zionist leader.

CHAKLAI ("WORKER ON THE SOIL"): From Mayan we drove over to Chaklai, established in 1923, one of the first groups of colonies. It is close to the town of Kohlai, a railroad station (Kohlai is a Tartar word; Chaklai, Hebrew, but the two sound alike). The *Agro-Joint* plows the fields for the Tartars who live in this town of Kohlai, and has dug a well for them. A Tartar delegation express their gratitude.

Dr. Rosen is proud of Chaklai. Last year all of their seed was of so high a quality that it was bought by the Government for pure seed breeding. At the end of last year they had thirty thousand roubles net profit.

When Dr. Kahn was here last year they all lived in wretched old barns, near which I am standing. Since then they have built the new houses which I see.

They started with eighteen families; there are now seventy-four families. They have forty-five hundred acres of land.

Six young families have left them and started a new group not far away. Thus the movement grows.

I am dictating these notes in the automobile, with a whole crowd of colonists standing around. Three of them, all grimy and black, have been carting coal. We meet the president of the settlers. He is a keen-looking man of forty-five, a bearded Jew, covered with coal soot. He complains: "We have no tractor of our own. The horses wear out. It is a hard life."

"Then why not return to the city?" I ask. He looks at me as if I were slightly mad. Want their own tractor. "Buy it," Dr. Rosen tells him. "You're making plenty of money here."

WE ENTER one of the new houses. Here is a bearded Jew with *t'phillim* and *talith.* * When we asked him why he made his prayers so late in the day he said: "On a farm we have to work early in the morning, and, though it is not quite correct to make my prayers so late, I have to wait until my work is done."

I don't remember whether Dante reserved a special circle in hell for filth. He might have if he had seen the living conditions which I saw ten minutes ago in the old barracks. But the house we have just now entered is a thoroughly clean place, with plastered and white-washed walls. It is Paradise compared with the inferno of filth in which these people lived a year ago. One could have doubted whether it was worth while to try to save people willing to live in such dirt and stench, but seeing what we now behold we learn otherwise.

I talked with one of the settlers at Chaklai. He has five children. He comes from Chernigov, was worth about eight to ten thousand roubles there. Lost everything he had. When I asked him if he wanted to go back he was astounded at my question and said: "Not

* Phylacteries and Prayer Shawl.

if you give me ten thousand roubles." "What?" I exclaimed. His eyes met mine and he said: "No, I wouldn't go back for thirty thousand roubles." "Why?" I asked. He says nothing, but eloquently stretches out his arms to his fields, his cattle.

There are twenty houses here, completed or in process. Six months ago not one was even begun. The total investment of the *JDC* in this settlement has been about fifteen thousand dollars.

Here's a colony for skeptics, for doubters, for the rich American Jew who won't give, because he doesn't believe the Jews can till the soil.

RATENDORF—the next colony we visit—is a settlement of fifty families with three thousand acres. This is part of the twenty-five thousand-acre tract settled in 1925. Neat houses, industry, progress.

"When I got back to Moscow after my trip through the settlements a year ago," said Dr. Kahn, "I told Larin I had seen more congested living conditions among these settlers than in all my refugee experience in Europe. When I spoke to the people, however, I found that they were full of hope. Today, look!"

"You can't make bricks without straw." Everybody uses the old adage. I never really appreciated what it meant until today. The bricks I had seen never had straw in them. But these houses are built of bricks made of clay and held together with straw. These

bricks are not little bricks, but about a foot thick or nearly so, and make staunch houses. They make the bricks by mixing straw and clay. The straw is a binder. They build the houses of these bricks and then cover them with plaster and white-wash.

"It was in this same way," I ventured, "that the Jewish slaves in Egypt under Pharaoh made bricks when they built with the clay from the Nile." But Dr. Kahn, the erudite, corrects me. "The clay in Egypt needed no straw binder," says he. . . .

THE FIRST house in Ratendorf at which we stop is the combined post office, medical and instruction station and general community house. Here we are introduced to the secretary of the local Soviet, that is, the local self-governing body of the community. We meet the president of the coöperative. We go into the room of the *Agro-Joint.* This house was built only a few months ago. The walls are covered with maps, charts, diagrams of wheat, rye, barley; instructions as to the use of various agricultural implements. There are test tubes showing soil compositions, diagrams showing the movements of water in cultivated soil, etc., etc. Here lives Shulman, the *Agro-Joint* agronomist, whose business it is to teach settlers in this district.

His spotless little room contains cot, books, scientific research things. On his table lies an encyclopedia for agriculturists printed in Russian. At his desk I

see maps of the twenty-five thousand-acre tract with all its subdivisions. One in colors indicates crop rotation.

Twenty-two homes have been completed here. Acacia trees have been set out along the road. The passion for beauty. When that begins to express itself you may feel that the first pangs of necessity have been assuaged. Acacias! It takes twenty years for them to grow into real trees! Does that mean anything?

Along comes an imposing looking man, who shakes hands with Dr. Kahn. "Satisfied now?" Dr. Kahn asks him in German. "*Alles sehr gut*" is his answer. "A year ago," said Dr. Kahn, "he complained bitterly of congested living conditions. I didn't blame him."

The chairman of the local self-government body, elected by the colonists themselves, tells us that they now have one hundred and thirty-eight head of cattle; a year ago they had fifty.

"How many of you want to go back to the city?" I asked a group of twenty. "You couldn't smoke us out," replies the spokesman. That's literally what he said. I have always inquired at random. I have always received the same answer. Indeed, when I ask the question, they look at me as if I were slightly unbalanced.

A little later I meet a young couple who were married in Ratendorf. I ask the wife whether she wants

to go back. She smiles. "What for? Here I am happy. In the town how can we make a living?"

In all of the colonies, with the exception of Tel-Chai, there are many children. No race suicide here. Parents and children are all asking for schools. I have told them we would do our best. Schools. Schools. It's the invariable demand. It is not for nothing that the Jews are called the people of the book.

A group of women who gathered about Miss Frisch * and brought her into their homes told her that they wanted to have a bath built. They'll have to wait a while.

An artesian well here, three hundred and fifty feet deep, dug by our Keystone driller.

We approach a house. An old man sits at the doorway. He bends over a great tome. His white beard almost covers the page. He is reading the Talmud.

Two colonists complain . . . need another ox. Must have it, they say. Cannot plow all their fields. "You put too much money in your house," says Rosen.

Good-byes. Hands wave. Children, old people, they call out good-byes. Their eyes strain yearningly after us—the strangers from America.

ANOTHER colony. Its name "Auflebung." Note the names of the colonies. "Work." "Hope." "Labor."

* Then American Secretary of *JDC* in Europe.

"Revival." "The Hill of Life." "The New Dawn." "Forward." "Vanguard." "The Field." "Earth and Work." "The New Road." "The New Life." "Toilers of the Land." These names mean something.

In the spring of 1925 the people came here, ignorant of farming, built a shed and began to work. Here, a year ago, there was not a house, excepting the barracks with fifty people crowded into one dormitory, sleeping on shelves, like sardines in a can. Dr. Kahn describes it to me as he saw it a year ago. Now eighteen houses are built, twenty-one more, nearly finished. Houses with red roofs. There will be two streets here.

The winter wheat is in wonderful shape, acres and acres of it. In all, about fifty families, with about seventy-five acres for each family. Think of it. One year—thirty-nine homes.

We now stop at a dug-out, in which lives a family, just arrived. The structure stands about four feet above the ground. They have dug a hole. With mud and some boards they have built a shelter over it against rain and storm. They are digging themselves in. We enter the dug-out. Twelve feet by twelve. Eight people live here. Take a tape measure. See what a space twelve by twelve is. Crowded quarters.

There is another dug-out one hundred feet away, no bigger. Two entire families live here. They were traders in Gomel. In the first dug-out we speak to one

of the men who was a former soap maker. Same story. No chance in the town.

Next to the dug-out, an outdoor kitchen, a kettle on a little bit of fire. A fourteen-year-old girl is cooking the meal. These dug-outs are occupied by this year's settlers. They should have waited in the towns until some shelters, however rude, were ready. But they were not to be held back. They prefer this hardship to the hopelessness of their past.

In these two colonies, Ratendorf and Auflebung, we have invested per family from two hundred to two hundred and fifty dollars. This sum would, of course, not have been sufficient but for the very great help of the Government, as well as the substantial amounts the families themselves have contributed. It costs seven hundred and fifty dollars to settle a family. One-third we are furnishing, a third is loaned by the Government, which also gives the land; a third is furnished by the settler.

You can see thus why the *JDC* has done so much with comparatively little money. All our agricultural work in Russia to date represents an expenditure of two million three hundred thousand dollars. Ten thousand families settled through our aid. That's two hundred and thirty dollars per family. Of course, this alone wouldn't have done the job. Nor is the job for these ten thousand finished. The housing shortage is still considerable. Most of the settlers supplied funds

themselves, and the Government has, of course, given immense help. But the outstanding fact is that *our* aid, *ours*, plus the fact that the settlers receive the land free, has made all the rest possible.

That there are still millions of surplus fertile, untilled acres in Russia is not to be doubted. I've seen plenty of them myself, and Russia's world-strength depends on her crops. Here are economic factors that make a firm foundation.

DISTRICT No. 4.—Fifty-four families here. The barracks where they lived herded together, last year, now used for their live stock. We go into one of the houses, where a young couple lives; spotless. I notice a large collection of books and pick one up. It is a book of Russian poetry by Nekrasov, a famous Russian lyric poet. The young husband opens a cabinet for me. Here he keeps his Torah.

They are very proud of their horses in this settlement; they have sixty head. The young farmer brings out a superb young breeding stallion. Lubarsky explains to me that the matter of horse and cattle breeding receives careful thought and attention. Good live stock is a big element in the entire problem.

Dr. Rosen says: "When we took over this twenty-five thousand-acre tract and said that we expected three hundred and eight families to settle here this spring, everybody laughed at us. The Crimean De-

partment of Agriculture, and even the neighboring German colonists, laughed—nobody took us seriously, just as some of our friends in America did not take the matter seriously. But instead of three hundred and eight families there are three hundred and fifty-nine families settled."

SETTLEMENT No. 3, also on the twenty-five thousand-acre tract. It is a 1925 settlement. As far as the eye can reach, miles of winter wheat, well along. Six-thousand acres of winter wheat. Figuring thirty bushels an acre at a dollar a bushel, means a profitable yield of one hundred eighty thousand dollars on this tract.

Talks with settlers. Enthusiasm. Why not? Look at their crop. Want a school and a synagogue.

SETTLEMENT No. 2—"Neuleben." "New Life." We're an incurably poetic people. But it's not an inappropriate name. The settlers here are very poor—the houses are small. They are only beginning. We pass by a Jewish woman plowing with two oxen and a man plowing with three horses. He is near the road. We slow down, stop. Greetings. Good-byes. . . .

BACK TO Simferopol. An evening of statistical studies and analysis. Here's the result:

We have furnished to date to the settlers twenty-

five hundred plows, two thousand harrows, fourteen hundred cultivators, a thousand reapers, a thousand wagons, a thousand seed-cleaners, seven hundred combined harrows and seeders, three hundred drills, a hundred and twenty-six tractors, a hundred threshing machines. We must furnish more wagons. Wagons; wagons. Bumper crops coming. We need wagons.

CHAPTER IV

MONDAY, MAY 10TH

WE LEAVE for Eupatoria, on the shores of the Black Sea. On our way from Simferopol we stop to inspect the Victoria settlement. It suffers from prosperity. They made sixteen thousand roubles net last year and quarreled among themselves. Dr. Rosen hauls them over the coals. But it's a difficult situation. They tried Communistic farming. It didn't work.

They have only three hundred and fifty acres, but that's plenty, for they have a twenty-year-old orchard of twenty-five acres, belonging to an abandoned estate. The trees in superb condition. No scale. Well pruned. A great deal of fruit coming. They have not much of a herd of cattle, only about twenty-four heads. This is chiefly a fruit business.

This settlement is only a few miles from the Black Sea, has excellent transportation facilities and a ready market at the Black Sea for its fruit.

The difficulty here is that their work, to be successful, must be done collectively, and they have to work out their own problems of how to divide their earnings. That's not easy. Some work hard; some are not so strong; some have husky sons; others not. An in-

teresting problem for adjustment of communal life. They cannot effectively split up the land because of the irrigated orchard.

There are twenty-two families here, and, because of these disagreements, they have divided into two groups.

We are taken through the fields by a fine young chap who has studied agriculture in France, specializing in fruit raising. He proudly shows us individual trees—how they do not merely prune, but paint the ends of cut-off branches. There is a tree nursery here with three thousand young fruit trees.

Dr. Rosen cuts a bunch of lilacs for Miss Frisch, and almost slices off his thumb. I paint it with iodine and bandage it. Will he get blood poisoning? It becomes a subject of agreeable debate.

At dusk we arrive in Eupatoria. This was a famous shore resort. There was much fighting with Wrangel here. Ruins; gaping ruins; blocks and blocks of staring dead walls are eloquent witnesses of the loveliness and glory of warfare. A stone's throw away the beautiful Black Sea.

The hotel at which we stop is a good one, run down, but reasonably clean. We are ahead of the season. The hotel is empty. Our footsteps echo in lonesome corridors. Soon it will be filled with the owners of Russia—the peasants, the members of labor unions, the proletariat.

Large buildings; peasants' homes, soldiers' homes, homes for workmen's children. The peasants and the workers. They own the show.

Supper time. We go to a little restaurant on the main street. A Communist parade marches past—a man with a banner, a drummer boy, forty-two children. I counted them. They teach them young. The oldest is about eight, the youngest not over four. The restaurant is run by a Jewish woman who has two little girls of seven and nine, Freda and Fanya. Freda, the seven year old, is sitting at a table beside us. She has no eyes for us; not even for the parade. I wish I could read the Russian book to which her eyes are glued. Our efforts to gain her notice fail. . . . Fanya shows us her violin. She goes to hear all the music she can get to. With Lubarsky as interpreter, we talk about Stravinsky. The mother, who owns the restaurant, is a trader; hence a member of the declassed bourgeoisie. The father is a workman and a member of the favored class—the proletariat.

ISRAEL ANGELO is selling sunflower seeds, which everybody here chews. It's quite a business, selling sunflower seeds. Israel is eating his own stock of trade. Dr. Rosen asks him why. "Business is poor," says he. He is a Tartar Jew, with great, beautiful eyes. He says it is hard work being the head of the family when business is bad, but comforts himself by munch-

ing his sunflower seeds. I give him forty kopeks; he is overjoyed. It's a week's profit. He munches more seeds. Israel is pretty young to be in trade. He is eight years old.

Before the revolution, Eupatoria, Balaklava and Alushta were the only seashore towns on the Black Sea to which Jews were permitted to come. All the other resorts were proscribed.

From petty persecution and pillage to wholesale murder and pogrom; that has been the bitter daily bread of the Russian Jews for generations.

TUESDAY, MAY 11TH

WE START at seven in the morning for the colonies between here and Simferopol. On our way through Eupatoria we stop at the sanatorium for bone tubercular children, of which Dr. Bramson spoke. It was established by the *JDC* with the aid of *OZE;* a splendid institution. The *JDC* now contributes twelve hundred and fifty dollars a year, and the Russian Jews give about fifteen thousand dollars a year. Where do they get the money? By unbelievably heavy sacrifices.

Then we came to the colony of ICOR ("Workers on the Soil"). In 1923 five families started this settlement without a penny. They came to Dr. Rosen. He doubted whether they could make a go of it. They

were determined. He had hardly a penny to spare for them. Today over fifty families—three hundred people—are settled on these five thousand acres. They have sixty horses, thirty-six oxen, a hundred cows and a hundred head of young stock. Here's a rough balance sheet.

Their horses are worth	Six thousand dollars.
Their oxen	Four thousand dollars.
Their cows	Five thousand dollars.
Young stock	Three thousand dollars.

This takes no account of their implements, machinery, houses, planted fields and acreage.

The whole investment of the *Agro-Joint* to date in this colony is seven thousand dollars, In a few years we ought to get that back and help settle more people with the funds so released.

This settlement, too, was run on a collective basis during its first year. But they didn't get along. The same problem. Equal division to unequal earners. It hasn't worked. Then they parcelled their land into individual holdings. At once they began to progress. The weaker ones somehow began to grow stronger; they had to walk on their own legs; they had no other shoulders to lean on. . . . Communism and farming; they don't seem to go together.

These instances of failure in collective or Communistic farming and immediate progress when in-

dividual initiative is rewarded are noteworthy. To communize peasants doesn't work so far as I can learn. The reason's not far to seek.

If I own a hundred shares of U. S. Steel, that's a remote sort of ownership; a scrap of paper; a stock market quotation, and dividends. Do I think of myself as owner of the plants or land or buildings of the U. S. Steel Corporation? I don't even know where they are. But my acres, my crops, my house, my stable, my chickens, geese, cows, oxen—they are mine. Mine. No one has so keen an individualistic sense of ownership as the farmer. And eighty per-cent of the Russians are farmers.

I ASK these settlers my invariable question. Do they want to go back to the town? The answer becomes routine. And it isn't only the answer, but the manner of answer that is so striking. These people are putting their roots into the soil.

Seven houses were built here last year. They are now building eighteen more. The houses are staunch, made of calcareous stone, with tile roofs.

We drive over their grain fields, acres on acres of splendid crops. The Crimea arid? Not this part. Then we see their herd of cattle. A hundred cows and their calves. That's a sizeable herd.

"Workers on the Soil." The colony is not badly named. Jews are plowing. The plows are pulled by

oxen. The Jew and the ox—Dr. Rosen comments on the psychological effect of the ox on the Jew—the city Jew, nervous, impatient, fidgety, restless and eager. Little by little he learns to adjust himself to the even disposition of the animal, learns something of the value of slow, steady, deliberate, patient work. He can't hurry his ox, his crops, the sunshine, springtime. He becomes a part of the deep current of Nature. Thank God.

