

Contributions
To Dec. 5 (Cash)
\$600,673.31

Belgian Relief Bulletin

"He Gives Twice
Who Gives
Quickly"

No. 2

Office of the BELGIAN RELIEF FUND, 10 BRIDGE STREET, NEW YORK

Dec. 5, 1914

THE CO-ORDINATION OF BELGIAN RELIEF WORK THE BELGIAN RELIEF COMMITTEE THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION AND THE AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR RELIEF IN BELGIUM

The co-operation arranged between the Belgian Relief Committee and the Rockefeller Foundation, stated in the first number of this Bulletin, was announced through the press on November 9th. Under this arrangement supplies were to be assembled by purchase or gift by the Relief Committee and were to be shipped by vessels provided through the Foundation for distribution abroad by the American Commission for Relief in Belgium, of which Mr. Herbert C. Hoover of London is active chairman.

Several days after this arrangement was announced and put into operation Mr. Hoover notified the Rockefeller Foundation and the Belgian Relief Committee that Mr. Lindon W. Bates had been appointed vice-chairman of the London American Commission; that it had received large sums of money from European sources, which could be used only for the payment of transportation expenses, and that it would be prepared to furnish the shipping facilities which under the original arrangement were to have been provided by the Rockefeller Foundation.

After conferences, looking to the co-ordination of Belgian Relief measures, the following statement was given to the press on November 30th by the Rockefeller Foundation, to embody the co-ordination arranged:

Co-Ordination

"The American Commission for relief in Belgium, which has taken charge of the distribution of supplies in Belgium, has established a New York office for the co-ordination of the generous efforts that are being made in all parts of this country. The American and Spanish Ambassadors in London, the American and Spanish Ministers in Belgium, and the American Minister in Holland are the Honorary Chairmen of this commission, and Herbert C. Hoover is the active Chairman.

"Lindon W. Bates, Vice-Chairman, is in charge of the New York office and is perfecting an organization through which donations from America, whether from the Belgian Relief Committee in New York, the Rockefeller Foundation, or other relief organizations established in different parts of the country, may be shipped to the best advantage.

Ocean Transportation

"The American Commission has received large sums of money from European sources which can be used only for the payment of transportation expenses. In order, therefore, to avoid duplication of effort the Rockefeller Foundation will adapt its plans for furnishing ships to those of the commission, and the Belgian Relief Committee expects to arrange eventually for the delivery of supplies to ships to be provided by the commission.

Food, New Clothing, Blankets

"The following articles will be accepted: Wheat, rice, peas, canned goods, new clothing, blankets, flour, coffee (one-fourth chicory), beans, and cured or salted meats. Unground wheat is chiefly needed.

"The authorities in Holland and Belgium prohibit or object to the importing of second-hand clothing. The need for new clothing and blankets is urgent, and it is hoped that these will be contributed in large quantities.

"Gifts of the above articles, preferably in carload lots, may be consigned to the Belgian Relief Committee, Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, N. Y., and all goods thus received will be forwarded as expeditiously as possible, either in ships chartered by the Rockefeller Foundation or in ships furnished by the American Commission for Relief in Belgium.

Cash Contributions

"Gifts of money and all communications for the Belgian Relief Committee in New York should be addressed to the committee at 10 Bridge Street, New York City.

"The New York office of the American Commission for Relief in Belgium, at 71 Broadway, is rapidly perfecting its arrangements for the concentration of supplies at the most advantageous shipping points, and is issuing detailed instructions to local organizations in all parts of the country in regard to the forwarding of supplies. The commission does not solicit funds, but favors and assists in the establishment of State or local organizations, with which it will keep in constant communication.

More Relief Steamers Soon

"In addition to the steamship Massapequa, which carried the first cargo contributed by the Rockefeller Foundation and which is now returning to New York for a second voyage, the steamship Agamemnon, 2,900 tons: the steamship Neches, 6,500 tons, and the steamship Ferona, 7,000 tons, have been secured by the Foundation and are to be loaded within a few days, the Agamemnon with a cargo made up wholly of donations through the Belgian Relief Committee and the other ships with cargoes supplied chiefly by the Rockefeller Foundation.

"Other sailings, including the second trip of the Massapequa, are now being arranged for December. The total tonnage already secured, as noted above, will yield about 50,000,000 pounds of food, nearly all of which will reach Belgium before the end of the year.

"As fast as the Rockefeller Foundation is relieved by the American commission from the responsibility and expense of furnishing ships, the Foundation will be able to supplement more largely the donations received from other sources.

