

500 AMBASSADORS OF PEACE

CHILDREN FROM THE FALLEN CAPITAL

How They Left Vienna for England

LAND OF THEIR DREAMS

By Our Correspondent Who Saw Them Off

Since the Armistice sixty thousand Austrian children have received hospitality in Sweden, Holland, Denmark, Switzerland, Italy, and have received in foreign homes the food their own land could not provide. They have left Austria pale and thin, and have returned rosy and fat, with new hope in their hearts and a new language on their lips.

This hospitality extended by foreign lands to the unfortunate children of Vienna has always seemed to me a beautiful action, and I have often wished that England would show her chivalry by similar charity. And now a group of 500 hungry children is being selected to go to England, under the superintendence of a distinguished doctor sent out here by the Ministry of Health.

Best Land Under the Sun

To all Austrians and Hungarians England is the best land under the sun. English culture, English manners, English ways of living, have always seemed to them the best, and even in happier days a visit to England was the ambition of thousands of Viennese; and when, accordingly, in these days of famine and suffering five hundred Viennese children were invited to England, thousands of children and parents jumped at the invitation.

To see England—to see the white cliffs of Dover and the villages of Kent and Surrey, and Regent Street, and Piccadilly, and the Strand, and St. Paul's, and Westminster! To have English food and English fires! To learn to read and speak English! What a chance! No wonder all the boys and girls in the sad city longed to go.

Lady of Consolation

For two days I watched the doctors examine the applicants. So keen were the children and parents that one would have thought it a matter of life and death. When a child was rejected often both child and mother wept, and finally the kind-hearted doctor sent by the Health Ministry—whose father, by the way, was the author of the boys' book called "Eric," which many readers of the C.N. must know—felt he could not face such harrowing scenes, and deputed a lady to console the children and mothers.

About half the children chosen were boys and half girls, and the boys were taken only between the ages of six and eleven, and the girls between the ages of six and fifteen. Children of all classes were chosen. There were children of artisans and children of professional men and officers; but, other things being equal, an attempt was made to select bright children likely to benefit intellectually by a sojourn in England.

The Great Departure

Yesterday I went to the station to see the children leave. They were dressed in their Sunday best and looked happy and excited, though one or two seemed overawed by the great event, and two little boys clung crying to their mothers and could not be persuaded to leave her.

As the train moved off there was a tremendous fluttering of handkerchiefs and flags, and a lady with me said it would be worth coming a hundred miles to see. "It would be worth coming half the way round the world to see," I said, "for every child there is an ambassador of peace. They go to sow love in English hearts, and they will come back with their own hearts full of love for England. That is the way to end war."

STORIES OF THE GREAT FLOOD

Many dramatic and remarkable things happened in the great Lincolnshire flood reported on another page.

The force of the water at a bridge was so great that stones weighing half a ton were thrown ten feet in the air.

A woman climbed up a rain-pipe to reach a roof, but fell back into the stream and was drowned.

The flood travelled through the streets at 40 miles an hour.

Three children were trapped on a ground floor, and the mother tried in vain to save them by piling up furniture.

A young lady in peril with her mother refused to be rescued alone, and both were drowned.

A woman climbed up a chimney of a house and sought refuge on the roof.

In one place a tar-sprayer weighing a ton and a half was thrown bodily through the air.

One helpless old man was being dragged to the door of his house through the rushing waters when a pig burst in between him and his rescuers, and the old man sank from sight.

A woman caught in a sitting-room, with the table wobbling like a raft, clutched the top of the window and hung on for four hours. She was eventually saved by a rescue party.

A child was born in one of the flooded houses, and the doctor attending the mother jumped through the window and saved a drowning man.

Food was carried by means of ladders to people taking refuge on a roof.

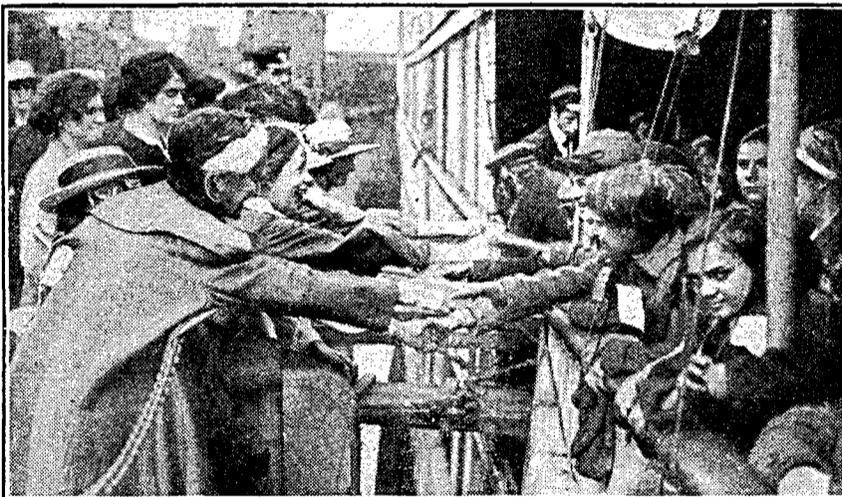
A chest of drawers was lifted out of a room and left in a wood-yard nearly a thousand feet away.