Two years ago this land was a deserted waste. Now it's a part of world economics. We see one of the tractors—one of the first eighty-six shipped from America. Two men are running it. One of them talks with me. Two years ago he was a trader in Chernigov. His family was starving. Now he is brown and strong. It is hard to believe he has ever been anything but a farmer. Rosen tells him that I am from New York. He stretches out his oily, grimy hand and says something in Russian. "Greetings to the Jews in America. God bless them for what they are doing for us." *Do svidanya.*

WE COME now to a 1926 settlement—this year's work. Eighteen families; only eighteen people, the heads of the families—the best workers, a strong son of the family—have come.

Nearly all of the colonists of the previous years have had to furnish at least two hundred roubles

apiece. This colony is an exception. It is an experiment. They are all very poor. They had no more than ten roubles to a family when they came out, four or five weeks ago. Rosen is indignant and unhappy about requiring the colonists to furnish some of the capital for land settlement. "It's not fair," he exclaims, "and excludes some of the best material. But we have been unable to help it. In this colony we are trying an experiment. These are particularly capable, strong people, well fitted to be farmers."

Those who have come out in advance are all young fellows. They come from Smolensk, over a thousand miles away. They are beginners, without equipment, without experience; with nothing but youth, courage, hope. Ah! but those are assets, even if not on a balance sheet. They have already seeded down two hundred and twenty-five acres.

They have rented a house for three months from the friendly, helpful German peasants nearby for twenty dollars. It has two rooms, fourteen by fourteen each, which the eighteen men use as a dormitory. They consider it a grand place. Why not? They're getting a chance. One of the eighteen has been elected cook.

Of the boys to whom we spoke, one is a shoemaker; another, a powerful young man, wanted to be a student, but couldn't; the third, whose father is a workman, could find nothing to do. A fourth was a baker. A mean business, bending all day over a fire, says he.

. . . The open fields; that's living. He stretches out his arms. . . . He wraps the sky and the steppe in his strong embrace.

They tell us their relations with the people here are friendly. The people in the neighboring village—Germans—treat them well and help them along. A few of the Germans see our auto. They join us. A pleasant chat.

We asked these boys why they are not all working in the fields. They haven't enough horses. They work in shifts. The first shift started at four o'clock this morning and works until about noon. Then the next shift starts in at about one o'clock and works until dark. . . .

"I have seen hundreds of young boys walking the streets in the cities and towns," said Dr. Rosen, "with no future before them; a dreadful process of degradation. These young men here have something to look forward to. They have no time to loaf; they are making plans for the building of houses, for planting wheat and oats and barley." . . .

TWELVE-THIRTY. . . . We have been motoring now for three hours over the vast steppes. We arrive at the beginning of a series of 1926 settlements between Eupatoria and Saraboos. Here we come to new settlers in new barracks. We have passed hundreds of thousands of acres of untilled vacant lands. All fertile.

They are only just building the barracks. The group coming here is to consist of twenty-five families; only the heads of the families have so far come. These people also come from Smolensk.

This thirty-thousand-acre tract is divided into a number of sections where the new settlers are coming in. At a little Lutheran German village, our agronomist for this district, Redkin, by name—a young chap who has graduated from an agricultural school—resides. He has charge of the bringing in of the settlers on this whole tract, and at his base we see settlers who have just arrived; we see carpenters and blacksmiths hard at work, preparing places for the others. As I dictate this, a wagon drives up with some new settlers. The thing goes on under my eyes. . . .

I asked Dr. Rosen how many head of cattle all of our colonists in the Crimea and Ukraine have today. He says that he has all the statistical information in the office and is unwilling to guess, but, pressed by me, he says that our colonies have at least thirty thousand head of livestock today. No small fry business. Walk through a herd of two hundred head of cattle, as we did this morning, and you begin to form some idea of what thirty thousand means. Or think of them driven up Fifth Avenue in lines of ten. Three thousand lines of ten.

While we are out inspecting the base, the agronomist's wife prepares luncheon for us. It is delicious.

Borstsch. Fried chicken. A talk with the agronomist. With a large group of the settlers. Seeing their enthusiasm my question—do you want to stay upon the soil—dies unspoken on my lips. A study of maps, charts, data as to seeds, soils, water. Off again. . . .

WE LOST our way in the steppes. I once lost my way in the forests of the Adirondacks. When I was sixteen I camped and tramped with two school friends. We got lost climbing Mt. Marcy. It wasn't a pleasant business. After ten hours of wandering we found our way. Trees, brooks, mountain peaks, compass and map guided us. It's different on the steppes. It's like being on mid-ocean in a rowboat. Not a tree in sight. Not a house. No cattle. Nothing. Only the endless rolling fields fading into the far horizon. We are on a little rise of land. It seems like an island. The blue distance all around us looks like the ocean. I was deceived completely. "Is this the Black Sea?" I asked Rosen. "Is this the sea all around us?" But it was only the vast steppes stretching, stretching out into the blue beyond the reach of the eye. . . . The wild flowers are beautiful on the unplowed steppe. Scarlet poppies, deep blue veronica, whole fields of wild flax, a brilliant orange flower which I have never seen before, cowslips, daisies, many others. . . .

We find our way. We reach another colony. We stop at one of the stone quarries. A quarry like this

is a great asset. Soft, calcareous stone. It is being cut, as I watch it, with a saw. A bearded Jew, over sixty years old, is working the saw. The saw cuts the stone faster than one can cut through a pine tree. Dr. Rosen is arranging to put in a small motor like the motors used for cutting timber. This stone is yellow, but after being in the air for a while, after it has been cut, it turns gray and becomes very hard.

There is a neighboring German colony. The Germans are capable farmers. Their villages are neat. Their fields are fine. They set an example. Dr. Rosen makes it a policy to have our settlers near the Germans.

WE COME to tract No. 63 of the Eupatoria district, containing forty-five hundred acres. Our tractors are working here. They are plowing for the fall planting. Early plowing; that's the secret of a good crop. The settlers will come out next spring, and should have a good crop. This is of prime importance. It gives them an income their first year on the land. This is one of the prime reasons why the work has to be planned a good while in advance.

Nearly all of this Eupatoria district is practically virgin land; it has not been occupied or plowed for over a quarter of a century. "Why is this?" I asked. "Why has this fertile land been lying idle so many years?" Lubarsky explained. Water, in this part of

Crimea, is hard to get. You have to dig your wells very deep, and this means a cost which the ordinary peasant cannot meet.

The tractors are plowing a straight furrow over four miles long. That's rather a furrow. Each tractor does the work of twenty horses. Does it better and deeper in this black, virgin soil.

We have no tractor base in the Eupatoria district. The squad lives in one of the wagon-houses I described the other day. This tract is thirty miles from a railroad station. Ten boys live here. One of the boards of the wagon-house contains a stencil: "American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 40 Exchange Place." It carries me a long way. How many miles? Seven or eight thousand? I think so. A third of the way 'round the globe.

These six tractors have come to the steppes bringing nine steel containers for kerosene and gasoline, the wagon-house they live in, supplies of all sorts, drinking water, food, etc. It takes a lot of planning, preparation and organization to put through a thing like this four-mile furrow. But I look at the boys in this squad; the human material is capable of doing the job.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. This squad started working yesterday morning. It is now four o'clock in the afternoon, and they have plowed ninety acres.

When Belenky arrived at four this morning, the first tractor, he tells me, was already out working. The ninety plowed acres are deep chocolate brown under the gray sky. I pick up a handful of the fresh, rich loam. Sandy? Nonsense.

A new well. . . . How many wells are necessary, I ask Dr. Rosen? One to each colony or village. A well amply accommodates a colony of fifty families. The average cost of digging a well and furnishing its entire equipment is fifteen hundred dollars. This well-digging business is of paramount importance. Fifteen hundred dollars for a village of fifty families is not a terrifying item. But it explains why splendid fertile tracts lie vacant and unused until we come along. The Russian peasants haven't the fifteen hundred dollars. There's been a lot of talk pro and con as to this well-digging matter—a lot of loose talk about the need of irrigation. I've been careful to get my data right. The fields and acres occupied by our settlers need no irrigation—not for wheat or rye or barley or oats or any of the other major crops. Fifteen hundred dollars per colony solves the problem of water.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 12TH

YALTA. I am dictating these notes at the once elegant Hotel de la Russie in Yalta, on the shore of the Black Sea. This is the famous Riviera of Russia. We came

from Simferopol via a hairpin-turn road; precipitous, high mountains to the shore; then along the sea for twenty or thirty miles. The ride not unlike the Amalfi-Sorrento ride. The Black Sea lying below, emerald-green and purple, the mountains behind rising sheer to forty-five hundred feet.

I strolled through the sumptuous gardens surrounding the hotel. Here noble Russians used to flirt with languorous ladies. Now the peasants come here; the peasants who were slaves on the land. The peasants.

I don't pretend to make this diary an analysis of the Russia of 1926. Anyone who wants to understand the Russia of today must probe deeply—deep into ancient backgrounds; oppressions, grievances, ethnological problems, economic, religious, political currents. But the most casual visitor can see that the peasants are the greatest single factor to reckon with today; for they are four-fifths of the population, own the land and are bound to gain in wealth and strength, particularly as education spreads among them.

How will the present rulers of Russia work out the peasant problem? Who, then, are these rulers?

The stories of Siberia, the Black Hundred, the punishment of political prisoners, of persecution and autocracy in the times of the Czars have been abroad through the world ever since I was a young boy, and long before. The revolutionists who are now in control were the firebrands. They are the leaders of the Bol-

sheviks, the men who control the Communist Party. Revolutionists. Most of them spent a large part of their lives in Siberia or in prisons—fugitives, men hiding like rats in dark corners. But it's one thing to be a rebel, to overthrow a government, and another to run one. It's one thing to be an "out," an antagonist, a critic, a destroyer. To be an "in," a builder, a creator—that's a different job.

When these men came into power, it meant the utter downfall of those who had had money, position, power, rank. Nothing demonstrates this so vividly as the present use of important buildings; of palaces, houses and clubs of the nobles. This I have already described. The Czar's summer palace; Grower told me about it in Moscow. Here it is before my eyes; it is a summer home for the peasants.

What are these men, these rulers of Russia, doing? It is significant that the maximum wage for a Communist, even if he be President of all Soviet Russia, is two hundred and twenty roubles a month—a hundred and ten dollars.

Now comes a query: Nine years have passed since the revolution. A new generation of office-holders and men in control is arising. Another ten years—and many of the fanatical revolutionists will have passed by. Many, I am told, are not in good health. Their earlier lives of privation in prison and at Siberia have told on them. What will the newer, younger men

do? What will be their philosophy of life? Will they continue to impose a Spartan self-sacrifice on themselves and live on a hundred and ten dollars a month? And can they communize the peasant?

The really skillful factory worker today in Russia earns more than an official of the Soviet Government, and I am assured that when Communists are caught violating their principles in any business for personal gain at the expense of the Government or in any species of graft or profit-making, they are punished more summarily and severely than anyone else.

There are, I am told, about seven hundred thousand members of the Communist Party. To become a member of the party is no easy matter. It is like being elected to an exceedingly exclusive club. There is a long waiting-list. One has to prove that he is a one-hundred-percent Communist. There are many young men who want to join. For the code of the band wagon exists here as in all countries. It takes no courage to be a Communist today in Russia. It did before the revolution. Then it meant that a person deliberately chose the life of a hunted criminal.

The younger men who are coming in, however strict the rules of election to the party may be, cannot long, in the nature of things, furnish proof that they are of the same mettle. Time rapidly destroys the possibility of such proof. The choice is a curious one. The non-Communist can make more money and

live far more comfortably and bring his children up in better circumstances than the Communist; but the man who in this country is ambitious, the man who wishes power, fame, position, political life, has to make up his mind to be a poor man. Will such a condition continue? How long?

We hear in the United States of the new economic policy of Russia and the swings to left or right. Such swings are bound to occur. But to me it seems fairly evident, from what I see and learn of the business, the stores, the industry of Russia, that the Government will do its best to keep a tight hold on key industries, on its great natural resources, and on big business. Small shops, small businesses, small trade will be—are being—encouraged—or at least not closed up. But the minute a business gets big enough to be worth while, the Government, if I can sense the truth, tries to take a controlling position. This it is now doing through direct Government ownership and through a vast network of coöperative stores.

But when it comes to the peasant how will the Government manage? Taxation? In kind? They tried it. It didn't work; now they have even accorded the peasant the right to hire labor. Russian industry can hardly be expected for a good while to catch up to today's industrial pace and development elsewhere. Russia's strength is in her crops. This, then, seems to me to be, behind the curtain, the actual Russian

scene; a vast country with unlimited undeveloped resources; a country far behind the modern industrial development of other lands; a country which must so govern itself as to satisfy the bulk of the population, that individualist, the peasant.

And as for the Jews? It is, of course, common knowledge that Jews suffered more from the persecutions of Czarism than any other group. While it is clear that the present government is not anti-Semitic, while the fact that there is no state religion, that there are no grades of religion, is bound to help lessen anti-Semitism, yet, through inevitable economic causes, the Jews have been hit harder by the revolution than any other class. This is because the present government frowns on and penalizes the one chief occupation in which Jews were permitted to engage prior to the revolution—private trade.

Before the revolution a handful of Jews were rich merchants and industrialists. The rest were chiefly engaged in petty business; to a lesser degree as petty artisans—shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc. These were the only occupations (excepting, to a very limited degree, the professions) open to them. The whole economic structure of the Government since the revolution has been such as to drive the small traders completely out of work. Cooperatives supported by the State undersell the individual trader and have wiped out his chance to gain

even the most meagre livelihood. The same thing applies in an only slightly lesser degree to the small artisans, because of the destructive competition of Government-owned factory production. It is because these traders and small artisans have been thus prevented from making a living in the town that they seek the land. But there are three million Jews in Russia. Fifty thousand have settled on the soil. What of the rest? It is a terrific problem. To solve it would require many more millions of dollars than we can hope to get.

THURSDAY, MAY 13TH

BACK from the Black Sea to Simferopol, crossing again over the mountain range. Vineyards. More vineyards. The Crimean wine country. It's a delicious wine. Rosen points out vineyard after vineyard. Tears, almost, are in his eyes. "We could have got any number of these vineyards for the Jewish colonists, but we were too slow. Now they've all been settled. Hundreds of them lay abandoned four years ago. Too bad." It is hard to comfort him. . . . I'm somewhat unhappy about it myself. . . .

Corkscrew turns. Superb drive. Glorious views. Stopped off on our way back at Backhtchi-Sarai, the former palace of the Tartar kings. Immense, elegant rooms for the harem. A culture, life, civilization, past and forgotten.

CHAPTER V

FRIDAY, MAY 14TH

WE START for Kherson. We are motoring northward past various tracts comprising the seventy thousand acres which were granted to the settlers this spring, and on which three hundred and fifty-nine families so far have been settled.

The headquarters for this tract are in a house in this village rented us by an Esthonian. This tract is about four miles from the twenty-five thousand acres of the 1925 tract through which we passed a few days ago. In between is a part of those splendid million acres a portion of which we can get if we're prompt. These acres are glorious, rich land lying to the west, southwest and south of Jankoi, and south of the railroad that leads from Jankoi to Armiansk. In our travels in the Crimea we have again and again come into one or another portion of this vast tract. If we get it we will consolidate substantially the entire Crimean settlements. These million acres are enough to colonize twenty-five thousand families. A million acres. That's almost twice the size of Westchester County. But of the vast area of Russia it's a drop in the sea.

Of the seventy thousand acres through which we are passing, about five thousand have been plowed and planted. None of the settlers has as yet brought his family. During the first year only the working squads are encouraged to come, so as to give them a chance to get established.

We go through parcels 62, 49, 117. Old wells have been restored, additional well-drilling is beginning with our Keystone driller. Our agronomist points out on the survey the location of wells that have been restored. "Too bad," says Rosen, "that we have only one drilling outfit. We ought to have two more."

Eight tractors are working here. I meet a young settler on one of the parcels of this tract. He comes from Rezhitza in the Gomel district. He is one of a group of ten representing ten families. Sixty families came from this same village in 1925 and are located about ten miles from here. Thirty more from the same village are applying this year. Doesn't that mean something?

This particular site has been allotted these new settlers so that they may be near the 1925 settlers who are their friends and often their relatives. This settler with whom I just spoke had a shop which he lost in the revolution. A brother was killed in a pogrom. That's the sort of thing you hear from everybody. . . . What a life. The sword of Damocles.

Terror when they woke, terror when they slept. What dreams!

We come to the unfinished barracks at Lot. No. 62. The boys are working on the roof. The settlers, who have been here four weeks, are still sleeping in the open fields. In two days their shelter will be ready. Last year the settlers more frequently came with their families and chattels. This caused the terrible congestion and fearful living conditions which Dr. Kahn saw. Now, through the process of having only the able-bodied men come in advance, the technique has greatly improved. Also, instead of dug-outs, a pretty good-sized wooden building is set up, enough for a dormitory for several families. Later the wood is used for building purposes. Here they will live until the winter. Then they will go back to their towns, having planted their winter wheat. Then next spring, in 1927, they'll come out with their families.

We talk to three or four of the settlers who came out just a couple of weeks ago; one, a massive, white-bearded, blue-eyed Jew, who might have posed for Michael Angelo's "Moses." He's as full of courage and hope as a boy. He refuses to discuss famine or pogroms or bandits. Crops, soil are his themes.

We call out good-byes. The patriarch waves his hand. "Don't forget us," he calls out. "Don't forget us. We are willing to work, but don't forget us."

Tears sprang to my eyes. It'll be a long time before I forget old Moses.

WE DRIVE over the fields. Another tractor squad. Another house on wheels; more kerosene containers, one holding over a thousand gallons. This container was pulled over the fields, together with the house and the whole contraption, by one of the tractors. They all came from Jankoi, forty-five miles away. This wagon-house is very stylish. And the boys are proud of it. It has a fresh coat of red paint.

Belenky is here again, in charge of the work. We must provide him with a motorcycle. The thing's arranged. And we need twenty or thirty small motor trucks. Yes, fifty, at the rate the crops are growing. . . .

Today is Friday. They started plowing this field on Monday and have been plowing and harrowing ever since.