Efficient Distribution

"The Rockefeller Foundation has received from its War Relief Commission, which already has reached Rotterdam by way of London, a very favorable report on the efficiency of the organization for distribution already established by the American Commission for Relief in Belgium.

Food Supplies Urgently Needed

"Mr. Wickliffe Rose, Chairman of the Foundation's War Relief Commission, reports that the need of additional supplies is most urgent, and that contributions of 30,000 tons in addition to the cargoes already assured must be shipped in December."

(Continued on page 4)

BELGIAN RELIEF FUND

FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND OTHER NON-COMBATANTS.

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This BULLETIN is published to furnish in convenient form information most sought by persons interested in the work of Belgian relief. Inquiries received at this office are so numerous as to preclude individual reply to all. Other Bulletins will be issued from time to time, and the Committee will be pleased to add to the mailing list upon request names of those to whom the Bulletin may be of interest or assistance. All Belgian relief co-workers are invited to send to the committee pertinent information in concise form for possible publication or for inclusion in the permanent records of the Fund.

"We say nothing about causes; what we are speaking of is the fearful desolation and ruin, the heart-rending distress, the unspeakable agony of hundreds of thousands of non-combatants who, a few weeks ago, were dwellers in quiet and happy homes, and who are now wanderers on the face of the earth,—fatherless, perhaps, or widowed; homeless and forlorn and almost hopeless surely. The mere extent of the misery defies realization; the individual horrors of the scene are too infinitely varied to permit of any attempt to grasp them."

Cash contributions to Dec. 5, \$600,673.31

Smallest contribution - - One Cent

Largest contribution - - \$10,000

Another Food Ship Sails

Food supplies totaling 2,800 tons left Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, Dec. 5 on the steamer Agamemnon for Belgium. The cargo was valued at \$206,000, of which \$186,000 represented purchases by the Belgian Committee, and the remainder contributions from the Committee of Mercy. The officials present when the steamer left the dock were Louis de Sadeleer, Minister of State of Belgium and Lionel Hagenaers and Rev. O. A. Nys, of the Belgian Relief Committee. The bulk of the cargo was rice, of which a million pounds was carried. There was also 63,000 pounds of condensed milk and considerable consignments of coffee, beans, salt, lard and flour. The Agamemnon was furnished by the Rockefeller Foundation.

"Restoration of Belgian Homes and Households"

Dr. Henry van Dyke on Rehabilitation—
Conditions in Refugee Camps

Suggestions looking towards rehabilitation of Belgian refugees were outlined by Dr. van Dyke, American Minister to Holland, in a letter to the Belgian Relief Committee, shortly before coming to this country for his present brief stay. The Committee had made three cash remittances to Dr. van Dyke for use in behalf of Belgian refugees in Holland, totaling about \$20,000. The first two were applied through the Netherlands Committee for the Aid of Destitute Belgians, whose letter of acknowledgment, by its president, appears in another column. The later remittance enabled Dr. van Dyke to make a beginning along the line of "restoration."

Dr. van Dyke's views are of particular interest to the Belgian Relief Committee because from the time of its organization the Committee has had in mind an ultimate, tremendous problem of restoring the homeless and destitute Belgians to conditions of self-support. Its purposes have been stated thus:

1. To relieve immediate distress of the hundreds of thousands of Belgian women and children and other non-combatants in Belgium.
2. To rehabilitate as soon as practicable the poor Belgian peasant and working classes by helping them to get roofs over their heads and tools to work with.

Dr. van Dyke wrote:

"The number of Belgian refugees now in Holland has considerably diminished, owing to the return of many of them to Belgium. But there are still a great many remaining here, and in my opinion, according to the report on the subject which I made after my visit to the ruined cities of Belgium on October 24th and 25th, there will be a large number, perhaps between one and two hundred thousand in all, who cannot go back to Belgium with safety this winter, because their homes are wrecked and they have no work and nothing to live on. These are naturally the poorer and more helpless people. Holland, now that the first rush of refugees has passed, feels that she can take care of the sheltering and feeding of those who remain out of her own resources, although of course she is grateful for the gifts of friends. But the task in which she most needs help at the present moment, in my judgment, is that which I have called the 'Restoration of Belgian Homes and Households,' and it is to this task that I have applied the money which you have recently sent me. I have made this decision after full consultation with the president of the Netherlands Relief Committee.