A fire-engine was half buried, and a man was surprised to find somebody else's motor-car in his garden.

THE CHILDREN FROM THE FALLEN CITY



The Austrian children from the famine-stricken areas arrive at Folkestone. See next column



Lord French's sister, Mrs. Despard, welcomes the Austrian children who have come to England to recover their health. See page three

NEWS FROM EVERYWHERE

The Duke of Buccleugh is advertising his famous flower and fruit gardens at Dalkeith to let.

Germany has completed the delivery of 5000 engines which she was to supply to the Allies under the Peace Terms.

New Stars

Six more new stars have lately been discovered in that part of the sky in which Nova Aquilae blazed out in 1918.

Great Storm Round Paris

The most violent hailstorm in living memory has occurred in the district of Paris. Hailstones fell as large as hens' eggs, some of them killing animals.

A Distinguished Lobster

A lobster has lately been caught in Portland Harbour weighing 12 pounds and measuring nearly 19 inches. It is thought to be nearly 25 years old.

Concert Heard Through Space

A concert has just been heard through space, without any sort of wires, by the Royal Society of Canada. Listening at Ottawa, the audience was able to hear a concert at Montreal, 50 miles away.

A shorthorn bull has just been sold at Roath, near Cardiff, weighing over one ton one cwt.

An eleven-year-old caddy on the golf links near Manchester has been drowned trying to recover a ball from a pond.

Lucky Thirteen

Leslie M. Hunt, a schoolboy of thirteen, has just been appointed organist at Emmanuel Church, Stoughton.

The Postman's Bank

Some boys in Ireland have dug up a tobacco pouch containing 400 sovereigns. They were claimed by a local postman, who said he had buried them for safety.

Nothing Like Leather

To meet the great shortage of leather in the United States tests are being made with shark and porpoise skins, with a view to their being used for boot uppers.

The Flying Splinter

In the blowing-up of the Chatsworth glasshouse, as told on another page, a steel fragment smashed one of the windows of Chatsworth House and became embedded in the staircase.

GREAT MAN'S RARE ADVENTURE

FRENCH PRESIDENT LOST FOR HOURS

How He Knocked at a Cottage Door in the Night

A VERY QUEER STORY

Not one of us can ever guess what is going to happen to us next in this jolly, adventurous world. That is one of the reasons why it keeps so interesting.

When M. Deschanel, President of the French Republic, left Paris in the presidential train one evening to unveil a memorial in Southern France to a brave airman, he little thought that at midnight he would be stumbling along the railway, with bare feet, clad only in thin pyjamas, and wondering how he would be able to make anyone believe he was the chief ruler of a great nation.

When the platelayer's wife at the little house by a lonely railway crossing persuaded the bruised man who came to her door in his night clothes to go to bed and be quiet, she little thought that his story was true, and that she was entertaining a president unawares. She only saw in him a traveller who had had a bad shock, and whose mind was wandering because of it.

Strange Meeting on the Line

Yet each of these strange stories was true. M. Deschanel had left Paris tired and headachy, and had retired into his sleeping compartment at ten to get the rest he badly needed. But the night was hot and he could not sleep, so about eleven he tried to open the low window of the compartment to get a breath of reviving air. The window stuck, and he pushed, and then, it flying open, he fell out, and the presidential train hurried on without the President.

His fortunate fall on soft ground had not injured him seriously, and so, finding himself able to walk, he presently began to tramp, with shrinking feet, the railway track towards Paris, until, after about a mile of solitude, he met the flash of a platelayer's lamp.

The platelayer, kind but unbelieving, accompanied him to the cottage at the crossing, and knocked at the door. The kind and unbelieving wife coaxed him to rest—poor man, so badly shaken as to think that he was the great President of the Republic!

Wonderful Escape

As M. Deschanel had given strict orders that he was not to be called till seven, no one entered his compartment, and even when the news came down the line that someone had fallen from the train, and those who were in it were counted to find who it could be, no one thought of rousing the sleeping President till personal inquiries for him came over the wires from many miles away, where a bruised traveller persisted in saying he was the President of France. Then it was found, indeed, that he was missing; the President had been lost for hours and his friends had not known!

Seldom has so strange an experience come to a nation's ruler, even in the adventurous days of old, but one never knows where Romance is waiting for high or low round the corner.

All the world will congratulate M. Deschanel and France on the almost miraculous escape which turned what might have been a sorrowful tragedy into a quaint adventure.

A DOG'S SCOOTER

A Scottish reader claims to have a dog that enjoys a scooter like a child.

His scooter is the garden spade. My brothers and I run round the garden with the spade, while doggie puts his forefeet on the spade and runs with his back feet.

It is comical to watch his enjoyment of this sport. If we stop running he barks till we go on again, and then he is quite pleased.