"Any trouble with the tractors?" asks Rosen. "None at all," says Belenky. "I'm beginning to wish for some so as to see how the boys can make repairs." Belenky's wish was granted. The next day two tractors broke down. Parts had worn out. They had a good-sized job on their hands. . . .

ANOTHER settlement. Here we meet eight or ten men, one woman and a girl of about sixteen, who arrived about three weeks ago. They have a dug-out, a well-

built one. They sleep on boards. On May first there was a cloudburst here. They hadn't even a dug-out then; they laugh about it. The dug-out in which we were standing has a board roof; through the chinks we see the sky. On another dug-out, two hundred feet away, they have put a mud roof, which is fairly waterproof—chiefly, I fancy, when the sun is shining. They have brought thirty head of cattle, and some calves have already been born here. Life proceeds. . . .

They have a German farmer here as their instructor, an experienced man. He did not like the way they did their work at first, he says, but now they are taking hold. . . .

The Cadillac breaks down. Poor old car. Came from Poland after two years' relief service there. Took Rosen through Russia during the famine. It could tell a story, that car; of want, stark death, horror; of courage and endurance, too. . . . Long delay. We are forced to stop for the night at a little house in a ruined village. Armiansk. This town is a dreadful ruin. Here the Reds and Whites fought like devils five years ago. Broken walls. Deserted, tumbledown houses; gaping shell holes.

SATURDAY, MAY 15TH

UP AT five. An early start. We are to get across the Dnieper River today. Our first stop is to be the town

of Kakhovka. Just before we got to Kakhovka, we saw some of the vineyards the *Agro-Joint* has planted. Three hundred acres for one hundred and fifty-eight families who live in the town. These vineyards will not entirely support these families, but they have some partial means of livelihood in the town. Here there's a sandy surface, with a rich black soil beneath—ideal for grapes. We stop. Rosen shows us the soil. Explains. This is not large scale grain farming, but intensive cultivation. That's relatively a minor matter. But Rosen expects that a good many families will go into this type of work.

A mile or two before we reach Kakhovka we pass an immense plain. Here in pre-revolutionary days over a hundred thousand men and women used to gather in the spring to hire out their labor to the large land owners of the neighborhood. Rosen has seen this. The peasants used to lie down on the ground, and on the soles of their shoes would write a number to tell what wages they demanded. Then they'd go to sleep. The agents for the great land owners would hit them on the soles. That meant they were hired. It was peonage—practical slavery. These men and women came by foot from places hundreds of miles away. This is all a thing of the past. These men and women have settled on the soil. They are land owners.

WHEN WE get to Kakhovka, we stop at the trade school

which the *JDC* has established there. A lot of likely-looking young boys and girls gather about us. Three hundred and twenty pupils attend this school. The *Agro-Joint* started this school with a few thousand dollars and still gives a hundred roubles a month. The Government does the rest. Now they are dreaming about adding a blacksmith shop and a sewing machine shop for girls. They tell us their plans.

A new building is going up. The foundation has been set; stone walls are being built. This is no make-shift. I paced it—a sixty by a hundred-foot building. The walls are now up three feet. The rock and cement walls are twenty inches thick. There is a little blacksmith work going on inside. Perhaps it's no worse to see a young Jew at the anvil than at the cabaret, or even the college.

Dr. Cahgan, head of the Jewish community, tells us that there are about seven hundred Jewish families here among the eleven thousand inhabitants. The Government is giving four thousand roubles toward the new building; the local Jewish community is raising the balance. The school will accommodate four hundred children, of whom three hundred will be town children, the other hundred, children of the nearby settlers. This new building is for a general educational school.

The *Agro-Joint,* in addition to the hundred roubles a month which it gives the school, also helps by giv-

ing orders for windows and frames; brings the lumber to the school. Thus the boys earn a bit of money while learning a trade.

Dr. Cahgan, who speaks German, tells me that before the war most of the men here were in the grain business, this being a great grain market. Now this business is done for. Almost all trading is through the Government-supported coöperatives.

There are three synagogues here. One of the synagogues is very popular because it has a very fine cantor.

I ask Dr. Cahgan about the agricultural work of the *JDC,* and he says no other help meets the situation as this work does. His story is that of all the people I talk to. The land—that's the one place where the Jew has a future. . . . The individual trader has no chance. He gives me statistical details.

We reach the River Dnieper. . . . There have been floods. The river is thirteen feet above normal height. Usually they have a little hand ferry to get autos over the river, which is about a mile wide. But the hand ferry is swamped. It isn't running. What are we to do? A tiny steamboat plies across the river to Berislov, a town on the other side. This toy steamboat has never carried an automobile. Our party had two automobiles. Can we be ferried across? It's a big question. The steamboat docks. It looks like a child's affair. Conferences begin. We who do not understand

a word of Russian wait anxiously. All kinds of conferences. A conference with a man who seems to be the steamboat owner. He shakes his head no. The dock owner appears. Then come the head of the Jewish community, the village teacher, the rabbi, the priest and the president of the village. Conferences. Conferences. Words. Words. Buzz. Buzz. Buzz. Excitement? The town turns out. This is the most interesting business the town has known in years. Rosen begins to look anxious. What's it all about?

If we can't get across we'll have to motor a couple of hundred miles up the river to find another crossing place. That's why Dr. Rosen's brow is clouded. A couple of hundred miles. No roads. Just a sort of track across the steppes. At last Dr. Rosen tells us the difficulties. The gang plank to the boat is wide enough only for human beings. A special gang plank will have to be built. Some parts of the steamboat will have to be removed to let the cars get on the boat.

The town is in a frenzy. They are having the time of their life. Carpenters. Smiths. Bosses. Shouting. Roaring. Hammering. Hauling. A couple of fights. Men running to and fro. Oaths. Everybody has a different idea. We go off to lunch. Eggs. Prerevolution eggs. We return to the wharf. At last a gang plank is built. The first car gets down to the gang plank and ready to get on the boat. The opening into the boat isn't wide enough. More conferences.

More noise! A babel. Boards are pulled off the boat rail. Are they going to pull the boat to pieces? One of of the cars begins to slide into the river. Brakes on. She's saved . . . Six hours pass. At last we're on the boat. . . . We land at Berislov.

WE NEAR the base of the Kherson district. It is located at Lvov; Zaitchik, head agronomist, meets us—an emperor with twenty-five hundred families in his charge, and more coming right along.

Lvov is one of the first of the old Jewish colonies; it was established almost a century ago. It runs right along the Dnieper River. We stop to see their vineyards, which are superb. We gave this colony a great deal of help in 1922–1923 to restore it after the famine.

This matter of the old Jewish farm colonies deserves a paragraph. Rosen is not the only man who wanted to see the Jews on the soil. Over a hundred years ago Czar Alexander I. had the same idea. He gave some lands to Jews and permitted them to become farmers. So these century-old Jewish farm colonies came into being, and have continued to exist and to be self-supporting. In the last twenty years or so *ICA* has helped them. The famine of 1921 brought terrible suffering to these colonies. Since that time the *JDC* has spent about three hundred and fifty thousand dollars to re-establish them.

AT LVOV is a medical centre established by the *Agro-Joint.* There are three more medical stations for this Kherson district. The fact that there are two synagogues here should indicate that life in the country does not destroy religion. Today is Saturday. No work in the fields. Zaitchik tells me the settlers observe the Sabbath.

WE NOW come to the *Agro-Joint* base, where there is an immense supply of lumber. The base is located right at the river side. Much of our lumber is floated down the Dnieper. Observe how these details of transportation, medieal work, etc., have been thought out. The old Jew in charge of the lumber yard complains, because no sooner does the lumber come in than it is taken out by the new settlers. He likes to have a large inventory. Not Rosen, who wants progress twenty-four hours a day. Thirty-five carloads of lumber came in last week. Two-thirds has been taken out to the new settlements, but there is still a good deal of lumber here. Too much for Rosen. He wants that lumber converted into homes and walls and roofs.

In the Crimea the roofs are tiled. Here they are shingled. There is a pile of shingle big enough to fill fifty Mack trucks, and a lot of barbed wire, used for fencing the vineyards. . . .

THE OFFICE of the lumber yard. I asked how records

are kept. The old Jew was delighted. He's a competent bookkeeper. He brought out his ledgers. He writes a beautiful hand. I said I'd like to understand the system of accounting. So he produced the original orders from the settlers. These orders have to be countersigned by the agronomist in charge before lumber is delivered.

The way the thing is done is as follows: Each settler gets a little book when he comes in—something like a savings bank book. In this book are contained printed rules which he must obey. Whenever he comes for material, there is written into the book a memorandum of the materials he gets and the price, just exactly as a savings bank makes a record of a withdrawal. At the end of the season a bill is presented to the settler showing the total of what he got, and the settler must then execute a promissory note to the *Agro-Joint* for this amount. During the season these little pass-books preserve the record, and a settler cannot get even a nail unless he brings this pass-book. When the custodian of the lumber yard gets a carload of lumber, he signs a receipt and sends a duplicate to Moscow, examines what he receives, makes up an itemized statement. Let me particularize still further.

The people in our forest tract cut lumber and ship it to Kherson by rail. Kherson ships it here down the Dnieper by boat. When Kherson ships it, the Kherson *Agro-Joint* office sends an inventory of the goods

shipped here to Lvov, to our lumber base. When the goods are received at Lvov, the custodian of the lumber yard must check up the invoice sent to him with the shipment and find out if it is correct. If so, he makes out receipts in triplicate, keeps a copy here, sends a copy to Kherson and one to our central accounting office in Moscow.

Commodity accounts are kept in Moscow, Kherson and here in Lvov. All these accounts must tally. From the moment the lumber is shipped for the forest, the Moscow office has a complete record of the destination of the lumber and where every foot of it goes, and through comparison between points of shipment and points of destination, safeguards are set up all along the line, so that no lumber is lost.

At every base, also—not only the one I have visited, but at all the others—there is, in addition to these invoices and receipts, a ledger in which the base is charged with every bit of material that comes in and credited with every bit that goes out.

Every ten days this office sends an itemized statement to Kherson. This base is directly subordinate to Kherson, and accountable to Kherson only. Kherson is accountable to Moscow. In the Moscow office there are two accountants who devote themselves exclusively to the commodity accounting.

I have given only an outline; enough, I hope, to

show the care with which the difficult business of commodity accounting is handled.

Last year's commodity accounting, when checked up in Moscow, Dr. Rosen tells me, showed a loss of less than one-tenth of a percent, which is, of course, explained by the slight necessary loss of material, as, for example, in sawing lumber, there is waste, etc., etc. . . .

I HOPE that *ICA* will do some work for the Lvov colony. There are many houses here, either dismantled or half-broken, which ought to be repaired; new people put in. Or else such houses should be torn down. I asked Dr. Rosen why so many roofs were off these houses. It was because they tore off their roofs (which were of tin) and sold them during the famine to buy bread. That's evidence of hunger tearing the vitals. . . .

WE GO to the medical centre and meet the doctor, a woman. There are some old men and women patients. There is a little boy there, too, one of the new settlers. He had spilled some boiling water on his foot. The foot is being bandaged.

There is also a little operating room; also a drug store, with illustrated placards in re cholera, typhus, tuberculosis. Dr. Rosen gets free medical help. He

isn't satisfied with the way I bandaged his thumb. The Doctor assures him I did a good job.

The woman physician gets living quarters and a salary of one hundred and fifty roubles a month, of which the *Agro-Joint* pays half, in consideration of her looking out for the settlers within her territory. The community pays the other half.

WE VISIT the ambulatorium. It was an old stable. The transmutation of the stable into this ambulatorium was another *Agro-Joint* job. There are new doors; everything as neat as a pin. Paint. White-wash. The smell of iodine, or carbolic acid. No stable smell. The doctor has cards to show the records of the patients. There were fifty-five here today. Seven patients are at the hospital. The population is four thousand.

WE ARRIVE at one of the Lvov colonies which the *Agro-Joint* restored after the civil wars and famine. This is one of the century-old Jewish colonies. Here is a significant fact for those who fear for the safety of the colonies. In Berislov, only ten miles away, there were terrible pogroms six years ago. Berislov is a town of fifteen thousand inhabitants. Here in this colony, much as they suffered from the civil wars and famine, they tell me there were no pogroms. The reason is clear. It was simply too much trouble for the murderers to come out here—too far away. The vic-

tims were those who happened to be conveniently at hand for a mad mob.

WITHIN this territory three thousand new *Agro-Joint* colonists occupy about one hundred and twenty thousand acres. There are thirty-five settlements or villages. The ambitious agronomist begs us to visit all thirty-five. Alas! this is impossible.

We motor along past miles and miles of the winter wheat and the spring planting of our settlers. We pass by five hundred acres of winter wheat belonging to settlement No. 5, 1925 settlers. . . . Another settlement, No. 17, with about six hundred and sixty acres. Their wheat superb. I have seen a good many wheat fields mixed with rye. You can tell the difference between wheat and rye, even if you're not a Dr. Rosen. These wheat fields are so excellent, so pure, that their crops will be sold for pure-bred seeding purposes. This means a bigger price.

Dr. Kahn, who saw all of these settlements a year ago, can't believe his eyes. We have seen several mirages on the steppes. This, he thinks, is another one! Are these Potemkin villages? Those houses on the horizon; are they dreams, figments of our imagination, mirages? But no; for in another ten minutes we stand at a door way. We touch the solid walls. Three hundred and fifty houses have gone up in this region since a year ago. Rosen says: "It's these young

agronomists. They're the men who did most of the work of planning, and take all the trouble, and they don't get the credit."

FOR THIS whole agricultural work in Russia there are ten of these young field agronomists. In the Crimea, Levin is the head of the work and has three of these young men under him; in the Kherson district of the Ukraine, Zaitchik is in charge, with four agronomists under him, and in the Krivoi-Rog district, Schuchman is in charge, with three agronomists under him. Lubarsky is field generalissimo.

WE SEE a wooden case of grape seedlings from France. One and a half million of these plants have been imported and distributed, and practically all of them planted. A specialist, Professor Kippen, one of the foremost experts in grape culture in Europe, was sent to France to select just the right kind of plants adaptable to this soil. They were brought directly from the planters and grafted on American stock.

"Why on American stock?" I asked Dr. Rosen.

"Because the European variety grafted on American stock is not subject to a very destructive disease called 'philoxera,' " was his reply.

I am dictating this at the agronomist's house in colony No. 17 in the Kherson district. We are about to have some luncheon here. Here are more business-

like charts—charts of plants, of the use of cultivators, plows, seeders, planters, charts of instruction in Yiddish, samples of soil.

Luncheon finally at five-thirty P. M. It has been a long time since our five o'clock breakfast. The luncheon is delicious—radishes, cucumbers, new onions and many other indigestible things. Dr. Kahn refrains from eating them. Grower poisoned him the other day by recommending a plate of "Selianka," a delicious fish chowder of which Dr. Kahn will not soon again partake. Dr. Kahn asks for a soft-boiled egg. . . . An hour goes by; they bring him ten. He doesn't eat them all. . . .

LUNCHEON is over. The agronomist brings in some winter wheat from the fields. A technical discussion follows. Lubarsky pulls apart the stalks. He handles the young wheat with the tenderness of a lover. His Yiddish and my German meet at but few points, but this much we get to each other. *"Gut?"* and with almost a catch in his voice, he answers: *"Sehr gut!"* From one seed he counts seven stalks. Whether this is extraordinary I don't know, but from the rapt look on his face, I gather it is pretty good. "We shall need many threshing machines," says he. They shake the earth off the root. It falls on the floor. I am not exaggerating—it looks like pieces of charcoal. This is the black soil of the Ukraine.

The agronomist brings in some more wheat, which, this time, he has washed. Again I ask Lubarsky. "Too good to be true," says he, a grin of rapture extending to his ears.

Lubarsky and the agronomist calculate. The winter wheat in this section will produce a million poods—thirty-six million pounds. This is only the winter wheat. They also have summer wheat and summer rye. They have fifteen thousand acres of spring planting of rye. Lubarsky and his two agronomists say that the winter wheat in this district will, in this harvest alone, produce six hundred thousand dollars. The winter rye will produce fifty thousand dollars. In spring wheat and rye they have twenty thousand acres. This should produce on the present planting another hundred thousand dollars. These are Lubarsky's figures, arrived at after much scribbling on a pad. This makes seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars for twenty-five hundred families. "But that's not all," says Lubarsky. "The hay will produce another considerable sum."

Lubarsky figures some more. He concludes that, adding the hay, the corn, vegetables, these twenty-five hundred families ought this year to make a million dollars. This is two hundred thousand dollars more than Rosen is willing to allow. These results are reached after over an hour's talk, in which the expectancy of the crops of the Kherson district of this

year is carefully analyzed by Lubarsky and the local chiefs of the Kherson district, while Rosen checks their figures and their optimism.

IN THIS whole Kherson district we invested about six hundred thousand dollars. Of course, this is by no means the entire investment. The Soviet Government has also put in a like amount in this district, besides giving lumber and land free. Given a couple of years of good crops, and this thing will amaze the American Jews who have supported it. I don't mean that any of these settlers will become rich; but that they can and will make a decent living and support their families on a respectable living standard, is a prediction well warranted.

OLSHANSKY, a settler, tells us his story. He was an agent for an agricultural machinery factory. When he had to deal with plows or scythes and other agricultural implements and told how good they were, he always prayed to God to make it possible for him to use these instruments some day, instead of selling them. After the revolution, when he heard that Jews could settle on the land, he was one of the first to come. He is happy beyond words that he is at last on the soil, actually using the implements about which for years he was able only to talk.

A DEPUTATION of five children, from eleven to thirteen years old, followed Miss Frisch and Dr. Kahn into the open fields, and finally, plucking up courage, addressed them as follows:

> "We are a delegation representing thirty children who are here in this colony, and we implore you to do everything in your power to furnish us a school."

The words of these children must be carried to the United States.

