

SERBIA MADE LAND OF STARVING ORPHANS— EYEWITNESS TELLS TRAGIC STORY



He doesn't belong to anybody now! One of Serbia's 10,000 war orphans who wander aimlessly about their country in search of food and shelter. The boy in the picture above is huddled against the wall in the sunshine trying to keep warm. Notice that the toes of his shoes are out and the bottoms of his trousers frayed and torn by the brambles in the fields he had trudged through.

BY HARRY PAYNE BURTON
New York, Nov. 27.—Indescribably moving first-hand stories of the amazing misery of the 10,000 wan-

dering orphans of Serbia have been given me by Father Nikolai Velimirovitch.

This famous priest, the greatest

preacher the Slavs have ever had, has just reached New York from Serbia.

He looks an old man. He is only 34. But three wars have each added ten years to his life.

His simply-told, yet heartrending stories of the almost unbelievable sufferings of Serbia's lost children need no embellishing. They hit home by themselves. Here they are:

Tale No. 1—"One day I was standing outside the Town hall in Nish. A little girl was in the bread line, and when it came to her turn she asked for two loaves. "Oh, please give me one more," she cried. "I am not alone. We live six together."

"I made them give her two loaves, and went with her. We walked for half an hour, and at last came to a field. But I saw no house. There was a little heap of straw, and in it six little children were playing.

"When they saw Yela coming their faces lit up, and they ran toward us with little shouts of joy. This was the only food they got each day. They lived in the straw, and Yela was their only protector!"

Tale No. 2—"In Lazzaravitch I saw a boy holding a dog by a chain. He was crying, and a few soldiers were gathered around him.

"What is the matter, my little man?" I asked.

"My dog is hungry."

"He was Marko Markovitch. When the enemy came his mother told him to flee, while she remained to look after the house.

"I did not want to go," he told me. "I got my dog and we ran away. We walked for days and days, and we slept in the fields. Once it snowed. I have walked half over Serbia, and I am now going back to look for my mother. We have stopped here for a rest.

"Yes, I am hungry. But give my dog something first."

Tale No. 3—"Kossera Petrovitch was the mother of four. She fled from Resnik to Belgrade and tried to get a train to take them south. There

were 20,000 others waiting there. In the terrible struggle for trains Kossera was left four days.

"Then one of the children strayed. Where? Who knows? It was lost.

"On the fifth day she and the other three got aboard a train. After 50 miles the second child was crushed to death on the train. Two days later another child died.

"Then I saw her with her one remaining child and no home. She said to me:

"I will go home. What does it matter if I and this one are killed, too?"

Tale No. 4—"A father is fighting at the front. The mother has died of typhus. The children are left without anybody. Kosta is a boy of 12, and his sister Vera is 9. They start to find their father. After many days of wandering by chance they meet him. 'Mother is dead. What shall we do with the house?' they ask.

"The poor father, fighting for his country—what answer could he make them?"

There are ten thousand children looking for their parents like this. They are known as the "wandering children"—Serbia's babes in the woods.

HEALEY TO ACT ON GLEASON AND PTACEK TODAY

The delayed recommendation of the civil service that Capt. Gleason of Austin and Capt. John Ptacek of Lawndale be suspended temporarily was made by the civil service commission this morning when Percy Coffin, president of the commission, arrived downtown. Gleason was former chief of police.

Chief Healey will act on the recommendation from the committee this afternoon. The commission wants them off the force while they probe the slush fund charges.

The case against Lieut. Matthew Zimmer, Filmore station, was continued till next week.