Rehabilitation

"By this term, 'The Restoration of Belgian Homes and Households,' we mean to cover whatever needs to be done to enable a poor family to get back to its home and to live in it. If the house has a hole knocked in it, we will help them to mend it. If a peasant's cow has been stolen or killed, we will try to get him another one. If he needs seed to sow in his vegetable garden for next year, we will provide it for him. In short, we will try to do what we can to put the family in a state to go on with their life again.

"This work, while the same in spirit and ultimate purpose, you understand, is quite distinct in form from that which is being done by the American Commission for Relief in Belgium, which has in view the revictualment of the whole civil population of that country, whose food supply has been either exhausted or carried away by the German army.

"I trust that the course which I have followed in this matter may meet with your approval, and I send you my warm congratulations on the admirable work which your committee has done and is doing.

"I wrote to our Government in the second week of August to say that in my opinion the question of Belgium was and would remain the most vital and significant question of the whole war. It seems now as if that would prove true. All the factors of the problem from every point of view seem to be summed up and symbolized in the experience and fate of that country. Whatever wider range the great conflict may take, the significance of Belgium in its relation to the fundamental issues at stake remains central."

An earlier letter, under date of October 26th, was as follows:

In the Refugee Camps

"On Saturday and Sunday I went by motor car to make a personal investigation into the condition of the Belgian refugees in Holland, and the possibility of repatriating them in Belgium.

"I visited carefully the refugee camps at Rosendaal and Bergen Op Zoom, small towns which have entertained from fifty to eighty thousand Belgian refugees. In other still smaller villages along the Dutch frontier the proportion of refugees to inhabitants was even larger. In one place of about 5,000 population there were 30,000 refugees who arrived within twenty-four hours; most of these, however, went on to Rotterdam, Amsterdam, or The Hague. At Rosendaal and Bergen Op Zoom there still remain about 25,000 refugees in each place.

"The condition of these people is most pitiable. For the most part they are without money. They arrived in great haste, and in a terrified condition, pouring into the country in crowded trains, and in such carts and wagons as they could find, and trudging on foot along the roads. The majority, of course, are women and children, and there are many tiny babies, some born during the flight. There are all sorts of sicknesses among the fugitives, but there is, as yet, no epidemic. There are two excellent emergency hospitals at Bergen Op Zoom.

"The people of Holland have risen magnificently to bear the weight of the great burden which has been thrown upon them. Many private houses in every city and town have been thrown open to receive fugitives, and large public refuges have been provided. In Rosendaal, a vacant factory building was utilized. It has four stories, and on each story long bunks, filled with straw, were provided for sleeping accommodations, so that the building altogether houses about 35,000 people. Their food is prepared in an outdoor kitchen by the ladies of Rosendaal. In another large building, at the other end of town, belonging to the Catholic Social Club, an all-day restaurant is run by the ladies, providing eight series of three meals each.

"On Saturday evening I motored through to Antwerp, and on Sunday morning made an examination of that city, and of the small cities lying between there and Brussels. My object was to determine how far it would be safe for the refugees to go back at once to Belgium.

Problems

"So far as the attitude of the military authorities is concerned, I believe there is no danger whatever for non-combatants in returning. Antwerp itself is not so much injured as to render it uninhabitable for the greater part of the population. A very large majority of the houses are standing and uninjured, especially in the poorer quarters of the city. The only serious problems connected with the return of the refugees to Antwerp are the water supply, the question of employment, and the question of food.

"In regard to the smaller cities in the neighborhood, the case is entirely different. For example, the towns Waelhem, Mechelen, Duffel and Lier are reduced practically to ruins, and are certainly not in a condition to receive back more than one-third of their ordinary population. There is, moreover, a smell of decay in the air which probably proceeds from corpses buried in the ruins, and which may, at any time, breed a pestilence. The resumption of the ordinary industries of these places is absolutely out of the question, as the factories and workshops are all knocked to pieces. To send people back to their homes when those homes no longer exist, I believe to be cruel. There are, I suppose, ten or a dozen other small towns in Belgium which are practically in the same condition as those I visited, desolate and uninhabitable, half of their houses wrecked, great many scattered and isolated farmhouses which have been practically destroyed, and a considerable portion of the land under cultivation has been laid waste, either by military operations or by inundation for defence.

"The practical result of my investigations was to convince me that while a large part of the Belgian refugees in Holland may return either to Antwerp or to Brussels, or to towns which are known to be very little injured, yet in regard to the inhabitants of other places, a careful investigation of their former homes should be made before sending the people back. I believe, therefore, that there will be a considerable number of Belgian refugees remaining in Holland, and that humanity will require that they should be taken care of there, at least until the process of repatriation can be made more secure at the Belgian end.