SUNDAY, MAY 16TH

STAYED last night at the agronomist's little house. Crowded quarters. Not much sleep. Off at five o'clock this morning. Just passed a seven-hundred-acre tract of winter wheat. Rosen enthusiastic. This belongs to colony No. 16. "This wheat," says Rosen, "is the best we have seen in all our traveling." He shows us its development, purity, etc. And now acres and acres, settlement on settlement. . . . Groups, more groups of farmers . . . splendid wheat. I'd like to record it all . . . the talks with the settlers . . . their eager faces . . . their horny hands . . . the house building . . . these tiny settlements on the vast steppes . . . these brave beginnings of life . . . these men and women and children, from village, town and city

. . . from packed and filthy ghetto . . . their courage . . . their faith as they sweat and labor. . . .

We go into a dug-out, about fourteen feet square. Eight people live in it. It is a cellar dug into the ground. A fairly water-tight, thatched roof. At the door of the dug-out is a *mezuzzah.** Does religion perish in the fields?

The name of this colony is "Labor and Bread." The leader of the colony is a husky strapping man of middle life. His eyes twinkle as he greets us. We ask him how they are getting along here. "This year," says he, "we have enough labor; next year we hope to have enough bread."

Half a mile away are the ruins of an old estate, enough stones probably for another dozen houses or more. That's a grand asset.

WE COME now to a store. This is the beginning of a second collective, Rakitnow, a consumer's coöperative store started about three weeks ago. They have had a turnover here, in these three weeks of their existence, of a thousand roubles. They handle crockery, soap, small tools, kerosene, matches, pails, shoes, baskets, sausages, rope, flour—almost everything that is needed in the colonies. . . .

* A piece of parchment with sections of the Hebrew prayers, enclosed in a small box or container, attached to the right hand doorpost of the entrance to Jewish homes.

I buy some smoking tobacco here at the general store for seven kopeks. I try the new tobacco. I believe it is made of a local variety of cow dung. Dr. Kahn, who is less accurate but more poetical, says it is made of birch leaves. . . .

In this same building, which belongs to the community, a creamery has been installed. They mean to use this building also for meeting place, school, synagogue. By next winter they'll be giving theatrical performances here, I wager. I wish we could spare a little money for luxuries. Each of these colonies ought to have a Victrola.

TRACTORS at work plowing fields for fall planting. Shall I dictate more details? The sun moves across the heavens. The wide steppes. Jewish colonies. We have seen fifteen settlements in the Kherson district within a radius of seven miles.

We come now to Settlement No. 18, SHOLEM ALEICHEM; about four thousand acres. Large acreage in hay. Twenty-three houses have roofs, eighteen more being built. Eighty-four families are in this settlement. Thirty families here; only the working members of the other families.

Settlements Nos. 6 and 19 are near at hand—about twelve miles away.

TRACTOR headquarters. . . . Here is a permanent tractor base for the fifteen settlements lying within a radius of seven miles. There is a kerosene tank which holds ten thousand gallons. It is set deep in the ground with an automatic pump. There is also a smaller tank for gasoline.

A group of young settlers gallop toward us on horseback. "Our Jewish cowboys," says Rosen, a gleam in his eyes.

We stopped at Settlement No. 7, which has a well sixty meters (two hundred feet) deep. It took seven weeks of hard labor to dig this well; it had to be dug by hand. It could not be drilled, owing to the character of the soil. Right near is a pile of earth and white stone. The pile is quite a hillock. It was made of the material dug out of the ground when the well was built. It is a hillock twenty feet high. We climb to the top of this tiny elevation. Here the steppes lie flat. The tiny elevation is a mountain. Spread out before our eyes, along the horizon's rim we count fifteen Jewish villages.

ANOTHER coöperative store; this one at settlement No. 2. They have a turnover of fifteen hundred roubles a month. The members are the settlers. Here are some of the articles they sell, and the selling prices in dollars and cents:

Drinking glasses	7c
Cups	10c
Tin pails, about	65c
Fairly good sandals	$1.75
Pound of dried prunes	13c

AT THIS Settlement there is a doctor. Today is Sunday and there are quite a few patients. They are mainly Christian peasants who live in nearby homes. They get free treatment. Arranged by Rosen. He never forgets about the Christian neighbors.

I ask the doctor about health conditions. There is some tuberculosis among the Jews, I am told, but very little. At Lvov, malaria develops when the floods from the Dnieper River recede; but none here, as this is fairly far from the river and the malaria-breeding mosquito doesn't fly far. . . .

There are twenty-five hundred people in this doctor's charge. There are no cases of insanity; two cases of children with bone tuberculosis; considerable influenza, but no deaths; three cases, in all, of venereal disease.

I asked the doctor as to the health of the people now in his charge compared with their condition a year ago. He replied that he had been here only five months, and that he was not willing for that brief period to make a statement; but he was willing to

compare their health with the Jews in Ekaterinoslav, and to say that the general standard of health here is noticeably higher. Many of the Jews here, he says, are still anæmic, due to past underfeeding.

He made one other interesting remark, namely, that nearly every married woman in the colony of child-bearing age is pregnant; this fact deserves mention, as indicating that the families feel themselves of sufficient economic strength, despite the hardship of living conditions, to rear children. But that's not the only reason; on the land each child at an early age becomes a worker and an asset.

WE DRIVE toward SEIDEMENUCHA, the Hebrew for "Field of Rest." This is one of the old colonies founded with aid of the Czar Alexander; on the outskirts we visit an *ICA* house recently built. It is a small house; the inside is good, neat, clean; but the house is too small. I ask Dr. Rosen whether Seidemenucha has any tractors. He tells me that *ICA* has bought six tractors within the last two months. These are their first tractors.

Two years ago the *JDC* revived Seidemenucha, which was in terrible condition, put in *JDC* money, organized these coöperatives, etc., and brought our tractors to plow their fields.

We pass the corn planting of Seidemenucha, the

kind of corn planting introduced by Rosen into Russia. The Seidemenucha district, which lies beautifully in a valley beside the Inguletz River, has in all about five hundred families, with about thirty thousand acres. It is a colony about a century old, and is divided into three groups: Great Seidemenucha, Little Seidemenucha and Bobrovyi-Kut.

We visit the cheese coöperative organized by the *Agro-Joint.* They show us the cheese made only this morning. They have a stock of about two thousand pounds, worth about six hundred dollars. We are asked to go into the cellar where they keep the stock of cheese. "Feuer, Yankel" shouts the old Jew. Yankel brings a torch and takes us down the steep steps cut into the earth. I bump my head on the wooden ceiling. The ceiling, I think, is made of hard wood. This cheese has stars shining in it. Darting stars. I bend low as we mount the steps again.

Thirty-six cheese coöperatives organized by *Agro-Joint* in the old colonies are producing about a thousand poods a year each, which is thirty-six thousand pounds per colony, and thirty-six by thirty-six thousand is one million two hundred and ninety-six thousand pounds. The selling price is about twenty-five cents a pound, making a total of three hundred and twenty-four thousand dollars. Is my arithmetic right? This is just one of those jobs Rosen has done in an odd moment. The chief economic importance of these

cheese coöperatives to the old colonies is that they thereby get a use for their surplus milk.

Five families from these colonies have lately gone to Palestine. That's worth noting. Russia can be . . . will be the spring board whence healthy, strong Jewish folk of the land can go to Palestine.

THE HOUSES in Little Seidemenucha are in bad condition. We drive the whole length of the village street twice, counting the number of houses. These are the statistics:

There are eighty-three houses; the roofs of twenty-eight are dismantled in whole or in part, letting in the rain. Of these twenty-eight most of the roofs are seriously damaged so that the rafters show, and the rain pours right in. Some of these damaged houses are vacant; most of them are occupied. They sold the roofs in 1921 during the famine.

Selling the roof over-head. Famine, war, pestilence. A great life these people have lived. Yet they can still smile and crack a joke.

We now drive up the length of the street again to see how many houses are in good order. Ten are in something like first-class condition, whitewashed, with good weatherproof roofs.

We pass Great Seidemenucha; here, too, are many tumbledown roofs. There is a big synagogue here. We stop in front of the house of the *ICA* agronomist

of the Seidemenucha district. He built the house for himself with his own money. It is little, but charming; clean, with a tin roof, painted; the house whitewashed.

I VISIT a Jewish colonist at Seidemenucha. She is the widow Babitch. Before the war her husband was a well-to-do colonist with a good house and rich garden land. He died of starvation during the famine. Part of the tin roof of her house she had to take down during the famine, to exchange it for food. Two grown-up children went away during the famine to find food and work, and have not come back. From one of them she has never heard again. She mourns him as dead. A neighbor cultivates her land. She gets back a quarter of the yield. Her house is spotless; whitewashed by herself. And what is this? She has even a few little red and green ornamental Cubistic designs and decorations on the wall. Well painted too. The woman has talent. A bitter life. Her daily prayer is that one of her sons may come back and take care of the farm. She has been hiring out as a servant girl on other farms.

I could tell hundreds of such stories. They vary, of course, in detail. But the burden is pogroms, bandits, pestilence, famine. The Spanish Inquisition? It's overshadowed by the tragedy of the Russian Jews.

The pogroms of 1905; the terrible fear. The sword over every Jew's head. The horrible charge against Beiliss (and so against all the Jews of Russia) of ritual murder. But all this was only a prelude. 1914. The World War. The armies of Europe. Revolution. Counter-revolution. Occupation by Germans, Austrians; the red ebb and flow of war and blood. Bandits. Pogroms. Then for a finishing touch the famine of 1921, with cholera, typhus, dysentery.

I know an earnest, thoughtful, generous, American Jew. He must be worth at least five millions of dollars. He doesn't give a penny for this work. Doesn't believe in it. It's a matter of principle with him. He gives generously to American charities and other domestic good causes. His theory is that charity not only begins but ends at home. I wish he could spend a day with me here in Russia . . . at the Moscow coöperative; in the homes; out here on the steppes where these little groups of fifty families reconstruct life beneath the ample skies.

WE PASS through an Ukrainian village. The standard of building of the Ukrainian peasant is on the whole better than ours, though there is not so much uniformity. This village is within a few miles of Seidemenucha. The Russian villages in the Ukraine, through which I have passed, are almost uniformly of

good grade, and many of the houses larger than ours. I make careful note of this, in view of what Smidovitch said to me. . . .

It is six o'clock in the afternoon; we are four hours behind schedule. Battery trouble. A broken spring. Terrible roads. Just now we have had to ford a river. A trying moment; but we got across. We are miles from anywhere. It really looks at this moment as if we are to sleep in the fields tonight. . . . That wouldn't be so terrible.

ANOTHER Ukrainian village. A number of the houses are better than ours; some not so good. Some of the houses, evidently of the richer peasants, considerably better than ours. It is a village of over a thousand houses. Only two Jewish families live here. The *JDC* fed the people in this village during the famine and established a soup kitchen. There was a sign in the kitchen reading: "Supported by American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee." The sign is still there, I'm told. This is only one of the hundreds and hundreds of villages in which four years ago Jewish money saved the lives of the Russian peasants. It's too much to expect that the Russian peasant has unlearned the lesson of anti-Semitism which was dinned into him for a century. But I can't believe that he has altogether forgotten the help he had from Jews during the famine. Those signs were things I arranged

in London in the spring of 1922 when that fine man, Walter Lyman Brown (then European director of the American Relief Administration) reached an agreement with me as to the famine feeding program for the Ukraine. I'm a bit happy, I confess, about having had those posters made and spread through the Ukraine. I hope they did their bit to allay Anti-semitism.

"TWO MORE hours and we shall be at Kherson," says Dr. Rosen. "There each will have a room to himself and a decent bed, and we shall get a night's rest." . . . A night's rest. A decent meal. A clean bed! Rosen didn't half tell the grandeur of what was to come. . . .

We enter Kherson. The public square. Emerald lawns; a band-stand; the orchestra playing the delectable music of Petrushka; outdoor restaurant; tables covered with fine linen; a banquet; a Lucullan feast; fresh caviar, game; a glass of delectable white Crimean wine. The hotel: a bath, plenty of hot water, a spotless room, a rose-covered lamp at the bedside; perfect service. Who would have dreamed anything like this? . . . Dreamed? The poor old Cadillac gives a fearful jolt. . . .

I wake. We are driving through the broken, rusted, ragged gates of the ruined city of Kherson.

Fourteen governments since 1917. One-fourth of

the population destroyed by war, famine and pestilence. One-fourth. That's quite accurate. Miles of ruined houses. That's Kherson. The hotel? The less said the better. War, revolution, pestilence, plague, pogroms. A jolly life they've had, the people of Kherson, these past ten years. . . .

CHAPTER VI

MONDAY, MAY 17TH

KHERSON: We visit the small *Agro-Joint* carpenter shop. Carpenters are building window frames. It is worth while briefly to describe the window frames in order to give an idea of the substantial way in which the houses are being built. The inner part of the frame is built of pine logs which have been sawed into half. The frame is four feet by two feet six. Inside are three fitted frames for windows. These window frames are one and a half inches thick. This is by all odds the heaviest, most substantial window frame I have ever seen for a country house.

Here is another motor base for tractor and implement repairs. We see seeders, horse driven. There is also a contrivance, Russian made, but modeled after the American seeders, called a drill. Eleven rows of seed are planted as the horse pulls this vehicle along. Each one of these drills costs fifty-five to sixty dollars. There are a couple of thousand of these throughout our colonies.

This is the territory of Nechamovsky, a Russian Jew who went to America, became an American citizen, studied agriculture in the States, attending

the Farm School at Farmingdale, L. I. Of course, he speaks English. He came here with the tractor squad in 1923. Recently he married a daughter of one of the old colonists.

A lot of cable here, extra tires, seed cleaners, which latter are pretty good-sized wooden contrivances, costing about sixty dollars apiece. In every colony there are some of these cleaners. "Everybody," says Dr. Rosen, "knows what a seed cleaner is." I didn't. Now I do. It is an apparatus with a series of inclined planes, and the seed goes down these planes through sieves. The purpose of this is to get clean seed for planting, so as not to have weeds or mixtures. The sieves are of different sizes, so that the seeds can be separated. Dr. Rosen corrects me. "This machine does not separate the rye from the wheat, because the seeds are too much alike. You get pure seed out of the mixed fields by chopping off the heads of the rye growing in the wheat field. It's slow and careful work. But the results you have seen in the fields."

There is other machinery here. American cultivators; dairy utensils, etc.; also quantities of nuts, bolts, screws, locks, tires, nails, springs, wrenches, hammers, saws. There are three more warehouses in Kherson. I'm afraid Dr. Rosen will take me to all of them.

Another wareroom here—plows, reapers, harrows.

They tell me the Russian name for reaper. It is called a *"lobogreika."* The word means a thing that brings the sweat to the brow. . . . French sprayers for fruit trees. I see the name on the boxes—Ulysse Fabre, "Le Sans-Rival." They open one of these boxes and show me the sprayer. It is of bronze with a knapsack arrangement so that a man carries it on his back. These sprayers cost eleven roubles apiece in France; would have cost thirty-five roubles in Russia. We pay no import taxes. This right accorded by the Government to *Agro-Joint*—this right to import duty-free—is a matter of moment. Another piece of work put through by Rosen. They are adjusting one of these sprayers. I am arranging to have them spray me. I need it after recent nights in strange beds.

THE PEASANT, I find, is not like Millet's man with the hoe. All the aspects of modern machinery, industry and science touch this large-scale farming business. . . . Here is an invalid Dodge car. These pieces of American machinery, automobiles, tractors, plows, drillers. Here in far away Russia they get a sort of human quality. They shake hands with me. Poor old Dodge. His body has been taken off and a truck is being built on his chassis. All his snappy American style is gone. He is to be a tractor service truck. Our tractor squad doing this job. A blacksmith

and a machine worker are rebuilding some vats, made of tin, for cheese making. Three feet deep, four feet in diameter. . . .

Now we come to a door-making establishment. "Why not cut the doors down six or eight inches?" I ask. "You'd save quite a bit of lumber. They are a little higher than need be, and on these thousands of doors, lumber being the most important item, you might make a saving." Dr. Rosen doesn't concede my point. This life in the fields will make the Jews into taller, bigger, stronger men, he insists.

THE KHERSON Catacombs. . . . Under our warehouse are old oil and wine cellars, the passage through which is exactly like that in the catacombs I visited in Rome two months ago. A workman leads us through with a sputtering candle. Here are more stores, for our space is limited; more farming implements. . . .

Outside again. An electric motor has been installed. The total cost of power, ten roubles a month; and here all the parts of the tractor are being repaired. Here is a Jewish boy, a graduate of the Kherson Trade School, grinding a piston which is to be used on the tractor. To have these repairs done elsewhere would cost at least one hundred times—this is not a typographical mistake—one hundred times what it costs us at our own shop. This young mechanic is getting twenty roubles a month, but he is still an apprentice

and is learning his trade. Here our cars are being repaired after their strenuous ten days over the rough roads we traveled.

Records, statistical data, are presented to me to show the business system, accounting, etc. The commodity inventory accounting methods the same as at Kakhovka.

Nechomovsky (a member of the *Agro-Joint* tractor-squad) is in a glow about the wonderful wheat tracts in colony No. 16, because these fields were plowed with the tractors sent out from his base. . . . He is almost in tears . . . for we have told him we will not have time to visit Colony No. 16.

WE IN New York must stop talking about liquidating the work of the *JDC*. This is no short-time palliative relief enterprise, but a genuinely and tremendously big business. We have invested two million three hundred thousand dollars to date in the agricultural work. With this sum ten thousand families have been put on the soil. Rosen declares that a large part of our investment will be repaid by the settlers. We're going to have a sizable revolving fund, I hope, to continue the work and help the weaker ones in times of hardship. Indeed we must do this.

Our assets here, save for some wholly unforseeable catastrophe like famine or revolution, are going to be good for a lot of real money. There will have

to be some kind of organization over here for a long time, and a revolving fund to keep it going and meet emergencies. Farming may be individualistic, but big-scale farming on hundreds of thousands of acres requires permanent organization. Talk of finishing, of liquidating, is fatal. Fatal is not too strong a word. No business can thrive if the heads announce that they are going to go out of business at a given time in the near future. . . .

To THE lumber yard. On the way we pass the oldest synagogue in Kherson—a hundred and thirty years old; a dignified, handsome building. . . . We pass the big courthouse, a really fine building.

