

**THE ASSOCIATION FOR IMPROVING  
THE CONDITION OF POEPL (A. I. C. P.).  
COMMITTEE FOR LABOUR CENTRES.  
REPORT ON LABOUR COLONIES.  
INSTITUTED 13TH MAY, 1892**

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**JAMES MAVOR & JAS. R. MOTION & JOHN SPEIR**

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COMMITTEE ON LABOUR  
CENTRES.

REPORT ON LABOUR COLONIES

BY

JAMES MAVOR,

*Professor of Political Economy and Constitutional History, University of Toronto, formerly  
Professor of Political Economy and Statistics, St. Mungo's College, Glasgow.*

JAS. R. MOTION,

*Inspector, Barony Parish, Glasgow.*

JOHN SPEIR,

*Farmer, Newton near Glasgow.*

AND

R. PATRICK WRIGHT.

*Professor of Agriculture, Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College.*

THE ASSOCIATION FOR IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE,  
116 ST. VINCENT STREET, GLASGOW.

1892.



**EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF LABOUR CENTRES  
COMMITTEE MEETING, 21st JUNE, 1892.**

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"The proposal to send a deputation to visit and report on two or three Labour Colonies was discussed and approved of, and it was agreed to recommend that Mr. John Speir, Farmer, Newton; Mr. R. Patrick Wright, Professor of Agriculture, Glasgow Technical College; and Mr. J. R. Motion, of the Barony Parochial Board, be sent to Hadleigh, and to one of the German Colonies, Rickling being suggested as the most suitable." The name of Mr. James Mavor, Professor of Political Economy, St. Mungo's College, was afterwards added

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**EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF GENERAL COUNCIL**

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*INTER ALIA.*

HUTCHESON'S HALL,  
12th July, 1892.

"A minute was read from the Labour Centres Board desiring authority to 'send a deputation to visit and report upon Labour Colonies,' the names of several members being recommended. After conversation as to probable outlay, and as to the most desirable Colonies to be visited, etc., it was agreed to 'remit the whole matter to Mr. Stevenson and his Board, with instructions to report upon Labour Centres in the city as well as in the country, and not to exceed an outlay in connection therewith of more than £80, other details being left entirely to their discretion with full powers."

NOTE.

We deeply regret the delay that has taken place in the publication of this Report, caused mainly by the hurried departure of Professor Mavor to fill the Chair of Political Economy in the University of Toronto, to which he was appointed while the Report was being prepared. Much time was thus unavoidably lost in the transmission and correction of proofs. Delay was also experienced in awaiting the return of proofs sent for correction to the authorities in the various colonies visited in England and Germany.

JAS. R. MOTION.  
JOHN SPEIR.  
R. PATRICK WRIGHT.

GLASGOW, *December*, 1892.

*TO THE GLASGOW LABOUR CENTRES  
COMMITTEE.*

GENTLEMEN,

We have the honour to present to you our Report upon Labour Colonies.

Your instructions to us bore that we should report upon Labour Centres in the city as well as in the country.

We therefore proceeded to London early in August and visited the labour centres there recently established in connection with the Social Wing of the Salvation Army. We also visited the Farm Colony at Hadleigh-on-Thames, founded by the same organisation. We then proceeded to Germany and visited the Berlin (city) Labour Colony, the Farm Colony at Friedrichswille, near Reppen, province of Brandenburg, and subsequently the Farm Colony at Rickling, in Schleswig-Holstein.

We have to express our gratitude for the courtesy which we received at the hands of His Excellency Count von Eulenberg, Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of Prussia ; of Herr



von Heintze, Landrath of the District of Kiel ; of Pastor Diestelkamp, of Berlin ; of Pastor Proeller, of Reppen ; of the inspectors of the various colonies visited by us ; of Senator Roscher, of Hamburg ; of the Hon. H. de la Poer Trench, of the British Embassy, Berlin ; and of General Booth and the officers of the Salvation Army in London and at Hadleigh.

We have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Yours obediently,

*(Signed)* JAMES MAVOR.  
JAS. R. MOTION.  
JOHN SPEIR.  
R. PATRICK WRIGHT.

GLASGOW,  
October, 1892.

## REPORT ON LABOUR COLONIES.

The Labour Colony System, as carried on in Germany and elsewhere, is fully described in the accompanying Notes upon the colonies visited by us.

It appears to us that the system is capable of adaptation to the conditions of our own country, and that with competent management and adequate safeguards a farm colony might prove an important influence in preventing men temporarily out of employment from sinking into degradation; and might also be expected to have some effect in rescuing those who have already been submerged. It has to be borne in mind, however, that the German Criminal Law is more comprehensive than our own, in so far as it confers more extensive powers over the class of persons for whom a labour colony is intended.\*

A farm colony may be promoted on one or other of two principles. Either it may be intended to be "self-contained" and "non-competitive," so far as practicable, or it may be intended to produce as much as possible of the most marketable crops, and to sell them for the highest price obtainable, like any other company engaged in the business of farming. The first case is one of production for the consumption of the group of producers, the second is one of production for sale.

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\* See Provisions of German Code in Appendix, p. 58.

It is very essential that a definite opinion should be formed upon this matter at the outset. The method of management and the nature of the land to be selected are alike involved in the decision as to which method should be adopted.

A.—If it be decided that a farm colony on the “self-contained-non-competitive” principle should be established, in our opinion the chief desiderata are these :

1. Suitable land within a reasonable distance of railway connection. Such land may be (a) Low-lying or submerged land ; (b) Moss land ; or (c) Sandy land to be treated by sewage, or clay.

2. Adequate regulations as to admission and discharge of colonists, due proportion of different industries being impracticable on the principle of open admission and indefinite stay.

3. Arrangement of the industries in such a manner as to avoid, so far as practicable, competition in the market.

The difficulties of administering a colony in this way are very serious, but by sending the annual subsidy to the colony in commodities which cannot be produced there, by skilful arrangement of industries, and by employing the labour mainly in reclamation, the amount of the sales of produce from the colony may be reduced to a minimum, as is the case with the colony at Rickling.\* This may even be done without ultimate loss should the reclaimed land be sold for a price sufficient to cover the outlay upon it, or

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\* See page 48.