"I believe also that the problem of food and employment in Belgium during this winter is going to be very severe; and that it is possible that the problem of food may be difficult even here in Holland.

"I send this information in order that you may know from an eye-witness just how the situation looks."

"Abyss of Want and Woe"

Belgium's Bitter Need of Our Aid—Sir Gilbert Parker Says Only America Can Save From Starvation.

The appalling misery which is overwhelming the thousands upon thousands in desolated Belgium is vividly depicted in the following statement by Sir Gilbert Parker, M. P., who last week left London to inquire into and report upon conditions. In the present status, he says, only America can meet the desperate needs. Starvation and death from cold and disease are certain for vast numbers unless the great work of human salvage, made possible through the agencies of relief, now co-ordinated, is supported to the full by those who are able to help.

"The hearts of all humane people," writes Sir Gilbert Parker, "have been tortured since the beginning of the war by the sufferings of Belgium. For myself the martyrdom of Belgium had been a nightmare. Her Government is carried on in another land. Her King is in the trenches. Her army is decimated, but the last decimals fight on.

"Her people wander in foreign lands, the highest and lowest looking for work and bread; they cannot look for homes. Those left behind huddle near the ruins of their shattered villages or take refuge in towns which cannot feed their own citizens.

Destitution—Desolation

"Many cities and towns have been completely destroyed; others, reduced or shattered, struggle in vain to feed their poor and broken populations. Stones and ashes mark the places where small communities lived their peaceful lives before the invasion. The Belgian people live now in the abyss of want and woe.

"All this I knew in England, but knew it from the reports of others. I did not, could not, know what the destitution, the desolation of Belgium was, what were the imperative needs of this people, until I got to Holland and to the borders of Belgian territory.

"There at Maastricht I saw fugitives crossing the frontier into Holland with all their worldly goods upon their shoulders or in their hands, or with nothing at all, seeking hospitality of a little land which itself feels, though it is neutral, the painful stress and cost of the war.

Ask for Bread and Salt

"I begin to understand what the sufferings and needs of Belgium are. They are such that the horror of it almost paralyzes expression. I met at Maastricht Belgians, representatives of municipalities, who said that they had food for only a fortnight longer. And what was the food they had? No meat, no vegetables, but only one-third of a soldier's rations of bread for each person per day. At Liège, as I write, there is food for only three days.

"What is it the people of Belgium ask for? They ask for bread and salt, no more, and it is not forthcoming. They do not ask for meat; they cannot get it. They have no fires for cooking, and they do not beg for petrol. Money is of little use to them, because there is no food to be bought with money.

"Belgium under ordinary circumstances imports five-sixths of the food she eats. The ordinary channels of sale and purchase are closed. They cannot buy and sell if they would.

No Work

"There is no work. The factories are closed because they have not raw material, coal, or petrol, because they have no markets.

"And yet war taxes are falling with hideous pressure upon a people whose hands are empty, whose workshops are closed, whose fields are idle, whose cattle have been taken.

"In Belgium itself the misery of the populace is greater than the misery of the Belgian fugitives in other countries, such as Holland. I have seen in a room without fire, the walls damp, the floor without covering, not even straw, a family of nine women and eight children, one on an improvised bunk seriously ill. Their home in Belgium was leveled with the ground, the father killed in battle, with little food, insufficiently clothed, there by the North Sea, they watched the bleak hours pass, with nothing to do except cling together in a vain attempt to keep warm.

"Multiply this case by hundreds of thousands, and you will have some hint of the people's sufferings.

"Children are born in the hugger mugger of such conditions.

Pathetic Endurance

"The saddest, most heartrending thing I have ever seen has been the patience of every Belgian, whatever his state, I have met. The pathos of lonely, staring, apathetic endurance is tragic beyond words. So grateful, so simply grateful, are they, every one, for whatever is done for them.

A Democracy of Famine

"None begs, none asks for money, and yet on the faces I saw stark hunger, the weakness come of long weeks of famine. A rich man can have no more than a poor man. It is a democracy of famine.

One Nation's Waste Could Save Another

"There is enough food wasted in the average American household in one day to keep a Belgian for a fortnight in health and strength. They want in Belgium 300,000 tons of food a month. That is their normal requirement. The American Relief Committee is asking for 8,000 tons a month, one-quarter of the normal requirements, one-half of a soldier's rations for each Belgian. The American Committee needs \$5,000,000 a month until next harvest. It is a huge sum, but it must be forthcoming.

