

EUROPEAN CHILDREN'S FUND.

MR. HOOVER'S AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

CHILD WELFARE MISSION TO HUNGARY.



After Two Months Care in the Budapest Home.

In a recent letter to the *N. R. Ct.* Mrs. van Schelven-Balogh gave some interesting and some appalling data with regard to the condition of Budapest. This city, she explained, has now a population of just upon two million souls, among whom are 600,000 fugitives from the occupied territory—from Slovakia, Transylvania, Croatia and Slavonia.

Budapest has no longer fertile backlands; the plains are beset with Czechs, Rumanians and Serbs. The Rumanians, who have carried away loot to the value of 38,000,000 000 crowns, are still stationed at a few hours distance from Budapest. The peasants cannot

bring their produce to the capital, as trains run only twice a week.

According to the statistics of the Swiss Red Cross, the mortality in the Municipal Children's Home during 1919 was 96 per cent.: thus, of every 100 babies only 4 survived. Children's food is totally wanting. Sister Martha of the Swiss Red Cross writes that "it is heartbreaking to see the wizened baby faces, and the weak necks incapable of supporting the heads they should bear...."

"Operations are performed under full consciousness! There is no chloroform, no ether, no local anaesthetic to be had".



Mrs. De Graaf-v. d. Moore and Captain Gardner Richardson, Chief of Mission to Hungary, with his staff.

Capt. Richardson is seen standing between Mrs. De Graaf-v. d. Moore and Rittmeister v. Stadler.

A Dutch Lady's Experiences in Budapest.

Continuing her interesting letter about her trip to Hungary to fetch a dozen children who are to spend a couple of months in this country, our private correspondent writes from Budapest:—Whilst the Bolsheviks robbed them of a considerable part of their possessions, the Rumanians either carried off or destroyed what remained. Thus I asked at the hotel for a filter to make some coffee-extract, but was told that the Rumanians had carried off everything of the kind, dishes, spoons, forks, linen, &c.; 64,000 railway carriages, besides other rolling-stock they had transported to their country, and the carriages left are not worth a stiver. The upholstery has been cut out and people have to cover the horsehair with newspapers to be somewhat comfortable.

Neither daylight nor artificial light is possible, for the lamps have been broken and the windows smashed and boarded up. The general impression is that of a country which has been thoroughly sacked, with a population which is heartily tired of warfare.

Our Work in Budapest.

After having rested over Sunday we began the work for which we had come. Our Consul gave us the necessary addresses of families whose children were in need of relief and our number was soon complete. In spite of this we were overwhelmed with applications and offers from desperate parents who beseeched us to take their children that they might recuperate and forget all misery in delightful Holland, which to them is wonderland. Poor parents! Poor children! How I should have liked to take all care from their shoulders! And when it became known from a Press interview that a mission from Holland had arrived to take some children away, a crowd gathered in front of the hotel to apply on behalf of their children, notwithstanding snow, rain and storm. We were at first at a loss what to do, but, to save the situation, we took the names and addresses of the children and told the parents that they could go by the next Transport.

The Needs of the Intellectuals.

Despite the feeding of 100,000 children once a day by the American Relief Administration the distress is still great, for a child needs more food than any ever get here. Clothing is miserable as well. Hardly anything is left. I have seen children of well-to-do families, with fairly good

clothing, worn-out shoes and underwear in which the tears and rents were sewn up with tape made of paper, whilst the material was likewise half-paper, half-cotton. One of these children was suffering from bronchitis. Such people suffer worst; for officials who have a fixed income must live on it and there is no question of either bonus or extra earnings.

When it became known that several transports of children would be sent to Holland, the authorities and all kinds of prominent persons did their best to facilitate my task. At the instance of Mr. Fledderus, our Consul I made the acquaintance of Mr. Neugebauer, the head of the Kinder Schutz Liga, who agreed to supervise the transports to be sent later.

Farewell to Budapest.

After due preparation, we left Budapest on the 15th. We were accompanied to the station by fathers and mothers and other relatives. A special carriage, the best that was to be had, was coupled direct to the locomotive by the good offices of Captain von Stadler. It was a merry party, those 24 children with two nurses and we, the two members of the Committee of Relief for Hungary. The children did not suffer much from the journey. In Vienna we were well housed in an hotel and two days afterwards we proceeded further by fast train. Fast trains only run twice a week to Berlin and it was impossible to secure tickets in time upon arrival in Vienna. By a mistake on the part of my fellow traveller, we arrived at Nuremberg instead of Berlin. We stayed two days and were taken care of by the society for the reception of prisoners-of-war.

Fortunately, the children's train from Vienna passed Nuremberg en route for Holland and, at our request, we were coupled on to that train, so that we reached home sooner than we expected.

I wish to say a word of thanks to all the officials on the German railways and stations who treated us with so much kindness; also to the various physicians whom we so often needed for the weak children.

We arrived safe and sound in Holland on the 22nd and the children were cordially received by the various families who had asked me to do this charitable deed at their expense.

May the children have a happy time here and forget the misery of war and revolution and may the remembrance of their adoptive parents and of the time spent in Holland live for ever in their memories!