

American Friends Service Committee

20 South Twelfth Street



Philadelphia, Penna.

BULLETIN ON RELIEF IN FRANCE

Bulletin #28

For the Use of Editorial Comment and Re-publication

April 23, 1941

QUAKER SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Unoccupied France

"Il n'y a plus---"* prefaces much discussion in France these days, telling the story of shortages of potatoes and sewing thread, milk and medicines. Spring is a kindly season and townspeople and those who till the land welcome it. What does it matter now that there is so little coal? The farmer, plowing his land for spring planting, prepares to bring more fields under cultivation. In unoccupied France and in Switzerland the reduction of pasturage and herds by 20 and 30% will provide more land for crops. It may also mean that there will be less milk and less meat next winter. Mothers are glad the warm sun has come. The sun is an able assistant to bleach and clean the clothes, now that a month's soap ration is only a small cake.

Quaker offices in Marseille, Toulouse, Montauban, Perpignan, and Auch are, as always, crowded. A young French woman asks if there is some way by which she may communicate with her brother in occupied France. A child needs shoes. A foreign refugee seeks help in arranging his papers for emigration from France and when he learns that even after his visa for the United States has been secured there may be months of waiting for ships, he says despairingly:

"Perhaps it will be too late."

The American Friends Service Committee gives such help as it can to those who come to its offices. Quaker workers visit the concentration camps where foreign refugees, including some 3,000 children are interned.

The care of children continues to be the major service of the Committee.

COLONY CARE

More than 600 children live in the fourteen houses in unoccupied France maintained by our Committee. These colonies are:

Condom Colony at Condom (Gers)	39
Chateau de Monteleone at Condom (Gers)	55
Chateau de la Rade in Toulouse	68
Nursery at Montauban	106
Col des Marroux near Foix (Ariege)	40
Canet-Plagè Colony near Perpignan (P.O.)	40
MacJanet Colony at Ancey (Haute Savoie)	40 to be increased to 100 May 1.

* There is no more.

Charmes (Ardeche)	13
Ecully near Lyons	30
Chateau Decormis near Marseille	56
La Rouviere " "	31
Mourieres " "	28
St. Remy " "	31
Cooperative Club in Marseille	10

Here the children share work and play and forget the hardships which are the aftermath of war. Most of the French children in the colonies come from large families, impoverished by present widespread unemployment, concerned about fathers and brothers who are prisoners of war.

One of the most beautiful Quaker colony sites is the MacJannet Camp at Annecy loaned by Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. MacJannet. Situated in the French Alps close to the Swiss border on Lake Annecy, this colony now has 40 children. An additional 60 will join the group May 1st when warmer weather will permit use of buildings which could not be heated during the winter. The directress of the colony writing in February describes a walk at Annecy:

"The sharp air of the mountain gave all the children a beautifully fresh and healthy complexion. On a certain Sunday afternoon we walked until we arrived at a rather steep slope. In no time the children were climbing up. Then they rolled down immense snowballs. I wish I could have photographed this sight and the pleasure of these little ones who had never seen so much snow. I made a dog of snow which the tiny Emile carried in his arms for a quarter of an hour. But on arriving home, in spite of his care, Emile slipped and there remained of his dog only a little heap of snow."

SCHOOL FEEDING

Approximately 30,000 school children in 400 schools in 10 cities of southern France are now receiving extra rations for the midday meal. These meals are served in the school dining rooms decorated with the American and French flags and the children greet our workers with a "Vive l'Amérique." Soup, the gift of local committees, is served first, then the Quaker rations of rice, vegetables, cocoa, and sugar. Because this is often the only real meal the child has all day, second helpings are encouraged. Young volunteers vie for the privilege of scraping the pots.

These school meals, which cost our Committee approximately 2 cents a day, supplement the inadequate rations of the neediest. We wish it were possible to extend this service to more children. One hears from the children frequently "Vive l'Amérique." A small boy presenting flowers to a Quaker worker in Toulouse says:

"We shall never forget that the noble America has come to our aid helping the suffering of the unhappy children. We beg you to transmit to your friends in America our grateful thanks. We pray for you and all your little children."

MILK FOR BABIES

A pint of milk a day is now being distributed to 10,000 French babies. Reports from our workers indicate that because there is so little milk, it is being reserved for sick children and babies under 13 months of age. These are the babies of war, many of them born in cellars and along the roads of evacuation. Mothers, unable to obtain sufficient food, find it increasingly difficult to nurse their babies. It is perhaps indicative of the plight of these infants to explain that the normal weight for French babies now approximates 5 pounds and that after a month and a half a baby seldom weighs more than 6 pounds 2 ounces. During the winter, too, some babies brought to clinics could not be undressed because of the cold.

OCCUPIED FRANCE

The American Friends Service Committee continues to maintain a small service in occupied France with offices in Paris and Biarritz.

The Quaker colonies include:

<u>Name of Colony</u>	<u>No. of Children</u>
Pax Colony near Bordeaux	38
La Sansonnerie near Poitiers	5
Biarritz colonies (6)	168

Committee delegates are also helping English civilians interned in the Paris area.

April 14, 1941