

THE CHINESE FLOODS.

A letter in *The Times*, signed by the Archbishop of York, Lord Cecil of Chelwood, Sir Michael Sadler, and many other influential persons, draws attention to the conditions which have arisen owing to the Chinese floods of last summer, which constitute one of the biggest recorded disasters of this kind in human history. According to aerial surveys, in which Colonel Lindbergh's assistance will be remembered, the seriously flooded areas were larger than the whole of England. In these areas the crops, livestock, and practically all the houses and implements were destroyed. The number of persons drowned can never be known. The number of persons affected was estimated at 50,000,000, those rendered practically destitute are at least 10,000,000.

As the waters slowly receded during the autumn, the great majority returned to their villages and began the work of rebuilding their homes and recultivating their land. Charitable funds poured in from such Government quarters as could help, from the foreign resident community, and from a very large number of Chinese subscribers in China and abroad.

The Chinese Government has secured 450,000 tons of wheat from the United States on credit. The National Flood Relief Commission, under the directorship of Sir John Hope Simpson, who was appointed by the Chinese Government on the nomination of the League of Nations, is engaged on the work of distributing these supplies. Wheat, however, by itself is insufficient. Cash relief is essential to

supply other food, clothing and shelter, and to provide seed for the spring sowing in order that this year's crops may be secured. Sir John Hope Simpson now informs us that unless additional funds are immediately provided he will be unable to carry on the work now in hand.

Sir John Hope Simpson explains that funds are not only urgently needed for relief but also for the work of repairing the innumerable breaches in the dykes in order to prevent renewed floods this year.

The emergency appeal committee has an office at Edinburgh House, 2, Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1. The hon. secretary is Mr. Kenneth MacLennan, and the hon. treasurer is Mr. F. B. Bourdillon, to whom it is asked that subscriptions should be sent at that address. Cheques should be made payable to the Midland Bank, Limited, and crossed, "China Flood Relief Account." All funds received will be remitted to Sir John Hope Simpson.

The Committee appeal for subscriptions both from individuals and from churches, trade union groups, Rotary Clubs, charitable and philanthropic organizations, and other bodies throughout the country.

Miss Gladys Stephenson, so well known to our readers, has sent us the following graphic account of her work there.

FLOOD RELIEF WORK IN CENTRAL CHINA. BY MISS GLADYS E. STEPHENSON, S.R.N., F.B.C.N.

Director of Nursing Service, National Flood Relief Commission, Central China.

The best known of the concentration camps for flood refugees in Central China is that of "Heh Shan" commonly but incorrectly called "Black Hill." Its real name is "Majestic Hill."

Situated about four miles above Hankow city on the west bank of the river Han, it has the appearance of a large commanding cliff. Climbing the cliff one is confronted with a line of low hills with a deep valley between in which lies a large irregular shaped lake. Not far from the hill is an Arsenal and it was at this point that the refugees coming by boat loads down the river Han were stopped by the police and forbidden to go farther towards

Hankow. They therefore congregated on this hill top and set up their tiny huts around the lake side. At first about 10,000 came but this number increased daily until at Xmas time there were no less than 104,000 people congregated there, all living in weestrawhuts family by family. As the hills are covered with graves, the huts are lodged in the flat spaces between the grave mounds.

The huts are made by bending strips of bamboo over in a circle each end being stuck into the ground and on these are nailed squares of straw matting each square costing only a few cents. These precarious shelters in which an adult can-

not stand upright are the homes of the refugees through autumn and winter. Seen from a distance, it seems unthinkable that a family could exist in one. When Colonel Lindbergh, the famous airman, came to help make an air survey of the flooded regions, he could scarcely be persuaded that more than one person could inhabit such small shelters.

Cooking is done in an iron pot over a fire of twigs gathered from around the camp, just outside the hut, or if the weather be bad, just inside the doorway of the hut.

When the first refugees arrived, the weather was hot, there was no food, no sanitation, flies abounded, dirt and debris lay everywhere, cholera and dysentery were rife and many dead lay among the living unburied.

As soon as the extent of the flood calamity was made known, the government acted promptly, the President Chiang-Kai Shek, flew from the capital to Hankow in an aeroplane and at once made plans for relief. A national Flood Relief Commission was set up and Dr. Borsic of the League of Nations, Health department, the Minister of



ADMITTING A REFUGEE PATIENT, FLOOD RELIEF SHIP.

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