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PUBLIC HEALTH

Modern Health Service For Diseased Chinese County

T LEAST one rural county of disease-ridden China is to have modern doctors and nurses and a real health department and the 400,000 inhabitants will be given a chance for healthier, longer lives, a report to the Milbank Memorial Fund in New York city indicates

The county of Ting Hsien in the interior of China has been made the subject of a rural health experiment, which is part of the Chinese National Association of the Mass Education Movement. Many such experiments have been successfully conducted in America, but the experiment in China will be made under conditions hard to picture, the political unrest being merely one of the many difficulties to be met.

In the entire county of 400,000 people, there is not one physician of the modern scientific school. The native doctors believe disease is caused by heat and wind. Sanitation is unknown. Ninetenths of the people are unable to read or write. Nearly all of them are ignorant, superstitious and poor. Eighty thousand of them live in the county's one city, the rest huddling in the squalid, mud hut villages. About 30 out of every thousand die each year, while the life expectation is only about 35 years.

The health demonstration has begun by educating the natives to come for examination and to accept medical advice and treatment. Vital statistics are being collected and native nurses, midwives and physicians are being trained in modern scientific methods. The head of the Ting Hsien Health Department is Dr. H. H. Yao. The Milbank Memorial Fund has given \$50,000 to aid in the work.

The present time is considered particularly opportune for this movement in spite of the political situation, because it is hoped that this non-political organization may lay the foundation for more effective governmental activities when the political situation is once more stabilized. The League of Nations has just announced that it will support and cooperate in attempts to modernize China's health service despite the country's seeming preoccupation with civil war.

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