We arrive at the central lumber yard for all of the Ukraine. I thought the other lumber yards pretty big. This one dwarfs them all. A considerable accounting office. This is necessary, Lubarsky explains, because this is the center for the distribution of lumber throughout the Ukraine. Settlers are getting lumber here for their home building. They come with wagons, teams and horses. Daily inventory, commodity accounting system. The same little pass-books. The system identical with that at Lvov. An index tabulating the various kinds of lumber on hand.

The accounting office is white-washed and spotlessly clean. A young settler, twenty years old, arrives. "How are things going?" "Hard work." And he wipes

the sweat from his brow. "Do you want to go back to the city?" "*Niet; niet.* What for?" And his tone leaves no doubt.

Piles of pine boards, twenty-one feet long, one and a half inches thick, twelve inches wide. Piles of logs.

The man in charge of the lumber yard was formerly a wealthy lumber dealer. He gets a hundred roubles a month and is mighty glad to have the job.

An open shed. I pace it. Ninety by thirty-five feet.

Reapers. Not the kind of reaper used in America, but a combined reaper and hay-cutter. In America they have a special cutter for grain, which not only cuts but piles the grain into bundles. We cannot yet afford that kind of machine; hence this so-called universal machine for grain and hay. . . . Boxes on boxes of glass for windows. . . . A year ago they were sawing the logs with hand saws. Today they have an electric motor.

"Do you use the saw dust?" I idly asked Dr. Rosen. "Of course," is the answer. "We use it for airspaces in buildings and for fuel."

They are setting up another log cutting apparatus of iron and steel, made in England. This has been loaned to us by a man in Kherson. Concrete foundations being set up for this. A cement house, just finished, for housing this new motor which is to cut the biggest logs. The cement foundations for this new cutting machine go about eight feet into the ground

and are six feet in thickness. That gives an idea of the size and weight of the apparatus. Dr. Rosen counts the rings on a tree. It's a hundred and thirty-one years old. Four logs, each twenty feet in length, were cut from this one tree. . . .

A railroad siding at the lumber yard. More economy. Figure the saving in the haul. That railroad siding's an asset. . . . Another warehouse. More window frames. More tractors.

It's one thing to read about thousands of acres and plows and millions of grape vines and logs and window frames and reapers; it's another thing to see them. . . . To see them. That is the only way to realize the bigness of the job.

How ARE the crops marketed, and how about the price, I ask Dr. Rosen. This is his answer: The settlers may sell their crops in any way they please. There are no restrictions. At present the grain is purchased chiefly by the Government Bank or Government export organization, though also by private dealers. Our settlers have already organized quite a number of coöperatives and are selling their grain for export largely through the Government Bank, receiving on delivery at export station a guaranteed minimum of ninety cents per bushel, plus the excess of actual selling price over net delivery cost, the bank charging a commission of three per cent.

WE VISIT the synagogue, a large white stone building with a style of architecture which is new to me. Suggestions of Byzantium and French Chateau. Curious mixture; a kind of exotic beauty. It stands in a paved square with grass and trees. Adjacent to the synagogue is a school. There are seventeen more synagogues in Kherson. Before the war there were twenty-three. Attendance at the synagogue was reduced a good deal, but now they have a good cantor and choir, and whether it's that which attracts the people I don't know, but the fact is, they tell me, that the attendance in the synagogues is on the increase.

Quite a few people are trying to revive and stimulate religious life. "Is there religious attendance among the children and the young?" I asked. The answer was: "If you have a good rabbi and cantor and choir, even the young people come. But if it is uninteresting they don't come." This answer was given me by the president of the synagogue, who happened to be in the synagogue when we visited it. I fancy his statement holds good for many a church in many a country.

"How is it going with the Jewish business men in Kherson?" I then asked. He shook his head sadly. "Terrible," was his reply. "The business men cannot get on here, and the small trader—hopeless." Accompanying the president is another man. I ask him the same question about the business man. He answers

sorrowfully in Yiddish: "I don't want to talk about it." I can't get another word out of him.

TO THE Kherson court house, which we passed earlier this morning. It is both a civil and a criminal court. The civil court is not in session today, only one branch of the criminal court. I can't miss this. Rosen doesn't want me to lose any time here. He has other *Agro-Joint* activities to show me. "What have the courts to do with the business in hand?" my taskmaster asks. But I was not to be denied.

We went into the small court room. Three judges sat on a slightly raised platform. The presiding judge was a man of about fifty. He is a Communist, a member of the party, Lubarsky explained. He wore a cheap, dark blue Tolstovka, no coat. He was quite bald, had a large black moustache, wore glasses, looked like an intellectual. He was composed and businesslike. The two associate judges were young fellows, both of them probably under twenty-five, typical blond Russians. During the session the chief judge hardly consulted them. He was the boss of the show.

The raised platform on which the judges sat was draped with faded turkey-red cotton. Some thirty people sat on the wooden benches which faced the bench.

A man stands at the foot of the bench. What is he?

Complainant? Witness? Defendant? He is poorly clad, but decent looking; evidently much frightened. Serious business is going on. I can see that. The presiding judge is asking him questions with severe earnestness. The court room is hushed. A young woman is brought in. The man had stood in a sort of enclosure, a pen. The young woman had not been in the court room. She walks in. She stands close to the presiding judge. He is questioning her. The thing is deadly serious. The judge's voice is lowered almost to a whisper. We can scarcely hear. The woman is answering with a catch in her voice. The court room is cleared. We have to make our exit.

This is what it was all about. The parents of the young woman and also a young man, whose relations to her were not disclosed, have filed a criminal charge of rape against the defendant. The defendant has testified that he had had sexual relations with the girl, but afterwards married her; that she is his wife; that he loves her. She has admitted that she married him, but asserts she did so under duress; he threatened to kill her if she didn't marry him, said she. She is asked whether she wants to give testimony behind closed doors. That is her wish. It is a right granted in such cases; that's why the court room was cleared.

It is too bad I hadn't time to wait for the end of this chapter of Dostoievsky.

"That judge was pretty good," said I. "I wonder what kind of a lawyer he is?" "Lawyer? He isn't a lawyer," Dr. Rosen answered, "but an ordinary workman. The Communists select a number of workmen who preside over the courts. He is a permanent judge of the court. The other two judges need not be members of the Communist Party. But they must be either workmen or peasants."

These are the proletarian courts, and I learned that the first thing the judge had asked the girl complainant was to tell him her economic and social status. These courts make no bones about it; the workers and peasants have the better of it. It is to these groups that this country belongs and not to the despised bourgeoisie. The codes and status of Soviet Russia favor the workmen and peasants over other classes. . . .

WE VISIT the polyclinic in Kherson. About four to five hundred patients come here daily. Seven departments. Nine physicians in charge. I talked with Dr. Chassin, head physician. This is a non-sectarian institution; considerably over half the patients are Jews. All the doctors are Jews.

The total budget of this institution is about a thousand roubles per month. We supply four hundred roubles a month; the Government gives four hundred roubles a month; two hundred roubles a month are

furnished by the people of Kherson. In other words, this hospital, run on a budget of six thousand dollars a year, takes care of five hundred cases a day. Not bad.

The general health in the last few years has improved, Dr. Chassin says. As a result of investigations as to trachoma among the Jews and non-Jews, he finds the largest percentage among Germans and the lowest among Jews. But there is much tuberculosis among Jews—the terrible effects of famine and privation during the civil wars.

We pass through the various departments—the drug store, where they issue about one hundred and fifty prescriptions per day. We meet the woman doctor in charge of children's diseases. On Saturday they had a hundred patients here. Today she cared for twenty-three mothers and children. We meet the doctor who has charge of the ear, throat and nose department. There were seventy patients here this morning. Two women doctors are in charge of the department for women's diseases. Several nurses are in attendance. All the rooms are white-washed and clean. . . . Amazing, how the *JDC* has entered the lives of the Jews of Russia.

WE VISIT the trade school. This is a local institution built by local people. It's now locally supported, except for a hundred roubles a month we give for

lunches for pupils. We restored this school after the famine, re-equipped it, put in tools, repaired windows, spent about five thousand roubles. This is a big, stone, substantial-looking building, two stories high, running along about a hundred and fifty feet on one street and about a hundred and fifty feet on another. It is known as the Jewish Professional Technical School. They have four major departments:

a. Iron casting department,
b. Metal work department,
c. Wood work department,
d. Blacksmith department,

and a small department for girls. . . .

We go into the school. Boys with grimy hands and faces are hard at work. "How many trade schools are there like this?" I ask Dr. Rosen. "About a dozen." "How many trade schools in all is the *Agro-Joint* supporting?" "Forty-two." "How many pupils?" "All together, three thousand five hundred and sixty-five. I happen to remember the figure, because I had to sign an appropriation for the trade schools the day before we left Moscow."

"These boys," said Dr. Rosen, "are not being taught to be artisans in the sense of being handworkers. The day of the handworker in Russia is past. The present government is seeking to industrialize Russia. There will, of course, always be some place for the

little shoe repairer and tailor, but the industry for which we are preparing these boys is factory work. The Government takes special interest in trade schools; the Department of Labor place trade school graduates in the factory. Before the war Jews were not accepted in the factories, except in Bialystok and some of the Polish textile factories. Now they are, though it still is more difficult to place a Jew than a non-Jew in the factory."

This statement summarizes a long talk with Dr. Rosen. I stress the economic aspect of the trade school in Russia, which I had not hitherto really appreciated. The relation of the trade school to the economic scheme in Russia is a weighty point which the boys understand. Graduates of trade schools automatically become members of the labor unions. This is of extreme significance, bringing such workers into the favored categories, and also because only the members of trade unions get factory jobs.

The trade school course is usually three years. For the establishment or restoration of these trade schools the *JDC* two years ago expended in all about two hundred thousand dollars. The *Agro-Joint* is now helping to support all these schools, but they are supported chiefly by the Government.

This Government is hard up for cash and credits. Yet forty per cent. of the expenses of the dispensary we visited this morning and over fifty per cent. of the

expense of maintaining the trade schools are borne by the Government. Here are facts—deeds, not promises.

WE ARE now spending about eighteen thousand dollars a year for trade schools; *ICA* also helps these schools, chiefly by paying part of the teachers' salaries. They spend about twenty-five thousand dollars a year, I believe, in this work. They spend it well. I wish they and we could spend ten times as much. It's a splendid, hopeful, constructive job. I like to see the Jewish boys working at complicated machinery, their faces and hands grimy, their minds and muscles alert. . . .

CHAPTER VII

CONFERENCE AT AGRO-JOINT OFFICE, KHERSON,

MAY 17, 1926

PRESENT

Dr. Rosen — Mr. Lubarsky
Dr. Kahn — Mr. Rosenberg
Miss Frisch

WE ARE now entering into a long, dull, uninteresting statistical, financial discussion for the purpose of ascertaining the financial situation of *Agro-Joint* and of our work; the housing problem; the results to date of our work. These subjects we have discussed repeatedly. It becomes necessary to have a series of formal meetings. It would perhaps be best to summarize what follows; but on careful consideration I prefer to give the whole picture as it developed for these statistical details are, I believe, genuinely important.

My first question then is as follows: "As of May 1, 1926, how many settlers have we placed on the soil since the very beginning of the work?"

Dr. Rosen answers as follows:

"To begin with, we mention one thousand families that settled on the soil in the Odessa district. That work started in 1923; we did not feel we could assume responsibility for that work, therefore we supported the Odessa Committee of the *ORT*,* to which we supplied certain funds,—all together, in round figures, $75,000. This work was carried on by the Odessa Committee of the *ORT* until the end of the season in 1925.

There is further talk on this subject. It ends with consensus of opinion that, while the *JDC* is under no responsibility, the Odessa *ORT* settlers still need further help.†

Dr. Rosen then explains the work in White Russia, where over one thousand settlers were helped to the soil through the White Russian Committee of the *ORT*. *JDC* gave them about $50,000 through the White Russian Committee. The work was under the supervision of Kaz and Oogorsky, very competent men. Kaz was connected with the *JDC* for a number of years. This work is now being continued on a large scale by the White Russian Government and through the assistance of *Komzet* and *Ozet*, which spent this year

* *ORT*. The Society for the promotion of agriculture among Jews, organized and directed largely by Eastern European leaders.

† This has since been put through. The *JDC* has allotted $175,000 for the *ORT*, chiefly to complete this colonization work.

about $200,000 for Jewish agricultural settlements in White Russia. We have no responsibility to these White Russian settlers; nor is it necessary for us to help them.

ROSEN: Then there are the *Chalutzim* and the *Soobotniki.* The latter are a group of peasants in the Voronezsh province who have accepted the Jewish religion—about one hundred families to whom we rendered assistance. We helped them to buy live stock, and spent for them about $3,000. This meant the difference to them between being able to continue or abandon their work. We are under no further commitment either to them or the *Chalutzim* of any kind. Nobody but the *JDC* and the Russian Government helped the *Chalutzim* in their agricultural work.

ROSENBERG: When you talk about families to whom we have any commitment, do you include the *Chalutzim;* for example, the Tel-Chai settlement which I saw?

ROSEN: No; we do not include them; they need no more help. All the work done by the *Chalutzim* was done through the aid of the *Agro-Joint.* Now they are independent. We have no commitments to the *Chalutzim.* We spent all together for them considerably over $50,000. Tel-Chai started with a dozen people and one hundred roubles. At present this settlement is self-supporting.

ROSENBERG: Have they paid anything back?

ROSEN: No; not yet.

ROSENBERG: How many *Chalutzim* have been able to settle through help of the *JDC?*

ROSEN: About 2,000.

ROSENBERG: When you have made reports to America, have you included these in the families settled by us?

ROSEN: No. They wanted to settle themselves, but they were penniless, so we supported them and assisted them till they could make a go of it.

ROSENBERG: Are these *Chalutzim* groups and committees known in Russia as Zionist groups?

ROSEN: Surely. They are legalized Zionist groups.

ROSENBERG: How much land, approximately, has the Government granted to the *Chalutzim* groups?

ROSEN: They have about 75,000 acres. They generally got the land on a rental basis in the first instance. This was bad. It meant that they were subject to the danger of having it taken away from them. Later, in the Crimea, the Government gave them the land on a toiler's usage basis, the same as our settlers have. The *Agro-Joint* aided in arranging this.

ROSENBERG: What other work, if any, have the *Chalutzim* done and are you helping in it?

ROSEN: They started with only one colony and they now have fourteen. Every one of these colonies has been helped with our money.

ROSENBERG: What other Jewish groups have we helped to put on the soil or helped to get started as agriculturists?

ROSEN: There are two groups of mountain Jews in northern Caucasus.

ROSENBERG: How large are these groups?

ROSEN: They consist of about one hundred families, or about five hundred people.

ROSENBERG: Do we owe them any further responsibility?

ROSEN: No.

ROSENBERG: Are there any others?

ROSEN: Yes. About fifty scattered families especially deserving of being restored to agricultural work, to whom we gave individual loans.

ROSENBERG: Are these commitments to these people?

ROSEN: No.

ROSENBERG: How many non-Jewish farm families did you help after the famine work was over?

ROSEN: Over sixteen thousand families in one way or another, sometimes with tractor work, which was extensive; sometimes with live stock; sometimes with machinery, etc., depending on the local needs. These are in nearly all cases neighbors of our Jewish colonists.

ROSENBERG: Have you found it possible to discontinue the help for these non-Jewish peasants?

ROSEN: In the Crimea, particularly, we are still doing work for them. Altogether, we are now spending in the Crimea, together with the *Komzet*, about $50,000 for non-Jewish peasants. About sixty percent is *Agro-Joint* and about forty percent *Komzet* money. This help is to Christian peasants only, chiefly Tartars, a few Germans, a few Armenians, but always restricted to peasants and new settlers.

ROSENBERG: Are you making it known to these non-Jewish settlers and peasants that it is the Jewish *Agro-Joint* which is helping them?

ROSEN: Yes.

KAHN: When I was here last year and we arrived in Jankoi, a delegation of the leading Tartars came to Jankoi to welcome Dr. Rosen and thank him for the work he had done for them.

ROSENBERG: Does the general body of the Tartar population in the Crimea know of the help that has been given?

ROSEN: Oh, yes.

At this point Lubarsky produces a letter of April, 1926, just received from a Christian peasant village, thanking for the help we gave in 1922–1923, and asking if we can help a few more of these people.

ROSEN: We have had many, many letters from the Russian peasants expressing their gratitude. I sent most of these letters to New York.

ROSENBERG: Now let us deal with the old colonies.

As I understand it, there are about eight thousand families of Jews in the old colonies of the Ukraine.

ROSEN: That is right, but does not include the Vitebsk district, White Russia, Kiev province. There are eight thousand families in the thirty-six old colonies in the Ukraine. These colonies we have helped with a total of about $250,000. Our total expenditure in agricultural work for 1923 for the old colonists was $350,000, but this was partly for Odessa, partly for White Russia.

ROSENBERG: How many families are in those latter districts?

ROSEN: Not less than five thousand families.

The discussion grows more and more statistical. Rosen, before answering the questions, always turns to Lubarsky for consultation and confirmation. Lubarsky has ledgers, records, statistics before him produced at my request. Long discussions take place.

At last we set down the following data:

In White Russia, 1,000 new families were established with our financial aid, i. e.	5,000	people
In Odessa, *ORT* colonies helped by us (1,000 families)	5,000	"
100 families of Soobotniki	500	"
Chalutzim	2,000	"

Northern Caucasian	500	people
Scattered—50 families	250	"
	13,250	"

Therefore, excluding the *Agro-Joint* colonists we have the following totals:

New settlers helped to the soil .	13,250	people
Russian peasants, non-Jewish families helped in agricultural life (16,000 families)	80,000	"
Agricultural life restored for 13,000 families in the old colonies with $350,000. This means	65,000	"

ROSEN: Yes; those figures are right.

ROSENBERG: Now for our colonists, those who look to *Agro-Joint.*

ROSEN: Let us make a tabulation.

