

An Historical Study in France

By

Morris Gilbert

18th. a little youthful is rising. solve the difficult to do with German Jews who fled to France the Hitler drive on. Whatever succeeds in doing. attempting to turn so-called "roads" into farmers.

The work is being undertaken by a distinguished builder—the man who made the suburbs of Berlin such garden-spots as to be the envy of the world. It is being done quite apart from the "refugee committees" and charitable organisations which French Jews and Gentiles have founded to help the thousands who have fled to France from the Hitler pogroms.

FUNDS are being raised, land has been bought, work has been started, by German Jews themselves, led by Hugo Sommerfeld, the great Berlin builder. He is just the man to start this work, since he had long experience in Greece in constructing the settlements where throngs of Armenian and Greek refugees fleeing from Turkish atrocities are now living in peace, security and happiness.

But the experiment of trying to turn young brain-workers into manual workers—college professors, doctors, lawyers and other professional men into farmers—is what is most fascinating about the new venture. In that way it resembles in a small way the development of the great Jewish community of Tel-Aviv in Palestine, haven of Jews from all over the world, and now a thriving Mediterranean metropolis.

Here is how Herr Sommerfeld defines the aims, purposes and future of his new, modern community:

- "Our method: Change of profession.
- "Our strength: The will of a race.
- "Our object: Independence through communion with the soil."

The new Tel-Aviv in France is situated within half an hour of Paris, in the little village of Montesson. You reach it by way of the Seine, passing through the ancient town of St. Germain-en-Laye. It is in the centre of rich agricultural country in the very heart of the beautiful region called the "Ile de France."

days, the sound of hammers and the sound of the saw. funds in the sizeable acreage which H. Sommerfeld, aided by other refugees, manage to buy. Enthusiasm makes up for the lack of skill, even though many a thumb more accustomed to turning the

leaves of a book than to handling a stone chisel has been nicely mauled. There are some three-score young and vigorous German "intellectuals" who are building the Montesson property into its essential shape under Herr Sommerfeld's guidance. A house or two on the estate was taken over, revamped, cleaned and made habitable by the building force while they went ahead with the work. Women refugees—one of them being the sister of a world-famous Berlin banker—do the scrubbing, the cooking, the other menial work.

The job is progressing. In a short time now the community will be in working order and ready for expansion. Then Herr Sommerfeld's experiment will have its open chance of success.

"THE large part of the German emigration," Herr Sommerfeld declared, laying aside his rolls of plans and his measuring tape for an instant, "consists of intellectuals, doctors, lawyers, journalists, writers, inventors, without forgetting a good number of merchants. It's clear enough that at some point in all these branches of activity the supply exceeds the demand. If these people, driven out of Germany, are to have some chance of gaining a living, they must first of all quit these overcrowded professions and take up a calling which nourishes mankind, namely, agriculture or other physical labour."

Herr Sommerfeld and his aides have divided up the aspirant farmers into groups of ten each. Age of admission to this community is sixteen years and the course is twelve months. The groups are supervised by experts in various branches of agriculture and rural economy. The director is—properly enough—a Frenchman, a native of the region, and an authority in agricultural technique.

The organisation of the community, however, is entirely Jewish, and there are special courses outside the agricultural and building side. There are conferences, films, excursions. There are general discussions of procedure for the group, which is a small and homogeneous democracy. Theoretic instruction mingles with practical experience, Herr Sommerfeld points out.

"The young people," he declared, "must not only assimilate the essential notions of their new profession of farming, but must also accustom themselves to manual work in the field which they have chosen to live in." For that reason, it was pointed out on a visit to the Montesson farm, there are no servants, all the work of house and field being done by the pupils themselves.

that Colonel Taylor is no longer on the Palestine staff.

The reference to "legislation by the Jews against the Arabs" is a pure fabrication, as there is no Legislative Council or Assembly in Palestine, which is governed by a British High Commissioner under the Mandate. The general tenor of Colonel Taylor's speech, with its references to "out-Hitlerising Hitler," "Jews mobilising the world," "Call the bluff of international Jews," etc., is the sort of rhodomontade characteristic of a small and noisy section, which happily receives little or no countenance at the hands of public opinion either in England or in the Dominion.

(Concluded from page 3.) of the Staff of the Secretary for Palestine." Indeed it is manifestly a misnomer, the former term being a military the latter a civil designation. If, however, such an office were conceivable, its incumbent would not possibly have given the views expressed by Colonel Taylor, as they would involve his instant dismissal. In actual fact, Colonel Taylor was an official of the military administration in Palestine only during the period of military occupation, i.e., from 1918 or 1919 to 1920. A further Reuter message from Jerusalem on Sunday last pointed out

Building Site for Reform Temple

ACTIVITY OF JOHANNESBURG REFORM CONGREGATION.

THE Building Fund Committee of the Johannesburg Jewish Reform Congregation announces that it has purchased a suitable site for the erection of a Reform Synagogue.

The site is situated on Empire Road, corner of Hillside Road, and is just a few minutes from Clarendon Circle. The site covers three-quarters of an acre.

The first general meeting of the members of the congregation was held recently at the Carlton Hotel. It was unanimously agreed that Rabbi Moses Cyrus Weiler be officially elected rabbi of the congregation.

The meeting elected a Building Fund Committee, which was empowered to purchase a suitable site for the building of a Reform Synagogue, and also to collect funds needed for the erection of the synagogue.

The following were elected members of the Building Fund Committee: Mr. L. K. Jacobs (honorary chairman), Mr. Carl Sonin (chairman), Mr. Louis Mailer (vice-chairman), Mr. Emanuel Jacobson (secretary), Messrs. Max Franks, Elias Gordon, Philip Hyde, Bernard Jackson, Gordon R. Jacob, Dr. H. Davis-Marks, Messrs. Albert Menell, Leo Reichman, Jack Saul, and Mrs. B. Jacobs.

Piet Retief Bids Farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Braudo

ON Sunday, the 17th inst., an evening was arranged at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. George Susser in Piet Retief in honour of Mr. and Mrs. L. Braudo and family, who are shortly proceeding to Palestine.

Dr. R. Baranov, president of the Zionist Society, in bidding "au revoir," felt sure Mr. Braudo's departure would be a sad loss to South African Jewry, but nevertheless an excellent gain to the Palestinians.

Mr. Jacob Werner, that veteran Zionist, said that having known and associated with Mr. Braudo for over 20 years, he would greatly miss him. He felt the South African Zionist Federation would have some difficulty in filling the vacant position which would now be created through his departure.

The Mayor, Mr. B. Werner, conveyed an expression of regret that Mr. Braudo was severing his connection with Piet Retief. He declared that Piet Retief and district had benefited through the establishment of the timber industries initiated by Mr. Braudo. On behalf of the municipality and citizens of Piet Retief, he wished Mr. and Mrs. Braudo and family bon voyage.

Mrs. Feinberg, on behalf of the ladies of Piet Retief, also conveyed good wishes.

Mr. Braudo, in reply, spoke feelingly. He thanked the speakers for their kindly wishes.

After giving an outline of the present activities in Palestine, Mr. Braudo expressed the hope that at no distant future date he would have the pleasure of seeing some of his old friends in Eretz Israel.

JEWISH CHORAL CIRCLE.

An interesting society was held the chairman, lecture on "The Jewish Choral Circle" dated from the Mr. Idelson's by an interesting

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