

JEWS PLAN TO BUILD NEW ZION IN EAST AFRICA

Israel Zangwill Talks About Land Great Britain Has Given His People--How Zionists Hope To Get Palenstine

(Copyright, 1904, by Frank G. Carpenter.)
NEW YORK, November 26.—(Special.)—It was in his apartments at the Sherwood studios that I chatted with Israel Zangwill about the Zionist movement and the new Jewish state, which is to be built up in the highlands of East Africa. Mr. Zangwill has come here from London to push forward this project, and at the same time to watch the progress of the several plays he has on the American stage. His "Children of the Ghetto" is now being acted in Yiddish in Brooklyn, and Cecelia Loftus is starring the country with his new comedy, entitled "The Serio-comic Governess." He has sold another comedy since he came here, and is well satisfied with his success in those respects. He tells me, however, that he hopes some day to write a drama of a higher nature than anything he has yet produced—a great drama with Jews as the background and the principal characters. The novelist has his serious as well as his humorous side, and this is especially shown in his work for his people in forwarding the interests of the Jewish East African state.

How Zangwill Talks.
Before I reproduce our conversation let me take my pen and paint an ink sketch of the man as I saw him this morning. We were amid oriental surroundings. Paintings of the Far East looked down upon us from the walls of the studio, which is Mr. Zangwill's temporary apartment, a sullen-faced camel, which might have been one of those which brought the wise men from the Far East to Bethlehem, scowled at me out of an easel at my right. And Zangwill, as he lay upon a divan of old Turkish rugs, lacked only a turban and gown or a cap and Jewish gaberde to make him harmonize with the scene. As I looked at him I remarked his pronounced Jewish features, his dark complexion, and his nose with its typical Israelitish curve. He has eyes of a liquid brown, curly hair, combed up from a high but not over-broad forehead, and a manner too earnest and nervous perhaps to be in strict accord with the somnolence of the Far East. Indeed, when the telephone rang, as it did several times during our conversation, he almost ran to answer it; and his smooth, well-worded sentences were uttered with all the vigor of an up-to-date pushing reformer of the twentieth century.

Palenstine for the Jews.
I had asked Mr. Zangwill to tell me something of the Zionist movement. He replied:
"The Zionists are an organization of Jews from all parts of the world, who are working together to bring Palenstine back into the hands of our people. We Jews have always hoped that Palenstine would again belong to us. This hope has lasted for more than two thousand years, and from time to time various projects, based upon it, have been formed to repossess the land. Nearly all of these, however, have been visionary and outside the domain of practical possibility. Many of them have been founded upon the second coming of a Messiah, who should suddenly rise and lead us in some miraculous way back to our mother country. Many

Jews hope for this today, and confidently believe it will occur.
"The Zionists also expect to acquire Palenstine; but their plans are based upon the methods and men of the time. They are practical in that they expect to obtain their end through modern politics. They want to interest the Jews of the world in this work, and through them the great governments, and in time to be able to purchase Palenstine of the sultan of Turkey, or to show him that it is to his advantage that they should have it. In doing so they expect to convince the great powers of the world that such a consummation would not be to the disadvantage of the world at large."

A New Holy Land.
"What could the Jews do with the country, Mr. Zangwill?"
"They could renovate and develop it. We were once an agricultural and pastoral nation, and we could easily become so again. We are, I believe, well fitted to rule, and we hope to establish a Jewish colony made up of our own people where we can govern ourselves in our own way. We should not object to the suzerainty or protection of some other power in the sense of being colonially dependent upon it, but we want home rule and a great national land and home of our own."
"Who would go to such a home, Mr. Zangwill?"
"Jews from all parts of the world," was the reply. "There are millions who would leave Russia and go there. There are millions in other parts of Europe, and there are vast numbers right here in the United States. As it is now our people congest the great cities. It is said there are more in London than there are in Palenstine. Now York alone has 600,000 of us, and 300,000 Jews are here settled within an area of one square mile. You have the greatest Ghetto the world has ever seen, and you are adding to it annually by about 30,000 immigrants a year. The Jewish charities spend more than a million dollars a year to take care of the poor among these people. What we want is to send them to their own country, and to give them a chance to work for themselves. This is a part of the Palenstine project, and also a part of the project of the east African state."