	Families settled
Kherson	2,700
Krivoy-Rog	1,200
Crimea	2,500

and two minor groups as follows:

	Families
The Volhynia vineyard and hop-raising group	250
The Kakhovka, etc., vineyard group	168

As to these two smaller groups, they are people who live in their houses not far away, and there is no housing problem for them. They are being helped this year with about $10,000. They will need no more. If, however, we increase the scope of this vineyard and hop-raising work, it will, of course, need more money.

Lubarsky interrupts to remind Rosen of the Podolia group. The Podolia Jewish tobacco growers consist of not less than 2,000 families in the Podolia and Volhynia district, whom we helped very substantially in 1923 and 1924. We have no further commitments or any obligations in connection with them.

The following final tabulation then, dealing with a family as composed of five persons, is made:

NON-JEWS

Non-Jewish settlers helped on or to the soil by the *JDC* and the *Agro-Joint*	80,000

JEWS

White Russia, *ORT* Group .	5,000	
Odessa, *ORT* group	5,000	
Soobotniki	500	
Chalutzim	2,000	
North Caucasus Jews	500	
Scattered	250	
Vineyards, Volhynia and Kakhovka	2,000	
Agro-Joint, 6,400 families, i. e.	32,000	
Total of Jewish new settlers helped to the soil to date		47,250
Old colonists helped, total		65,000
Podolia and Volhynia tobacco growers		10,000
Grand aggregate helped in agricultural life		202,250

Of whom 120,000 are Jews.

WE ARE interrupted. A boy of eighteen manages to get into our office. He must see Dr. Rosen, they tell us. I protest. This is an important discussion. But a word

is spoken in Russian to Dr. Rosen. This boy, it turns out has walked all the way from Kiev to Kherson to become a colonist. This is a distance of not quite three hundred miles. Dr. Rosen talks to the boy. He is going to find a place for him on the soil. The rebuilder of lives. . . . We continue our discussions.

ROSENBERG: How about the *Agro-Joint* settlers, the seven thousand families?

ROSEN: The total program for this year is to settle three thousand five hundred families; one thousand five hundred have already been settled; five hundred will be placed during May and June; one thousand five hundred more in August and September.

ROSENBERG: Then, after these five hundred families are settled, we shall have six thousand nine hundred families settled. For purposes of easy computation, let us call that figure seven thousand. As to those seven thousand families, what is the housing situation?

ROSEN: A thousand families are taken care of by the old buildings on the estates. I would not call it comfortable—no, not even decent living; but we can for the time leave them without any additional buildings and they can live. You have seen them; they are crowded but their health condition is far above that of the city dwellers. By the end of this season, October, two thousand new houses will have been completed; one thousand in fact are already finished; the

other one thousand in the process of construction; many rapidly approaching completion, as you yourself have seen. In these two thousand houses we intend to house not less than four thousand families. These houses are not intended as permanent two-family houses. Two families per house means congested conditions, but is certainly an immense improvement over the conditions in most of the towns and villages they come from, and will suffice for several years. It is expected that, as the settlement work progresses, each of these families will in time be able to build a house for itself.

This leaves, out of the seven thousand families, two thousand unprovided with houses. These houses are of two sizes; one is 28 ft. by 38 ft., the living part, exclusive of the stable; the other is 21 by 38. This year we are building only the smaller houses. The larger houses have four rooms and a kitchen, and the smaller houses have three rooms and a kitchen. The stable is 17½ feet in length. These stables are large enough to accommodate two horses. The larger stables will accommodate six animals; the smaller ones four or five.

ROSENBERG: What is the minimum requirement of a family as to horses and cows?

ROSEN: Two horses and a cow, though quite a number manage to get along with one horse and a cow. There are, however, a good many who have four

horses. The average number is not less than two horses and one cow.

ROSENBERG: How much does one of these houses cost?

ROSEN: The smaller houses cost one thousand one hundred roubles apiece. That includes the whole business—stable, roof, doors, windows and whole houses, interior and exterior. During 1927 another two thousand houses will have to be built in order to make sure that all our seven thousand families are sheltered. This doesn't mean that each family has its own house. It means one thousand families in old estate buildings and six thousand families in four thousand houses. This is for the time and for several years sufficient. Three hundred and ten dollars is our limit in the shape of a long-time loan at three percent per annum for house building. Therefore, to build two thousand houses means loans by us in round figures of $600,000.

ROSENBERG: How is the rest provided?

ROSEN: The settlers put in quite some of their own money; considerable money comes from *Komzet* loans. The *Komzet* this year is loaning the settlers $1,000,000 on long-term six percent loans, and is now considering loans for one thousand two hundred new houses. Some saving comes from the fact that the people don't complete their houses at once. This year, however, everybody should be in a position to finish

his house from his own income, owing to the bumper crops.

ROSENBERG: Will it not be necessary also to improve living conditions in the old estates, such as Kadima, and build some schools? And how about equipment?

This question opened new doors. A final result was reached at last. It was as follows: A million dollars must still be spent for the immediate or early requirements of these seven thousand settlers. This will provide loans of $350 for two thousand houses; the balance of $300,000 is to be used for schools, communal buildings and additional needed equipment and live stock.

ROSENBERG: Let us assume that we have $1,500,000 for 1926 and $1,500,000 for 1927 and again for 1928 for agricultural work. Let us take from that the million and a half already spent and another million dollars, which will be required to furnish enough houses, additional equipment, and a sufficient beginning for communal buildings for the seven thousand settlers. That will leave for all other work, for settlement, for buying new tractors, farming implements and all other needs, the sum of $2,000,000 spread over a period ending in December, 1928. You therefore have this problem: Time is of the essence, as I fully appreciate, in getting the desirable lands. On the other hand, we have all seen many businesses

fail through over-expansion, through insufficient capital, through traveling on too much borrowed money, or in other words through trying to bite off more than can be chewed. We are anxious to settle as many families as we can settle satisfactorily. I ask, then, how many additional families can safely be settled with this two million dollars?

ROSEN: I will answer tomorrow.

WE SUSPENDED business to go to a meeting of the Kherson Jews. The next day our talk continued for many hours. At last Rosen was ready with his answer. This is his statement:

ROSEN: Though *Komzet* (the Russian government agency for Jewish land settlement) is doing much, let us figure only on the basis of our own resources for the future. Perhaps *Komzet* may work in independent separate regions. If we spend 1,000 roubles or $500 per family, that will be the maximum we will need to do. That means at least one house for two families, without counting the natural increase of house building if crops are good. It means, also, sufficient live stock, implements, etc., so that the settlers can take care of themselves. Figure 1,000 roubles per family. That means four thousand families. For my part, I am sure we can take five thousand, because many families can get along with hardly any help from us. We can put through such a program; I'm not afraid

to tackle it. I don't intend to gamble with human lives. But I tell you we can settle five thousand families in the next two years.

ROSENBERG: Before we close this talk, will you kindly state what *Komzet* has done?

ROSEN: In 1926 *Komzet* has done the following:

$500,000. in loans running from two to seven years, with interest at six percent;
$250,000. lumber, outright gift;
$180,000. in machinery furnished on long-term four to five years' credit for farming machinery. The farmers were required to put up no cash whatever.

In 1925 and 1926 the settlers received land having a pre-war value of $12,000,000. The Ukrainian Government also gave long-term credits this year for $250,000.

ROSENBERG: Please give a summary of what *Agro-Joint* and *JDC* have done up to May 1st of this year.

ROSEN: The grand total to May 1st of moneys spent by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint* in all forms of agricultural work (I do not include trade schools, kassas or other reconstructive work not having to do with agriculture) is $2,300,000. This covers the work both for new and old settlers and is subdivided as follows:

To the old colonies and old settlers .. $400,000
To the *ORT* settlers helped by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint* and for other miscellaneous agricultural work $200,000

The balance of $1,700,000 represents the expenditure to date for the seven thousand families that are being taken care of by the *Agro-Joint* directly.

ROSENBERG: Can you tell me the grand total of money spend by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint* for other reconstructive purposes, i. e., kassas, trade schools, medical institutions and coöperatives, help to artisans, etc.?

ROSEN: One million dollars.

ROSENBERG: The grand total then of money spent by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint* in all reconstructive activities, under your supervision, to May 1st, would be $3,300,000. Is that correct?

ROSEN: Yes, that is right. Now you see that our average cost per family, including our administrative expense, instruction in agriculture and everything else, amounts to about $250 per family. The total cost per family amounts to $750, of which one-third comes from the Government, one-third from the settlers, one-third from us. In addition the Government also furnishes the land.

In the first registration of 1924–1925, twenty-five thousand families registered for land settlement. Of these twenty-five thousand, ten thousand were actu-

ally placed on the soil. It was naturally to be expected that the second registration would show a smaller number of applicants. The actual fact is that in the second registration the number of applicants came up to thirty thousand, despite the fact that we have not yet had any records of registrations in seven of the large provinces from which I would expect at least fifteen thousand more families as applicants for permission to go on the soil. I am positive that there are at least forty thousand Russian Jewish families eager to go on the land and there is no question that none of these families are now able to make a living or have any future before them in the towns and cities. The schedules we have worked out show that with $1,500,000 a year for 1927 and 1928 we will be able to aid in the settlement of another five thousand families. This meets so small a portion of the acute need that I hope that the people in the United States will substantially increase their commitments, particularly as the opportunity for land settlement is a temporary thing and once the chance has gone by it will have gone forever.

So end the tedious statistical discussions.

I RECORD the essentials of the meeting with leading Kherson Jews.

(1) All agreed that colonization is the matter of

prime importance for the economic salvation of the Jews in Russia.

(2) They described, just as did the Moscow Jews, the terrible situation of the declassed Jews, the tradesmen. They have to pay heavily increased charges for water, light, all public utilities. They are taxed more heavily. They are in the last category of Russian citizens. Their rent is much higher than for the workman. Children of the tradesmen are allowed into the schools only after the children of all other categories are provided for. Since the schooling facilities are inadequate, the result is obvious. The Jewish trader can't get into the hospital, the sanatorium—into any place—until the early categories, soldiers, workmen and peasants, are first taken care of.

(3) The coöperatives and Government stores are resistlessly driving out the tradesmen. Whatever the political swing of the Government, this economic process continues.

(4) As to the location of additional colonization work, the meeting, to a man, agreed that the position of the Jew is better in the Crimea than in the Ukraine. Anti-Semitism, hatred against the Jews, has been bred into the Ukrainians for centuries, and while conditions have been ameliorated, these men here in conference feel that the situation among the Tartars,

German colonists, etc., in the Crimea is far more favorable. In the Ukraine, the Jews are a minority population as against a cohesive Ukraine majority. In the Crimea the population is one of many mixed racial and national groups. There is no one group of majority population.

CHAPTER VIII

MAY 18TH

IN THE car; on the way to the colonies in Nikolaiev and Odessa. Miles of ruined houses. We pause at a great grave in which are buried eight hundred people who died of starvation. Of the seventy-five thousand inhabitants of Kherson before the famine, twenty thousand died. Whole blocks of houses in the Jewish quarter abandoned, crumbled, fallen to pieces. Here a great pile of broken stone; the remnants of an armory. Cattle grazing where once were city streets; cattle grazing under the shade of jagged walls where thriving houses stood. . . . What a record of tragedy are these silent, broken walls; these abandoned, broken shells of houses.

THE GREEN steppes again. A settlement on the horizon. We count twelve houses. Dr. Kahn was here a year ago. There was then not a single house. We get nearer. Now I can count eighteen houses. The agronomist, Aronovitch, is with us. He can't believe his eyes. When he was here only three weeks ago, there were twelve houses. Three weeks? I ask him

again to make sure. They're working, these colonists. There are ten settlements in this district.

We pass eight teams, settlers in all of them, hauling stone from their own quarry. Two wagons are empty, returning to the quarry for more stone. The horses shy at the motor. The settlers jump off the wagons; grab the horses' heads. Not afraid of the horses. Know how to handle them.

We come to one of the ten settlements. VAVILOFF. Tract No. 17. Here are houses in all stages of construction. A regular building boom. Some of the houses are completely finished, whitewashed, tin and shingle roofs. It is a year since Rosen has been here. He is overjoyed. They have set out the houses on a street. "Another year—and there will be spruce, sycamore and apple trees, and the perfume of the acacias will make you dizzy," says Rosen, bursting into rhapsody.

Our first stop is at the dispensary for all these villages. A woman doctor there. They have had no epidemics of disease. They have had two serious cases of sleeping sickness; these were sent to the Kherson hospital. There is no tuberculosis; no venereal disease or malaria.

"Are the people underfed, or are they well nourished?" I ask. She says that many children still show the effect of undernourishment.

I ask what attitude she finds among the people here.

Are they discouraged? "They find it a difficult task," she says. "But do they want to go back?" I ask. I understand the answer without translation. A vigorous "*Niet*" and a shake of the head. "How about the men? Are they discouraged?" "No; they are full of hope and energy. The women find it harder than the men. They want the houses finished. Then they are satisfied."

We meet another woman, the druggist, the doctor's assistant; wife of a settler who manages the coöperative store, and is the president of the coöperative society. . . .

THIS MORNING Dr. Rosen closed an agreement with the veterinary representing the Government, whereby, for a rouble apiece, we insure our horses and cattle at the value of a hundred roubles apiece. This is Government insurance. Insurance at a hundred roubles gives a fair indication of the value which the Government places on our settlers' horses and cattle. In one of the other villages there is a veterinary station for these ten settlements with a veterinary attached.

We talk with the settlers, a crowd of whom—men, women and children—have gathered around us.

How is the housing getting along, we ask an old Jew. "In a year we shall all have houses." There are about fifty families in this group. Two hundred and forty-eight people already; fifty more coming.

The railroad track only two hundred yards from this colony.

OFF AGAIN. As we leave, we pass the vineyards newly planted this year. Fences being built to enclose the vineyards.

Two thousand two hundred and fifty acres in this settlement; nine hundred acres planted to winter wheat. We pass their spring planting of about six hundred acres. This should produce twelve thousand dollars, a little over two hundred dollars per family. No wonder the old Jew declared so proudly: "In another year every family will have its own house."

They have about sixty horses and about fifty cows. This is not enough. They need forty more horses and twenty more cows. They have, however, quite a lot of colts and calves.

Seven miles of our acres. The velvety green of the wheat, the chocolate brown of the earth, harrowed for the planting of next year's winter wheat.

We pass a Government estate, four thousand acres, completely surrounded by these tracts. Rosen expects the Government to allot this to us. It has ample buildings.

ANOTHER settlement. Fields of rye. Another horizon with another new settlement. . . . The one which we just left was a 1925 settlement. This one is also.

I count fifteen houses on the edge of the horizon. . . .

Settlements Nos. 8, 12, 13. Hay fields. Talks with settlers. . . . Same story. Life in the town was unbearable. . . . On again. To our left, untilled fields brilliant with wild flowers; daisies, wild flax, thistle. . . . This is the way all these miles of fields looked a year ago in the settlements we visited today.

Foundations for new houses in Settlement No. 12. . . . Miles of crops. Spring wheat on both sides of the road. Eight hundred acres of it. A poor field of winter wheat. "Why?" "Because the ground was not properly prepared," says Dr. Rosen. "The people came out too late to prepare summer tillage." We come to a good crop. What a difference! This was summer-tilled. Six hundred acres. . . .

Settlement No. 13 has a first-class crop of winter wheat. Rosen is satisfied. Summer tillage. Five weeks from now fifteen thousand men and women will be in the fields reaping the winter wheat. "That's a decent army," says Rosen. I wish I could wait to see it.

Settlement No. 15. A 1925 settlement. Twelve houses on the horizon.

Settlement No. 8. The ruins of old houses from the old estate which they use for building purposes. They have already laid the foundation for a public bath-house. Twenty-three houses here; not one last year. One of the houses used as a school. Insufficient

housing, but a school for the children. Significant. Everyone busy at building.

We drive by Settlement No. 9. No time to stop. The winter wheat here has been summer-tilled. You don't have to be an agronomist to see how wonderful this crop is—five hundred acres of it. A new well has just been finished here, a hundred and thirty-five feet deep. The Jews, the hardy pioneers, gather round. Wonder stricken, they have smitten the rock and it has gushed forth its blessing of water. I become lyrical.

Tract No. 37. A 1926 settlement, the last colony I am to visit. They are living in dugouts. But, though they have been here only two months, they have already started building nine houses; some already putting on the roofs.

Their acreage is about three thousand, and there are fifty families. They have seeded six hundred acres of spring wheat; but, so far, nothing else.

They come running out from their houses as they see the motor stop. A group gathers around, the last group of settlers for me to see, unless I return again in the years to come. . . . Just above I said that they had started nine houses. Inquiry has been made of the settlers. In two months they have started twenty-three houses. There are three families here with their small children.

My heart is heavy as I say good-bye to them. Will

they succeed, these pioneers? Their courage seems superb. As I leave them the image remains in my mind of old Moses and his parting words: "Don't forget us." Young and old, I believe in them, in their strength, their endurance and their courage. But we've got to continue to help in this historic, tremendous task.

IN THE colony we just left was a young woman, good-looking and strong, sent out as the working member of her family. "You can be proud of your sex," said Dr. Rosen, turning to Miss Frisch. "This young woman is, herself, with her own hands, building a house for her family." And, though neither woman could speak the other's language, there were tears in the eyes of both as they shook hands.

SO WE said good-bye to the last of the colonies we were to see. As we left them Dr. Kahn remarked: "These people will build a future for themselves if we don't neglect them. That doesn't mean that after three or four years we have still financially to support them, but they must know that they have our moral support. We must have our agronomists here, who will instruct them and will inspire them with courage and an *esprit de corps*, so that they will feel that they are tied up with the Jewry of America, and that, in case of distress, this Jewry will come to their help. This

is the work most needed for them when they are settled. They have got to know that they are not isolated from the Jews of the rest of the world; that there is a connecting link and tie. This does not mean many dollars, but moral support."

Dr. Kahn speaks wisely. We shall have to remember his words,—we, in America.

