

# Two hundred British children for Switzerland

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1946)**

Heft 1047

PDF erstellt am: **27.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-688278>

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## TWO HUNDRED BRITISH CHILDREN FOR SWITZERLAND.

On the 24th of this month, two hundred British children left this country for a six months' stay at Adelboden (Bernese Oberland).

Through the kind intermediary of the Swiss Legation, we were enabled to interview Frl. Dr. M. Zehr, who is one of the most experienced medical officers of the "Secours aux Enfants" in Switzerland, who has come to London in connection with this party.

This young and charming lady doctor has given your reporter the following interesting particulars:

The organisation of the "Don Suisse" invited, some time ago, through the channels of the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health, two hundred prae-tuberculous children, or rather "delicate children" to spend six months at the Children's Home in Adelboden. This offer was gratefully accepted by the British authorities and the London County Council was entrusted with the selection, aided by Dr. M. Zehr.

Principally children from London families, who had particularly suffered through the war, were chosen.

The necessary funds for this scheme (S.Frs. 301,000.—) had been granted by the "Don Suisse," who had asked the "Secours aux Enfants," a section of the Swiss Red Cross, to make the necessary arrangements, owing to their great experience in these matters.

The ages of the children (boys and girls) vary between 6 — 13. They will be looked after by a specially trained Swiss staff of nurses, and will receive full medical attendance. Six British nurses and two British teachers have been invited at the same time to Adelboden, where they will live with the children, so as to make them feel more at home, and help them from the educational point of view.

The Children's Home at Adelboden consists of a number of smaller Hotels and "Pensions," and a number of voluntary helpers will look after the welfare of the little guests.

Doctor Zehr was anxious to record the very friendly reception she has received by the British authorities whilst she was staying here. "Everybody was most kind and helpful, and my task was thus made easy," she smilingly said. It can also be mentioned, that our Minister, Monsieur Paul Ruegger, has been most helpful to bring this scheme to a successful conclusion.

Great excitement prevailed at Victoria Station on Wednesday last. The lucky children turned up in their "Sunday best" accompanied by their parents, relatives and friends; they were in high spirits, and no wonder, as to all of them this journey is perhaps the greatest experience in their young lives. Few of them had ever been even at the sea-side, and innumerable questions were asked by the tiny "tourists."

One little boy said to me: "Mister, how high are the mountains in Switzerland, and shall I be able to go to school through the snow, as I am only a small boy?" Another little girl proudly told me, that she heard that they even get pocket-money, which she is going to save, in order to buy Mummy a cuckoo-clock.

Punctually at 10 o'clock the train departed with vociferous cheers from the children, hats and handker-

chiefs were furiously waved, both by the passengers and those who saw them off. Here and there a little tear trickled from small faces, a sign of parting pangs.

As far as Calais the party was conducted by British personnel — from Calais onward, a special train, consisting of Swiss carriages, arranged by the "Secours aux Enfants" with Swiss staff took care of them, under the leadership of Mlle. Ludwig from Basle, who has been in charge of many children's parties in various countries; she was assisted by Dr. M. Zehr.

By the time this report is read, these little children will have arrived in our beloved country. Let us hope that their stay will be a beneficial one for all of them, and that they will regain health and strength, and that they will bring back memories of happy and carefree days spent in the surroundings of Alpine splendour.

## A GIFT FROM THE SWISS COLONY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

As a contribution towards the efforts to rehabilitate British families, who have severely suffered through the war, the Swiss Colony in Great Britain has offered 100 suites of furniture.

These will shortly be handed over to the Women's Voluntary Service who, in agreement with a committee representing Swiss Societies and Associations in Great Britain, have been asked to distribute them by the Ministry of Health.

Completing this gesture, the Zurich section of the Swiss Red Cross, will also send in the near future, as a gift from 50 Swiss families, 50 further suites of furniture, which will be distributed through the British Red Cross mainly to families of young disabled ex-service men, having at least two children, and having been unable to procure furniture to start a home.

It might be of interest to our readers to know what these suites, which are neatly packed in a wooden box, consist of.

Here are the particulars:

Two divans (195 x 88 cm.), with springs and mattresses.

One table complete with drawers (120 x 80 cm.), covered with lino with four stools.

One cupboard with two doors, (Height 172 cm., width 78 cm. and depth 40 cm.). One side can be used for hanging clothes, and the other for linen. Both sides can be locked.

It also includes the following kitchen utensils: two stew pans, one frying pan, one saucepan lid, one small pail, one soup ladle, one strainer, one coffee strainer, four dinner plates, four cups, four spoons, four forks and four coffee spoons.

We are also pleased to mention, that thanks to the assistance of the F.E.S.E. (Fonds Européen de Secours aux Etudiants) in Geneva, ten to fifteen British students, who are suffering with tuberculosis, will be received during the next two months for convalescence at the Sanatorium Universitaire in Leysin.

On going to Press we have received from the Swiss Legation in London, the splendid news, that the "Don Suisse" is sending a further consignment of 500 suites of furniture within three to four weeks. It will thus be possible to help families throughout Great Britain on a much larger scale.