God Help Those Who Help Themselves.
"But would not such a colony be founded upon charity? Would it not be a colony of paupers, as it were?"
"No, that is what we want to avoid. We want to teach our people to take care of themselves and to be independent. We believe that God helps those who help themselves. This movement is necessarily founded upon charity at the beginning. But even so, the gifts are made as an 'investment.' The money end of the movement is known as the Jewish Colonial Trust, a joint stock company, capitalized at about ten million dollars in 55 shares. Our stock is by no means all paid in, but we have already declared dividends of 3 per cent to our shareholders. They have invariably refused, however, to take the money, and ask that the dividends be added to the general fund. I know the Jews are



ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

looked upon as money worshipers, pure and simple; but this, it seems to me, shows they are something more.
A Movement of the Common People.
"Where does this money come from, Mr. Zangwill?"
"The movement toward the acquisition of Palenstine is being supported by gifts of Jews from all parts of the world. A little of it has come from the rich and prosperous, but the most of it from the poor. Indeed some of our subscriptions are so small that five families have clubbed together to aid by purchasing stamps of the Jewish national fund and adding these to the regular postage of every letter they send out. These stamps cost about a cent apiece, so that when a man puts one on a letter he is giving 1 cent to the cause."
"But do you expect to buy Palenstine with this money?"
"If we could buy it we would be glad

to do so, but its political situation is such that it will probably be impossible to buy it outright. Nevertheless if we could show the sultan that we had an enormous fund of money to develop the country and that we could add to the prosperity of that part of his dominion and to his revenues therefrom he would probably give the land over to the Jews, although he would still claim it as one of his dependencies."
"How about the fund of Baron de Hirsch?"
"That amounted to \$59,000,000. It was left by him to establish colonies and homes for the Jews of the world, and its trustees have attempted to do this by purchasing land and sending poor Jews to South America and elsewhere. Their attempts so far have been failures, and of late they have been applying the income from this vast sum to scattering charities. This is contrary to the idea

of Baron De Hirsch, and we hope to be able to direct the fund, eventually, to the Zionist movement, and more especially toward the acquirement of Palenstine. If we could show the sultan that we had \$50,000,000 back of us, there would be little trouble in getting him to consider our proposition. If we can acquire Palenstine, we believe we can make it a prosperous country, and from there we can spread out into ancient Chaldaea and other fertile parts of Asia Minor. I should like to see the rich lands along the Tigris and Euphrates worked by our people."
"How many Jews are there in the world, Mr. Zangwill?"
"There are probably about 14,000,000 or 12,000,000. There are something like 6,000,000 in Russia, about 2,000,000 in Austria-Hungary, 600,000 in Germany, about 200,000 in Great Britain and Ireland and more than 1,500,000 on this hemisphere. Altogether there are about 9,000,000 in Europe and several hundred thousand in Asia and Africa. There are about 80,000 Jews in Palenstine and the number is steadily increasing. Many of those who have settled in the Holy Land are tillers of the soil."

The Twentieth Century Messiah.
At this point in our conversation Mr. Zangwill asked me if I had ever heard of Dr. Theodore Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, and went on to speak of him, referring to him as a twentieth century Messiah.
"Dr. Herzl," said he, "was the editor of The Neue Freie Presse, the leading newspaper of Vienna, and also a dramatist and author of note. About seven years ago he announced his project of getting Palenstine for the Jews by practical methods, and at once began to put his words into action. He called a world congress, and Jews from everywhere sent delegates. They came by scores from Russia, Austria and every other country of Europe, and there were many from the United States and from Morocco, Algeria and other parts of Africa. The convention was a success, and since then annual meetings have been held once a year, and the organization, known as 'Zionist,' is working toward this end all over the world. We have a federation of American Zionists in this country. We have altogether several hundred thousand members."

"After starting the movement," Mr. Zangwill continued, "Dr. Herzl devoted himself to it body and soul. He traveled over Europe, seeing the leading men of each country and interesting them in it. He obtained the support of Joseph Chamberlain in England; he so interested the emperor of Germany that he gave him an interview, and the pope to such an extent that he received him and approved of his scheme. Dr. Herzl visited Constantinople and had two interviews with the sultan. He made such an impression that when he left the sultan said: 'That man Herzl is a good man. As he looks, so, I imagine, do the Christ might have looked.' Dr. Herzl was in many ways like the Christ. We sometimes call him the twentieth century Messiah."
"This work," Mr. Zangwill went on, "was kept up by Herzl for seven years, and all at his own expense. He might have had a salary from the Zionist fund, but would not take it. At the same time he was carrying on his bread and butter work of writing. The result was he over-did and died a few months ago. He left nothing, and we are now taking subscriptions to a fund for his family."

