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DISTRESS IN EUROPE

British Empire Effort to Help Smaller Nations.

Canadian Red Cross to Organize Appeal on Behalf of Orphans—Call to Be Made in Armistice Week.

An urgent appeal for aid to combat the widespread disease and distress in the war-stricken areas in Europe has been made by the League of Red Cross Societies to the nations which have suffered least from the war. In response a War Relief Fund has been undertaken in Great Britain with an Empire-wide appeal for contributions. The Fund is under the immediate patronage of His Majesty the King and has the support of all parts of the Empire.

His Excellency, the Governor-General of Canada, having received communications from London upon this matter, consulted the Prime Minister, and with his approval referred the question to the Canadian Red Cross Society, and it was arranged for an appeal to be made in Canada during Armistice week in November. The Fund will be known as "The British Empire War Relief Fund."

To Make Known the Need.

The Canadian Red Cross Society accepted the task of making this appeal known throughout Canada only in view of the relentless circumstances and the humane desire to help to alleviate the terrible suffering of a large number of peoples. The reasons are numerous and compelling. Large populations are suffering from distress and disease. Millions of innocent children are among them. Even in time of peace great numbers of their people lived close to the bread line. The war drained them of all their surplus resources. Through the years of strife they were denied all but the barest necessities, and their condition now is pitiful indeed. History has repeated itself. The diseases which took such fearful toll of human life after the Thirty Years' War, the Seven Years' War (1757-65), and the Napoleonic Wars are again widespread, and now there are millions of people in Galicia, Poland, Jugo-Slavia and Roumania who, in addition to being poverty stricken, are in the direst misery and despair on account of disease. In some twelve countries, most of which were either our Allies or friendly to the Allied cause, modern civilization is faced with the inevitable consequences of a great war through partial famine and pestilence.

A Previous Epidemic.

That the epidemic is now one of alarming proportions and terrible in its effect may be noted from the following quotation from "The Times":

"At present the worst results of typhus are confined to Galicia, where the schools are closed, business is at a standstill, and civic life is crippled. The whole community is faced with starvation, whilst the absence of clothing and drugs makes it impossible for the authorities to make any headway against the epidemic. Here we have a country into which the idea of modern sanitation has never penetrated; for the most part there is no water supply in the smaller towns and villages save wells, whilst the work of sewers is done by open gullies running through the streets. There are no doctors, no nurses, and no beds, and the miserable typhus-stricken patients lie unattended on the bare floor. Throughout the rural districts whole families exist in miserable one-roomed huts, their diet consisting of starvation rations of potatoes and beet, both bread and meat being luxuries rarely seen. In almost every hut there are several cases of typhus and in many instances whole families are stricken with the disease, and are perforce left to die unattended."

Many Countries Are Suffering.

What is said of Galicia is true of other countries of Europe, such as Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, huge territories of the Ukraine, Soviet Russia, Jugo-Slavia and Czecho-Slovakia. Nor is typhus the only affliction. Tuberculosis, smallpox, dysentery and relapsing fever are also ravaging large areas.

Lack of Medical Aid.

These terrible conditions have been called to the attention of the people of the British Empire in a statement by the Right Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, who, speaking for the Council of the League of Nations, says:

"Men, women and children are dying by thousands, and over vast and civilized areas there are neither medical appliances nor medical skill sufficient to cope with the horrors by which we are faced. Governments have in certain cases done all in their power to bring relief, but there remains a vast field for charitable enterprise which can be dealt with only by voluntary effort."

Eleven Million Orphans.

Dr. Livingstone Farrand, chairman of the Central Committee of the American Red Cross, who has just returned from Europe, states that there are 11,000,000 fatherless children in Europe who face the next few years without hope of adequate care unless outside assistance is given.

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