WE ARRIVE at Nikolaiev. It was one of the greatest ports in Russia for export of grain. It resumes life. It was occupied by Germans during the war. There was a lot of fighting here. Many ruined buildings stand open to the sky. Dr. Rosen points to a building in which he resided for a while during the famine days, and outside of which he remembers a thousand men and women standing all night waiting their turn to get a handful of corn grits or grain. Nikolaiev was the chief Ukrainian distributing center in the *ARA* days. . . .

Car trouble again. . . . We cannot make Odessa; must stay overnight in the tiny Russian village of Feodorovska. Arkady, our chauffeur, knows a good old Jewish widow there. Hers is the only Jewish home in this village. She has housed various members of the *ARA* and the *JDC* during famine days. She welcomes us, gives us food and beds. It is Sh'bueth * evening; the little house is spotless. The clay floor and

* The Festival of Weeks.

the walls are garlanded with greens. *Yom-tov* (Holiday) candles and *challa* (Holiday Bread) are on the table. The sleeping quarters are congested, but the beds are clean.

Following the revolution, this widow, like all the other people of the village, had been granted a small tract of land. She has fifteen acres. Dr. Kahn makes an interesting query: How many Jews throughout Russia have, like their non-Jewish neighbors, become owners of small parcels? The former proprietor, a large landowner, owned a hundred and twenty-seven thousand acres, seven villages and twenty-two sugar factories. All of this land is now owned by the peasants; the sugar factories have been taken over by the Government. There's a glimpse of what revolution has meant in the lives of rich and poor.

The widow was born in this village; she and her Christian peasant neighbors get along well together. The houses here are good and substantial.

CHAPTER IX

MAY 19TH

WE START for Odessa at five in the morning. Over the steppes; the early morning. Beautiful. But I am not cheerful. I am to see no more colonies. The thing has got into my blood. We reach Odessa. A bath, breakfast, and then to the loan kassa re-established by the *JDC*. This is the only kassa in Odessa with preponderantly Jewish membership. The *JDC* started it in 1923 with fifteen hundred dollars. Later *ICA* loaned another fifteen hundred dollars. Both loans have been repaid. We haven't a penny of investment. The head of this kassa is E. V. Linetsky. He deserves to be mentioned. He has done a wonderful job. There are four thousand members. The average loan to members is forty-five dollars.

On May 1, 1926, the paid-in capital amounted to sixty thousand dollars. Twenty-four thousand dollars of this was in shares paid up by members. Thirty-three hundred dollars accrued profits; seven thousand two hundred dollars reserve capital out of profits. Eighteen hundred dollars is invested in a sub-kassa which makes loans to the poorest people, charging no interest. Don't pass lightly over that. The members of

this kassa barely support life; yet they care for their weaker brothers. . . . Eleven thousand dollars special capital for purchasing and distributing material. Eleven thousand five hundred dollars special reserve against losses. Doubtful loans, three thousand five hundred dollars. Deposits by members, nine thousand dollars. Credits from central government and Odessa city government, forty-six thousand dollars. The progress of this kassa is mighty encouraging. All the members are artisans or handworkers.

IN THE evening we attended a meeting of the leading Odessa Jews, fourteen of them, representing various groups. Each one made a speech, and at the conclusion we told them how we are spending the million and a half dollars in Russia this year. While they expressed no opinion on the apportionment of the half million dollars for kassa, trade schools, medical work, etc., they were unanimous in their belief that the agricultural work was sound business. It is striking how, to a man, all these meetings in Moscow, Odessa, Kherson, Simferopol, agree on the value of this agricultural work. Dr. Silverberg impressed me deeply as he told the plight of the declassed. Only that day a man had to be turned away from the hospital because he was a trader. . . . No room for him. . . . No room for the declassed. An im-

mediate operation might have saved his life. Delay was sure death. "I feel like a murderer," said the physician. "But what can I do?"

MAY 20TH

WE GO to the polyclinic, which takes care of two hundred patients a day. Various physicians and other directors, most of them the same men we met last evening, escort us, make a little address of gratitude to the *JDC*, then show us through the laboratory, the equipment of which was purchased with money furnished by the *JDC*. This hospital is not helped by the Government.

The waiting room crowded with patients. On the third floor is the drug store. The head physician, Dr. Adesman, bewails the fact that their stock of drugs is very low. He takes us into a room of which he is very proud; it has a complete X-ray equipment. This whole room was installed by the *JDC*. The dental department, which we also visit, is short of dental instruments. Dr. Adesman is at the top of his profession in Odessa, and one of the leading Russian physicians. A kindly, fine person.

AND NOW we visit a delightful institution. It is called "Drop of Milk." This institution in Odessa should especially interest Mr. Nathan Straus. Dr. Gershen-

sohn, its director, who shows us through the place, has conducted this institution for twenty-five years. It's his love, his pet, his passion. It is for children up to the age of one year; one hundred children a day, under one year of age, are tended here.

Three hundred roubles were given this year by the *JDC* to provide treatment for children over a year old. The Government gives them twenty thousand roubles a year. Seventy-five to eighty percent are Jewish children. This is because of the large Jewish population in this neighborhood. It is a non-sectarian institution.

The first room into which we go is a room where doctors are attending a lecture, a post-graduate course, on how to teach mothers to handle young infants. Every week, also, there are lessons for the mothers themselves, who come to the hospital to learn the proper diet for children under one year of age. About sixty to seventy mothers come to these lessons once a week. The death rate of the children under the supervision of this establishment is one-half of the general Odessa infant mortality rate.

The milk kitchen; immaculate. Bottles antiseptically cleaned. All kinds of mixtures of milk; some for well children, some for sick. Dr. Gershensohn shows me milk mixtures; milk with sugar and barley flour, milk with butter, sugar and flour; all carefully labeled. I asked him whether he knew about banana

treatment for coeliac discovered some years ago by my friend, Dr. Sidney V. Haas, of New York. He said: "I know all about it, but we cannot use it because we cannot get any bananas."

I asked Dr. Gershensohn whether he had to close his institution during the famine of 1921–1922. He hadn't closed it a single day. I said: "This is unbelievable. How did you do it?" "From *ARA,* from *JDC,* from Red Cross, from the Nansen Committee—I grabbed a little from everybody. This is my child," he answered. "You are a prolific man," I said. "You must have about fifty thousand children." "I have lost count," he said. . . .

WE WASTE a little time. We cannot resist the babies in the baby room. Here the children are being weighed and measured. Card index for every child; graphs showing the increase in weight week by week, a record as to the teeth, when each tooth comes, etc., etc. The minute a child has an infection it is taken into an isolation room. Two children are in the isolation ward, being measured by an assistant doctor. Outside there is a shed where Dr. Gershensohn has had a solarium built. . . .

THROUGH the Jewish quarter, in the center of which the "Drop of Milk" stands. Skeletons of dead houses. This was not war, but famine. We pass through a

silent, empty avenue. This was one of the famous death streets, says Dr. Rosen. Here the *ARA* trucks used to come up and down daily and pick up the dead bodies. This famine ruined street is one of the most dreadful sights I have ever seen. It's not the melodramatic ruin of war. No shell holes; no great gaps in walls; no grass grown trenches. Only grim, gradual, empty decay. Where life teemed, now only a void. . . . Another street. Moldavanka district. We pass through the ill-famed street where in the dreadful 1905 pogroms three hundred Jews were murdered. We pass what was formerly the market place, now a deserted waste with remnants of walls around it. . . .

THE Trud Trade School. Youth. Life again. "Trud" is the Russian for "work." Sternberg, considered an expert on professional technical schools, is in charge. The day course has a hundred and thirty boys; the night course about a hundred boys. We started them off three years ago with ten thousand dollars for re-equipment. We now give them about twelve hundred dollars a year. *ICA* pays the teachers' salaries. Like all the other Government establishments, it is non-sectarian, but it is in a Jewish neighborhood and about eighty percent of the children are Jewish. The building looks run down. It is badly in need of money for new equipment.

We are taken through the school. The foundry de-

partment. There is an open court at the back of the building. Scrap iron is being melted down by the pupils and recast. We are in one of the big shops. Here are a dozen Jews working. They are not observing the Sabbath. Neither am I. Here is a white-bearded foreman who has been teaching in this school for fifty years.

A boy of sixteen is making a wooden form for casting, using a saw, motor driven. It is very delicate work. He has to cut to a very accurate line; impressionism will not do here.

They are equipping a shop for the manufacture of small electric motors. They show us the wooden model of the motor. Some girls are working here, too.

Now we see the forge, the furnace, the vats for the melted metal. Cast-iron nails, still hot from the furnace. They are re-equipping their own tools and instruments. . . . A press. . . . A boy is wielding a twenty-pound hammer. . . . A revolving crane which handles ten tons. . . .

A second building, about two hundred feet long. The upper floor devoted to drafting rooms, class rooms. . . . A special machine for nail-making. Two boys are being taught to set up and operate this machine. Another machine for the same purpose. . . . Twice as big; much more complicated. After they learn the work on the smaller machine they are

brought to the more complicated one, which turns out the product with greater rapidity.

Quite a lot of these boys are helping to earn their living by executing orders. The school had an income last year from orders amounting to twenty thousand dollars. This helps maintain the school and keep the boys and teachers alive.

Rattling, roaring, banging, shrieking, squeaking. This is the material for a Stravinsky or Honegger opera—the youth in modern industry.

Another room. . . . Swift revolution of the wheels and leather straps, and a lot of boys working. They are rebuilding their own equipment, which has been worn out during the last two years; no new material coming in; not enough funds from outside sources. They are remaking all their transmission, doing it in parts, remodeling one part, making it new; then setting it up again.

Here is a press they have made, which gives twenty-three kilograms pressure. They are executing an order for twenty-five of them for the city of Odessa.

Across the street, I am told, is another trade school, "Evrabmol," with a hundred and thirty students. They are nearly all orphans. They are not only being taught a trade, but are getting general education and living there; are given food. It is called an *Internat.* It was organized by the *JDC,* but is now maintained

almost entirely by local and Government aid. The *Agro-Joint* gives it twelve hundred dollars a year for feeding.

Another room. . . . Here's a lathe. A lot of these lathes are made by the boys. Sparks are flying. The boys are sharpening their own tools. A lathe, eight inches in diameter, eighteen feet long, is being built out of remnants from a dismantled Government factory. The Government has given such remains of machinery to various trade schools.

The luncheon hour. . . . There is an exterior iron stairway. Boys are sitting on the stairs eating their luncheon in the bright sunshine. Big hunks of bread. Some of the boys are reading. Two of them play chess.

We go up this stairway into the upper floor. Here is a boy of sixteen re-equipping alternate and direct current motors. . . . Here is a rusty, broken-down sixty horsepower motor, taken out from a factory after a fire. It was given to this institution and is now going to be remade. To my eyes it looks as if its only destination ought to be the scrap heap, but they tell me it is going to be a good, serviceable motor.

Here's a switchboard for direct and alternating currents, and all kinds of electrical parts; batteries, etc. They have equipped this laboratory for the instruction of their boys. Their work is so good that the city of Odessa has made arrangements with this

school for it to be the official tester of the motors set up in Odessa.

All of the equipment in the shop was made by the boys themselves, using the funds supplied by the *JDC*. It is called the *JDC* electrical shop. It was established a year ago. Fifteen hundred dollars so far have been put in. Today it plays a genuinely important part in the economic life of Odessa.

The lunch room; supported by the *JDC*, which gives a hundred dollars a month for the purpose. The boys and girls get one square meal a day, anyway—potatoes, bread, meat or fish. The boys I saw out eating on the stairs support themselves. We go into the kitchen. The dishes are remnants of the days of the *ARA*. These bowls could tell a tale. We sample the food; it is good. We eat with the boys. Look at 'em. Strapping. Young. Gargantuan appetites. The fish is fried in sunflower oil. . . .

Another trade school. For girls. It is run by Miss Behr, a well-known, competent social worker. *JDC* gives the school three hundred and seventy roubles (a hundred and eighty-five dollars) a month. Berlin *ORT* gives a hundred and eighty roubles (ninety dollars) a month. They get some income from their shops. From the city of Odessa they get money for lighting, heating, etc., and the fine building free. They receive eight hundred and sixteen roubles a month from the Government. The gross income from the

shops of this school is about nine hundred roubles a month, of which fifty percent goes to pay the student girls who do the work, and of the other fifty percent, half goes to pay the expenses of the shop; the other half to pay the additional teachers. A hundred and twenty girls are being taught all branches of sewing, cutting and needle work. They make ladies' garments, overcoats, undergarments, and are equipping a shop for men's clothing.

We are taken into a reception room for private customers, like a tailoring establishment, with patterns, made of unbleached cotton material, cut out and on forms; coats, suits. They show us a woman's gray tailored coat, neatly worked, and say with pride it is an English cut. They ask Miss Frisch about American styles.

This building was formerly a private high school for the rich of Odessa. There are parquet floors and a corridor eighty feet long by thirty feet wide. Here, I suppose, the *haute noblesse* before the war had their dances. Marble stairways, tiled floors and halls.

All the buildings for trade schools, hospitals and other institutions which I have seen (and thousands more throughout Russia I am told) are given by the Government free of taxes or rent. . . .

Back to the hotel. We pass the famous Brodsky synagogue, which has been taken over by the Government and made into a workmen's club called "Rosa

Luxembourg." Now the workmen want to give it back, because they cannot afford to run it, but the Jews have not enough money to take it.

At luncheon today at the hotel were Dr. Kahn's brother-in-law and sister-in-law. They are Russians; charming, cultured people with a beautiful child. The brother-in-law formerly practiced law, but is now a Government employee in the export business. He was in the synagogue today, and tells me that it was crowded, noticeably with young people.

MAY 21ST

ON THE train, on our way back from Odessa to Moscow. The train stops at Fastoff. Here were two Jewish farm colonies, three miles from the city. Due to civil war in 1920 and 1921 the houses were destroyed. The colonists moved to the city. When order was reestablished they returned to Fastoff. They were so poor that they had no cattle and actually hitched themselves to the plows, Dr. Rosen tells me. The *JDC* rebuilt their houses for them, supplied them with agricultural implements and gave them a fresh start. We spent fifteen thousand dollars here.

TWO HOURS in Kiev. We drive through the city. Visit the *Kievo-Petcherskaia Lavra,* one of the most famous of Russian churches with monasteries. Its

golden onion-shaped dome dazzling against a cobalt sky.

Kiev is a city of about five hundred thousand inhabitants. There was lots of fighting here. The Germans occupied it during the war. The pogroms here were probably the worst of any. The city is on the mend. Trolley cars are running, streets being paved, buildings painted. About three hundred droshkas at the railway station and one battered old automobile of the vintage of 1910. In our ride we saw exactly one other automobile. Russian statistics say that in all Russia there are only twelve thousand passenger automobiles.

CHAPTER X

MAY 22ND

BACK at Moscow. Issued a newspaper statement for America. I quote it here, since it is as good a summary as I can make.

"How do the leaders of Jewish opinion in Russia feel about the agricultural work? How does the Government feel? Chief of all, how do the settlers feel?

"Over one hundred leaders of all shades of Jewish opinion in Moscow, Odessa, Kherson, Simferopol and elsewhere with whom I held lengthy meetings, agreed almost to a man as to the primary importance of the continuance and extension of this agricultural work. As to the government, various of its important officials with whom we held long discussions are in constant, intimate touch with the *Agro-Joint* work and are enthusiastic as to its progress. The best proof of the Government's attitude is the fact that their land grants to our settlers this year represent a pre-war value of over $12,000,000, and this is the black, wonderful soil of the Ukraine and the Crimea, tens of thousands of acres of which I have seen with my own eyes. Not only this, but the Government is this year giving the settlers $250,000 worth of lumber and extending

long-time credits to them of $1,000,000 in cash and farm machinery. Smidovitch, vice-president of the Soviet Government, expressed his confidence that the support of the Government of this work will, if anything, be larger in 1927.

"But how about the settlers? That is the main point. To at least twenty-five groups I put the question: 'Do any of you want to go back?' Not one man, woman or child wanted to return to the city. The settlers are hardy, capable, courageous. Their hopefulness is justified, and, as peasants, they are no longer the bowed, miserable, declassed. The total investment of the *JDC* and thereafter of *Agro-Joint* since the beginning of the agricultural work now amounts to $2,300,000. The winter crops of this season, now in splendid shape, will alone produce over $2,000,000. This takes no account of the large investments in spring planting, live stock, buildings, machinery, equipment, grape and hop planting, lumber, etc.

"We all know Dr. Rosen's genius for silence. Hence I now give what has never before been presented, namely, a summary in human terms of the agricultural work of *JDC* and *Agro-Joint.* Seven thousand families have been settled by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint;* two thousand families have been settled by Russian *ORT* in the Odessa district and in White Russia through our financial backing; two thousand young *Chalutzim* have been settled with no help except from

us; five hundred families have been settled in the old colonies, a total of fifty thousand souls who have been enabled to succeed in their efforts to establish themselves on the soil through the financial aid furnished by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint.*

"In addition to this, thirteen thousand families in the old colonies and two thousand families of tobacco growers in the Podolia district have received substantial assistance, making a total of seventy-five thousand Jews. Thus, a grand total of one hundred and twenty-five thousand Jews have been helped in agricultural life by *JDC* and *Agro-Joint.* Over seventy-five thousand neighboring non-Jewish peasants, chiefly in the Ukraine and Crimea, have received and still are receiving material help.

"We have also visited many loan kassas, which have sixty thousand members. This means that the loan kasses are helping three hundred thousand people, one-tenth of the Russian Jewish population. We have inspected trade schools, hospitals, dispensaries. In all our surveys of the work, Dr. Kahn and I have been especially impressed by the support given by the Government, not only in the agricultural work, but in all these other activities. The Government supports the kassas by Government Bank credits to the extent of $2,000,000.

"Dr. Rosen has built around him a highly competent business organization. His two chief aids, Mr. Lu-

barsky and Mr. Grower, are men of conspicuous ability, and in the field I met the young agronomists, all graduates of technical farm colleges, who are on the job day and night and who know their work. I wish I could also give some idea of the size of this work—the lumber yards; carpenter and machine shops, blacksmith shops; the great herds of cattle; the vast and endless steppes; the tractors."