The Sultan Offers Lands.
"But did Dr. Herzl have no success with the sultan, Mr. Zangwill?" I asked.
"Not as to Palenstine," was the reply.
"The sultan offered to give him lands about Palenstine, where the Jews might settle and form colonies of their own. These lands were not taken, as Dr. Herzl did not want to ask anything of the sultan but Palenstine itself."
"What was the project to establish the Jews on the peninsula of Sinai?"
"That was brought forth immediately after these interviews with the sultan," said Mr. Zangwill. "Finding that they could not immediately get Palenstine, the Zionists thought it might be well to establish colonies nearby, from where they could move over into Palenstine as soon as that country could be acquired. Egypt is, as you know, now a dependency of Great Britain, and it is practically ruled by the British government. You may also know that the sands of the desert will blossom like the rose if they can only have water. Now, we planned to take the peninsula of Sinai, which was the wilderness through which the children of Israel wandered for forty years before they came to the Promised Land, and irrigate it by the waters of the Nile. We were ready to build a canal to the Nile to carry the water there, and the project seemed to be an engineering possibility. When it was brought before the British foreign office, however, and before Lord Cromer, the British administrator of Egypt, it was not seen how the water could be spared and the project fell through."
"What suggested your settling in east Africa?"

"That originated in the mind of Joseph Chamberlain," replied Mr. Israel Zangwill. "He knew of our movement in favor of Sinai, when he made his trip to Africa after the Boer war. He saw the barrenness of the peninsula of Sinai as he went through the Suez canal, and later on contrasted it with the great fertility of the highlands of British east Africa, which he visited by means of the Uganda railway. He was so delighted with the latter country that when he returned he advised that a part of it be given to the Jews to form a colony there. That suggestion developed into the definite proposition which has now been made to the Zionists."

A White Man's Country.
"Just where and what is this country, Mr. Zangwill?" I asked.
"It lies about 300 miles inland from Mombasa, with 10 miles of the new railroad which has been built from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. That railroad is about 600 miles long, and it goes straight inland from the Indian ocean, opening up some of the most fertile parts of the continent. A few hundred miles from the coast the land rises, and this territory which is offered to the Jews is on a plateau, which is almost a mile above the sea.
"The territory is larger than your state of Connecticut. It has an area of about five thousand square miles, and Sir Harry Johnston, who was in charge of U. S. protectorate, describes its soil as wonderfully fertile."
"It is a white man's country. It will grow all kinds of European vegetables, and potatoes raised there are now shipped up and down the coast of east Africa. Cotton is grown in Uganda, a little further west, and coffee in the lands to the eastward. The country is rich mineraly, and wonderfully rich in pasturage. It is a land of big game. There are vast herds of antelopes, zebras, gnus and giraffes. There are droves of elephants, and also rhinoceroses, lions and leopards. The country has a native population of more than ordinary intelligence, and native labor can be easily obtained. The ordinary man works for from one to three

dollars a month, and good servants can be had at a cost of from \$3 to \$4 per month.

A Jewish Government.
"How would such a settlement be governed?"
"The idea is to have a Jewish administration, a Jewish local government, with a Jewish governor at the head. The country will be a dependency of Great Britain, but no more so than other British colonies. It would be ruled by Jews and I think there is no doubt of our capacity to rule ourselves. Some of the great statesmen of the world have been Jews. Take for instance Disraeli and Gambetti. The leaders of the socialist and some other movements of today are Jews."
"But do you think the Jews would make the country pay? Would they be successful in building up a home and state of their own?"
"I see no reason why not," said Mr. Zangwill. "The Jew is ordinarily very successful. He has been enriching Christian capitals and states for centuries, and that with no final profit to himself. In one respect an enormous amount of

time would be saved. Millions of Jews still keep the Saturday-Sabbath, and, as they cannot use the Christian Sunday for business, they have a double day of rest every week. We could almost rebuild a state out of the cost of the Sabbath."
"But would the Jews go there?" I asked.
"That remains to be seen," replied Mr. Zangwill. "I think they would. We are an emigrating nation, and our people are always ready to better themselves. There are many millions in Russia who would gladly accept any alternative rather than continue in their present condition, and the Russian government has said that it would be willing to let the Jews go if they wished. It is our idea, however, that the Jewish state in east Africa would be one of the stepping stones toward the acquirement of Palenstine. It would show what the Jews could do in the development of a country and in governing themselves, and would aid us in persuading the sultan and the governments of Europe to acquiesce in our re-possession of the land which God gave us as our own."

FRANK G. CARPENTER.