"Of all the great powers of the world the United States is the only one not at war or in peril of war. Of all the foremost nations of the world the United States is the only one that can save Belgium from starvation if she will. She was the only nation that Germany would allow a foothold for humanity's and for Christ's sake in Belgium. Such an opportunity, such responsibility, no nation ever had before in the history of the world. Spain and Italy join with her, but the initiative and resources and organization are hers.

"Around Belgium is a ring of steel. Towns have fallen under the iron and fire of war. Into that vast grave yard of the desolate only the United States enter with adequate and responsible organization.

Our Great Opportunity

"No such opportunity was ever given to a people, no such test ever came to a Christian people in all the records of time.

"I am a profound believer in the great-heartedness of the United States. Probably the United States has 18,000,000 homes. How many of them will deny themselves a meal for Belgium? The mass of the American people do not need to deny themselves anything to give to Belgium.

"I say to the American people that they cannot conceive what this strain upon the populations of Europe is at this moment, and, in the cruel grip of Winter, hundreds of thousands will agonize till death or relief comes. In lonely, hopeless units, the Belgian people take flight, looking for food and shelter, or remain paralyzed by the tragedy fallen upon them in their own land.

Majestic Heroism

"Their sufferings are majestic in simple heroism and uncomplaining endurance. So majestic in proportion ought the relief to be.

Material Help and Sympathy

NETHERLANDS COMMITTEE FOR THE AID OF
DESTITUTE BELGIANS.

Amsterdam, Oct. 22, 1914.

Mr. Robert W. deForest,
Belgian Relief Committee, New York City.

My Dear Sir: By the kind assistance of your Minister at The Hague, Mr. Henry Van Dyke, we have the pleasure to receive your remittance in behalf of the Belgian Relief Fund.

We highly appreciate that contribution, as it will enable us

to continue for some time our relief work among our Belgian brothers who sought refuge within our frontiers against the cruelties of war.

Their number, evaluated at about a million, is hardly diminishing, most of them preferring the privations of exile to the prospect of experiencing again the calamities they passed through.

However they are actually safe with us. The population does a great deal to help them and our Government aids where it can. But their misery is enormous notwithstanding, and our Committee has a huge task.

Therefore we were so very glad to obtain your material help; but still more we regard it as a token of sympathy from across the ocean, which still strengthen us at our work of humanity. We remain, Sir,

Yours truly and faithfully,

TH. STUART, President.

"Everybody Has the Impulse—All They Need is the Address"

So wrote a Civil War veteran from a Soldiers' Home in the South. "I long wanted to help the Belgian sufferers," he continued. "I have known all too well the pains of cold, the gnawing of hunger, the loneliness of tragedy. Now, thanks to a piece in a New York paper sent to our Home in a bundle of reading matter, I can send my mite. My monthly invoice of cash don't tally up very heavy, but here's two bones (\$2.00) and hoping you can feed and keep the cold out of every last one of them."

Co-ordination of Belgian Relief Work

(Continued from page 1)

It should be noted that this statement supplements the announcement of November 9th, by including new clothing and blankets among the articles to be shipped.

Also it will be noted that there is no change in the instructions already given respecting contributions of money or supplies.

The American Commission calls attention to the importance of not permitting on supplies shipped any marks or messages mentioning any official of any belligerent countries, lest this might hold up distribution.

The shipping facilities of the Rockefeller Foundation solely relate to the port of New York. The American Commission tells us that it has established other terminal ports to which shipments may be consigned. These ports include Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, New Orleans, Portland, Ore., Seattle, Wash., and San Francisco. Should it be more convenient or advantageous for any correspondents to consign to any of these other ports they should preferably communicate directly with the American Commission for Relief in Belgium at No. 71 Broadway, N. Y.

Summary

Summarizing the above statement :

MONEY CONTRIBUTIONS should be sent to the Belgian Relief Committee, 10 Bridge Street, New York City.

Checks should be drawn to the order of "J. P. Morgan & Co.—For Belgian Relief Fund."

FOOD SUPPLIES, NEW CLOTHING and BLANKETS contributed through this Committee, if in car-load lots, should be consigned to "Belgian Relief Committee, Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, N. Y." If in less than car-load lots, they should be consigned to "Belgian Relief Committee, Factory 19, Bush Terminal, Brooklyn, N. Y."

All such supplies, as well as all purchases made from the funds of the Committee, will be, for the present, forwarded in ships provided by the Rockefeller Foundation.

When these ships reach Europe, all supplies, etc., will be received and distributed by the American Commission for Relief in Belgium.

Whenever the Rockefeller Foundation ceases to furnish ships, we expect to make our shipments by vessels supplied by said Commission.