

RELIEF FOR SERBIA.

The Serbian Relief Fund drew together a crowded meeting at the Mansion House, on Tuesday, March 22nd. The chair was occupied by the Lord Mayor. Stirring addresses were given by the Rt. Hon. Herbert Samuel, M.P., the Lord Bishop of London, T. P. O'Connor, Esq., M.P., Mr. Bertram Christian (Chairman of Executive), and Mr. Georgevitch (A.D.C. to the Prince Alexis).

The Lord Mayor, in opening the meeting, said he thought the plight of Serbia was not duly appreciated in England; we were, perhaps, more intimately associated with the fighting troops. The Relief Fund was started, not only for the relief of the people in Serbia, but also for their refugees.

The Rt. Hon. Herbert Samuel said that until recently very little was known about Serbia; we even called it "Servia." Suddenly, we had become brothers in arms, even if we were not fighting side by side. He dwelt on the fact that in a generation Serbian revenues had increased tenfold, but they were only about half those of the L.C.C., and its population only about half that of the Borough of Kensington. This small struggling State had had three great wars in a very few years. It was not surprising after this that their resistance was weakened, even collapsed. They had now three enemies to fight—Austrians, Destitution and Disease. There would be no summer crops, because there had been no sowing; there were no horses available for agricultural purposes. There was no possibility of doubting that they were now also in the grip of typhus. He had it from Colonel Bennett, the accredited representative of the Red Cross Society, that sixty men were dying each day. In one hospital, there was one doctor for 750 patients, only 20 of whom could stand on their feet. In another, for 1,600 patients there were six doctors, twelve orderlies and *no nurses*; the staff was reduced by death to three doctors and three orderlies, and in consequence the hospital had to be closed. Many of the wretched victims lay in the streets with the certainty of death before them. The remedy was far beyond the control of its own resources. If preventive measures were not set to work at once, cholera faced them when the warmer weather began. The condition of things was, he said, now far worse than it had been at any other moment. He asked his hearers to contrast it with England at this time, where business and pleasure were going on as usual.

The Bishop of London, who was in khaki, said he had just come from seeing twenty men who were blinded by the war. He wondered how the nation *could* carry on so many amusements in the face of all these things. He pointed out that Serbia had nothing left to cope with disease, no stores, no appliances of any kind. He spoke of how a French nurse said the streets smelt of blood. "We know," he said "of the fate of women and children in Belgium, and we know now that the same horrors have happened in Serbia. Added to all this—the scourge of typhus." He had it on

good authority that efficient sanitary work would probably save thousands of lives, but it would cost a quarter of a million. He appealed for Serbia that out of our great wealth, we should assist its piteous misery.

Mr. Georgevitch gave some telling incidents illustrating the gallant character of the "Boys" and their fathers and mothers. After a hard battle of four consecutive hours, of the 250 "boys," only seven were left. They came to their Colonel. "We are only seven left. Are we still to keep the position?" A soldier having a painful wound dressed, shifted: "Excuse me sir, I won't do it again," he said. A mother to her son who had five days' leave: "Why did you come? Take the train back to night." A father who had all his three sons killed, mourned not because of their loss, but for his little grandsons—"It will be so long before these little ones grow up to hold a rifle."

Mr. H. E. Morgan said it should not be a question of giving what we could afford we should give the sum that we would rather give than see England in German hands.

Mr. Bertram Christian said that though Lady Paget had unfortunately contracted typhus, so far they had good news of her. Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's unit, composed of women, was due to leave at the end of this week and would be tied to no building but would work where most required.

The Fourth unit (the British Farmers' Hospital) was also to start soon. This would deal entirely with fever. It would be staffed by doctors and nurses of great fever experience. Bacteriologists and the complete machinery for sanitary work would accompany them. The work must be preventive. To deal with it by cure would be the task of Tantalus. Mr. Christian then proposed a vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor, which was seconded by Mr. T. P. O'Connor, M.P., in an eloquent speech. The Lord Mayor's reply brought the meeting to a close. H. H.

At the quarterly meeting of the Scottish Council of the Queen Victoria's Jubilee Institute for Nurses, the report on the past three months' work was received. It showed that the Council were directly responsible for the maintenance of nine Queen's Nurses and twenty-five candidates receiving instruction in the Training Home. Eight candidates completed their training during the period, and were engaged in Edinburgh (temporary), Carmichael-Anstruther, Bressay, Inverkeithing, Prestwick (temporary), Leven, and Vale of Teith. Fifty-five nurses had been called up for service with the Army or Territorial Nursing Service, and 26 others were giving whole or part time services in various capacities. An interesting ceremony took place during the meeting, when the Chairman (Dr. Barbour) presented Miss Peterkin, the superintendent of the Scottish Branch, with the long service Gold Badge awarded by the Council of the Institute for twenty-one years' service.

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