VISITED an exhibition today of over two thousand pictures painted since the revolution. A few showed marked talent. Not many. But the striking thing is that there were no self-conscious nudes, no abstractions, no cubistic schemes, no sophisticated still lifes; this is work which grows out of the soil and the sweat of life—pictures of peasants at work, soldiers fighting, factory workers; and everywhere paintings, busts and statues of Lenin. The artists are responsive to what is happening. Art; it has got to touch life if it is to endure.

IN THE evening we went to the theatre. I am not impressed with the much cracked-up Russian theatre. I can't say I enjoyed it, but that's probably because I don't understand the language. After the theatre we waited on the street for the antomobile. A boy of twelve came up to Dr. Rosen, offering to get us a droshka. A little conversation ensued, which Dr.

Rosen then translated to us as follows: "I told the boy we had our own car coming for us, and the boy replied: 'I don't believe it. Nobody in Russia owns his own car.' " That'll give an insight into today's Russian mind.

MAY 23RD

A HOT, brilliant, May Sunday. . . . To the suburbs; visited the Ostankino palace, a huge building. Looks somewhat like a Greek temple. Crowds pouring in, mostly workmen with their wives and children; a sprinkling of peasants in high boots. Nearly all the young girls wear scarlet bandanas on their heads. A line of several hundred waiting to get in. The capable Chaikin of the *Agro-Joint* office gets us in at once. By a tip? Workmen are forbidden to take tips. In a country owned by workmen it is beneath the dignity of labor to accept gratuities. I have found that about half the people who serve you do actually, refuse tips.

We get into the palace. I never saw anything like it for opulence, luxury, extravagance. Inlaid floors of rare woods and beautiful design. The walls covered with silk, damask, velvets, rare brocades, tapestries. Heaps of statuary, most of it inferior seventeenth century stuff, Venuses and Cupids; art from Greece, Rome, France, India, Egypt, all mixed up in a med-

ley. The picture gallery two hundred feet long. Here and there an Italian primitive. Evidently an enormous investment here. Malachite tables, columns by the hundreds of rare porphyry, marbles, granites; yellow columns, pink columns, gray columns. A concert hall big enough to seat at least five hundred. Backs of chairs carved into shapes of musical instruments; lyres, harps, etc. Ceilings painted. Some of the carved doorways must have represented tens of thousands of roubles. Heaven knows how many millions went into this building and its decoration. Its owners, I fancy, could afford it. They had, I am told, three hundred thousand—not three thousand—three hundred thousand serfs.

In this palace one has to put on red felt slippers over one's shoes. They want to preserve the superb inlaid floors. The slippers are bright red. A tribute to Communism? When we entered the palace there were no more red felt slippers left. But Chaikin managed to persuade the guard to let us by, and we walked through without the slippers. A group surrounds us. An eighteen-year-old boy harangues Chaikin. What is it about? Looks like a fight. Quite a row. At last Chaikin pacifies them. Chaikin explains. "This is our palace," the boy has proclaimed. "This belongs to us; how dare you walk on our floors without slippers? Haven't you any conscience? You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

NEAR THE palace is a huge church of Russian architecture, onion-shaped spires, gold and scarlet. This was the private church of the noble who owned this vast palace and estate. It and its priests were supported by him.

"How many such palaces are there?" I asked Vendrov, the newspaper correspondent who was our cicerone. "In Russia? Thousands. Not many, though, as fine as this." Vendrov is not a Communist; but before the war, long ago as a young man, in 1905, he fought with the revolutionists in their abortive attempt to overthrow the Czar. I asked him why.

"'Since 1825 there have been steady revolutionary attempts. They have been going on a hundred years. Do you wonder why," said he, "after seeing the palace and the church and the garden and the park, and having heard of the three hundred thousand serfs? Read Russian history of the last years. Read about the persecution of the Jews. Was it to be expected that we Jews should love a government which made it a matter of notorious public policy to persecute us? Have you forgotten that for the treatment accorded Jews, your President Taft abrogated treaties between Russia and the United States which had been in force over fifty years?"

In the palace were six or seven guides; crowds around them. They were lecturing about the works of art. One of them, a young fellow of twenty-five,

hearing me speak English, addressed me in English and explained a bit. Later he passed by as we were lunching in the park. He stopped to chat. He is a graduate of the university. His subject is *belles lettres*. A labor union employs him to teach art and *belles lettres* to the masses. A labor union. One of his duties is to go to the art museums on Sundays and explain the history and meaning of art to the proletariat.

MONDAY, MAY 24TH

AN HOUR with Merejzin. Discussed the progress of agricultural work. He showed us a diagram of a new type of house. We discussed the proposal for the building of smaller houses, about twelve hundred, under the auspices of *Agro-Joint* through *Komzet* financing.

We urged that *Komzet* assist in devising ways of relieving the terrible situation of traders. Merejzin said that plans are under discussion for the *Komzet* to enlarge its activities, and expressed a desire to take up the subject of the declassed traders and other declassed Jewish groups in a comprehensive way, so as to make a definite plan. This is most important in its potentialities. I wish I could stay in Moscow and develop this matter.

MAY 25TH

MEETING with the *ORT*. Discussed Odessa colonization. Promised to try to get help. The entire Jewish scene in Russia talked over at length. *ORT* people urged that we pay more attention to other branches of work besides agriculture. Work among artisans and preparation of the Jewish youth for factory work stressed.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26TH

I COUNTED on going to picture galleries and churches today. I had a splendid guide picked out. The Bureau of Foreign Cultural Relations, of which Mme. Kamenieva is the head, furnishes guides to foreigners. I had looked forward to seeing the Russian kino, the Myerholdt Theatre, to hearing Russian music. I have had none of this. The historical museum, the museum of Russian life and costumes; the museum of revolutionary material, literature, data; the museums of oriental and decorative art—I had to give them all up. . . .

Last night an official meeting, under the auspices of *Komzet*, of men and women interested in the colonization work, to which leading non-Communist Jews were invited.

Weinstein presided. He is assistant to Smidovitch

in the *Komzet*. He is an outstanding figure; is Assistant Secretary of Finance.

THE meeting began at eight and continued until one o'clock in the morning. There was first a brief address of welcome by Weinstein. He referred to the frightful distress the Jews had undergone in the last quarter century, reviewed the history of persecution, pograms, famine, etc. Then he described what it meant to the Jew to have a chance to put his roots into the soil like the rest of the population. He said: "We are gathered here, Jews of all shades of opinion, sharply opposed to each other in many respects; but we unite on this common ground." He then called on us to speak.

Dr. Kahn and I both addressed the meeting. Weinstein had spoken Yiddish, but it was more German than Yiddish, and I comprehended him pretty thoroughly. I said a few words in English, Grower translating. I described the work and the American aims. I showed the desire of the American Jews to help their brethren into productive life on the soil. Dr. Kahn gave a picture of the progress of the work since he had visited the colonies a year ago.

Dr. Kahn and I were both then questioned. Then I said: "Now we have told you our story. I should like to know, so as to be able to report to America on my return, what this gathering thinks of the work, and I should like frank criticisms."

An agronomist connected officially with the *Komzet* spoke. We had met him on the steppes. He said it was a great thing to introduce modern machine and scientific methods into the steppes, but that we are doing it on too small a scale. He called for more tractors, more money, larger colonization. He spoke of the need of entertainment and education for the Jews, and referred to radios and schools. Practical details were taken up. Schools, tractors, seeds, soils, well-digging, transportation, markets.

Professor Kagan rose. He is a distinguished mathematician; a splendid looking man about sixty, well known in the scientific world. He spoke German. He began by saying: "It is a fine thing to hear discussions about practical, factual details. Nothing could prove more clearly that this thing is no longer a dream, but an actual event; but I want to take a higher ground. For us to fail to express our gratitude to America for the support of this work would be outrageous, but I hope I shall not be misinterpreted when I say that, considering the number of Jews in Russia, the frightful distress of the last quarter century, culminating in the last few years in wholesale pogroms, murders by bandits and pestilence, the Jews of Russia hope America can increase her aid to us. The land settlement work," said he, "is much more than an economic matter. It means much more than changing some tens of thousands of families into produc-

tive citizens. It frees the soul of Russian Jewry. It opens a new life to the body of Russian Jewry. Every Jew in Russia will feel a sense of release at the thought that he need no longer remain in the prison of Ghetto life. So important is this work that, miserably poor as we Jews in Moscow are, we are now making a drive for four hundred thousand roubles to help the work, and believe me, Mr. Rosenberg, that sum is more to us in Moscow than tens of millions to you in America. The life, the soul, of Russian Jewry hinges on the success of this work. My prayer is that America will comprehend us. The land which has always been denied us is open at last. At last we can be the equals of the others. At last we can stand on the same footing. That is the basis of our enthusiasm for this work."

Then Larin spoke. I think I have already mentioned that he is a well-known Communist; well-known for his brilliant intellect and attainments. He was one of the representatives of the Russian Government in writing the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Hence, it will be appreciated that he is a conspicious figure. He is the president of the *Ozet*, which, I repeat, is a social, non-political Jewish organization in Russia, which a year ago had twenty thousand and now has a membership of fifty thousand. Its sole purpose is the development of the agricultural work. The size of its

membership indicates the Russian Jewish attitude toward land settlement.

Larin expressed the hope that practical methods of coöperation between *Agro-Joint* and *Ozet* would develop. He pointed out that everyone recognized the magnificent work under the leadership of Dr. Rosen; that, though this was no time even to think of suggesting that the Russian Jews should take over the work, this must be foreseen as an ultimate goal. "We are too young, we are too weak as yet," said he, "but we must think of this as a matter of the future." He added that, though most of the Jews in Russia are non-Communists, the Government is lending every possible aid to this land settlement movement, and is giving the Jews an equal chance; and hoped that the help from America would increase.

Bragin then spoke. He is a journalist, a man of about thirty-five, a fiery, fascinating and eloquent orator. He made a most moving appeal, dwelling on the history of the last thirty years, the history of suffering of the Russian Jews, comparing it with the Spanish Inquisition. He cited Kishineff, Gomel, Odessa, the Beiliss case, the World War, Denikin, the famine and pestilence. He then talked about the importance of creating a Jewish state; and dwelt on the need of many millions of dollars to enable the colonization work to be done on a large scale.

I was not sorry that this question of a Jewish state came openly into the discussion. It gave me occasion to express what I believe to be the American point of view—at least my own. I asked Mr. Grower to translate carefully what I said. I paused after brief paragraphs so that each paragraph would be translated as I had said it. These, in sum, were my remarks:

1. As to *Ozet* or any other Russian organization having to do with agricultural development it is easy to use the word "coöperation." In the practical affairs of life it means finding a method of team work; Dr. Rosen and all his associates are now actually carrying through such efforts in the Eupatoria district.

2. I promised that on my return to the United States I would plead the cause of land settlement in Russia, but pointed out that we in America must be mindful of our duties to afflicted Jews in Poland, Palestine, Roumania, etc.

3. I said: "Without dwelling on the many other matters brought up, I shall take up this question of the Jewish state. Two years ago," said I, and I minced no words, "an ill-timed, unfortunate discussion of a proposed Jewish state in Russia came widespread into the press. What happened? It almost ended all

possibility of any American help for Russian Jewish agricultural work. It actually postponed American help by a year or two. Why? I know from my own study, since I have been here, that you encourage autonomous districts or states according to separate ethnological and cultural groups. If, in the years to come, that remains the policy of Russia, and if the Jews in large enough numbers shall have put their roots so deeply into the soil that evolution of a Jewish district, with its own schools, culture and local self-government, develops naturally, that is a matter for internal Russian governmental decision, as to which we in America obviously have nothing to say. But if you create a paper Jewish state, if you set apart definite territory on which there are but few Jews and call that territory a Jewish state and so risk offending and antagonizing majority populations of other racial groups, that is a sham. The *JDC* is a philanthropic organization which desires to give economic, medical and spiritual help to our suffering co-religionists. It will not meddle in political affairs, but as this matter has arisen I present what I believe to be the American point of view.

"Let us then, I pray you, direct our energies in unison toward creating a strong, capable body of Jewish farmers, and let the future take care of itself."

I then concluded my remarks by saying: "Gentlemen, I have told you what we think in America of

the work. I have told you of what I have seen. I have told you that I will plead the cause of land settlement in Russia. When I go back to America, I want to be able to report where you stand on this matter."

Weinstein then spoke. He said the Government was strongly in support of colonization; that it was opposed to the idea of a Jewish state when the unfortunate discussion arose several years ago. "We agree with you fully," he said. "We who are members of the Government feel that to create a state when there is actually none, when the need is not justified both by territory and human beings, is unsound and unwise, but even if it means the loss of American support, we want you to know that we work with a perspective, with a goal, and that is a matter which has been discussed with the Government, namely, if the agricultural work in which the Government is deeply interested develops over the course of time, so that there is within a reasonably compact area a sufficiently large Jewish population rooted in the ground, then, in line with our governmental policy, whereby thirty-eight autonomous districts or states have already been created, we shall seriously consider the creation of a similar autonomous district for the Jews. This would merely be to treat the Jews in Russia just as we treat all other racial groups. This is our perspective, our viewpoint, or aim, and

it is definitely within the thoughts of us here as a matter of future development."

MAY 27TH

I VISITED Weinstein at his office. From the age of sixteen he has been a revolutionist, was exiled and imprisoned. From early boyhood, said he, he was against the government of the Czar. He described the workings of autonomous districts. In a sentence, this is local self-government. Autonomy means that the territory has its own cabinet, self-determination in regard to education, health, a department of agriculture, its own social organizations, departments of education and justice. He confirms that it has no power to levy taxes. It makes its budget, but submits it to that one of the six republics in which it lies and of which it is a member, and so, through a gradual process upward, the budget is submitted to the Central Government in Russia. The autonomous territory has a central executive committee like a parliament and a small administrative group which runs the business of the government and which is elected once a year. It has no independent army.

I then went to the *Agro-Joint* office; had a talk with its head accountant, Zinovy Kahn; examined the balance sheet of the *Agro-Joint* as of January 1, 1926.

The following is a summarized statement thereof:

Old promissory notes from settlers..	$202,000
Owing by kassas	82,000
Miscellaneous receivables	33,000
Commodities (chiefly tractors and machinery after large depreciation)..	71,000
Building materials	261,000
New promissory notes of settlers ...	282,000
Live stock	25,000
Seed	44,000
Farm implements	23,000
Owing by settlers for vineyards....	9,000
New tractors	12,000
Well-drilling machinery	2,000
Total	$1,046,000

The total assets of *Agro-Joint* as of May 1, 1926, are $1,700,000 in round figures. These assets are figured after heavy depreciations. For example, we have invested in kassas, artels, etc., $175,000, of which $25,000 was repaid, leaving an investment of $150,000. This has been written down to $82,000.

Then I had quite a long talk with Sack, head of the *ICA* in Russia, and obtained the following statistical details:

ICA has $400,000 invested in loan kassas. "Is the money good?" I asked. "Surely," said he.

We have $150,000 invested which we carry at $82,000, as stated just above.

ICA is spending $40,000 this year in trade schools, practically entirely in payment to teachers. *JDC* spends $24,000 this year for trade schools. We put $200,000 into the rebuilding of the trade schools after the revolution, war, etc.

There are in all forty-two schools supported by the *ICA* and *JDC*, with 3,565 pupils. Of these schools twenty-five are helped by the *ICA*.

Here follow some astonishing statistics as to the kassas. These were all restored by the *JDC*. Today these kassas have an aggregated paid-in members' capital of $300,000. Their total credits from the Government are substantially upwards of $2,000,000. There are in all sixty thousand members. As these members are heads of families with an average of five to the family, these kassas mean constant, vital financial assistance to not less than three hundred thousand human beings. This is one-tenth of the Russian Jewish population.

ICA is not giving any help to tradesmen's kassas. We are doing a little in this direction; not much, I grieve to say. There are political difficulties by reason of the structure of the Russian Government. I refuse to regard these difficulties as insurmountable. I urged Sack that *ICA* ought to do something for these tradesmen by putting some money into the kassas. He was

dubious. I hope a special effort will be made to help create kassas for traders. This subject of kassas for traders was so complicated I had not the time to study it. I visualize, however, the possibility of developing these traders into good-sized coöperatives. This is one subject for special and intensive study. I am sorry to have to leave Russia without having probed into this matter.

Rosen, Kahn and I visited Smidovitch. He beamed with gratification as he heard what we had to say of our visit to the steppes. When Dr. Kahn described the development since his visit to the settlements eleven months ago, Smidovitch was delighted. We told him in detail what we had seen. He is a very busy man, occupying as he does one of the most important governmental positions in Russia, and we had determined to stay for merely ten minutes, making simply a formal report. He kept us there for an hour. The conversation was conducted in French and German. When we couldn't find a word in one language, we looked for it in the other; and when we couldn't find it in either, Rosen helped out with a Russian word. Smidovitch bade us good-bye, hoped I would return next year; said if I did he would surely accompany us himself on our next trip. It was a fine talk; he is a fine person. . . .

Packed our bags. Off for Berlin. . . .

So end four thrilling weeks. . . .

And the future? What of the days to come? Can these Jews make a go of it on the soil? Can these village- and town-bred, long persecuted people win out in this, their struggle on the steppes? Will they survive? Will they preserve the traditions and ideals for which the Jew has suffered and died through almost countless generations? I, for one, have no fears. This much surely is clear; that these longest suffering of humans, whose lives have been continuous chapters of incredible horror, deserve help,—help to the uttermost . . . for now that they are being given a bare chance, they are helping themselves with indomitable courage. To stretch out the hand of brotherhood to such men and women is not a sacrifice, but a privilege.

A NOTE ON THE TYPE IN WHICH THIS BOOK IS SET

This book is composed on the Linotype in Bodoni, so-called after its designer, Giambattista Bodoni (1740–1813) a celebrated Italian scholar and printer. Bodoni planned his type especially for use on the more smoothly finished papers that came into vogue late in the eighteenth century and drew his letters with a mechanical regularity that is readily apparent on comparison with the less formal old style. Other characteristics that will be noted are the square serifs without fillet and the marked contrast between the light and heavy strokes.



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