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FOR OUR COUNTRYMEN IN SPAIN

Appeal by the President of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique (London Group)

Is it nothing to you?

In the last issue of the Swiss Observer this question has been asked by the Editor, and it has touched the heart of many good Swiss in London. It is a question which we want to ask again and again and, if at each asking, only a few more good Swiss recognise the urgency of the help which is required, then, in the end, we Swiss in England shall have done our duty.

You will have guessed at once that this question refers to the Swiss Refugees from Spain, our unfortunate compatriots who have been forced to leave that country with no more than the clothes they wore. They had been exposed to terrible hardships and danger of life. They were driven out of the country in which many of them had spent the larger portion of their existence. The result of all their labour was taken from them ruthlessly. All that they had saved and invested in the country has gone irretrievably.

Thanks to the generosity of Foreigners, the crews of British battleships in particular, they and their children were cared for and fed, transported to the nearest ports and sent to their home, Switzerland. But even here they found at first a cool reception. Nobody was expecting them, nobody had made preparations to receive them. Nobody, evidently, was aware of the magnitude of their destitution and despair.

Then the Auslandschweizer Secretariat of the N.S.H. launched an appeal for funds in their favour which has reached by now well over S.Frs. 25,000. Government followed with a subvention which will ultimately be found to reach a very high total. From that point forward it was possible to take care of the refugees in a dignified manner, and this is now being done.

24th GORDON-BENNETT BALLOON RACE.

Warsaw, August 30th, 1936.

The Swiss balloon "Zurich III," piloted by Dr. Tilgenkamp and ten Bosch, was third in the Gordon-Bennett Balloon Race, which started from Warsaw on August 30th.

The following details might interest our readers:—

Twenty-eight years ago, the startling victory of Colonel Schäck. President of the Swiss Aero Club, as he then was, caused a great stir throughout Switzerland. The start was made from Berlin, where altogether 23 balloons took off. The distance flown by the gallant colonel and his companion amounted to 1200km. and they were all in all 73 hours in the air. The Americans came in second, covering a distance of 428 km. This event was unfortunately marred by some regrettable incidents; a few minutes after starting, an American balloon, burst at the height of 500m.; fortunately the cover acted as a parachute, and both pilot and passenger had a narrow escape, landing without being even hurt. The day following the net of one of the Spanish competitors snapped during the voyage, but luckily enough no loss of life occurred. The Swiss balloon "Cognac" piloted by Victor de Beauclair landed near the north sea coast, others risked the trip over the open sea, with the result that four balloons were fished out of the water, somewhere near Heligoland, when two German pilots lost their lives, through having been drowned.

Luck favoured the Swiss, after many hours of anxious waiting, the welcome news came over the wire, that the balloon "Helvetia" which was piloted by Colonel Schäck, had landed safely on the Norwegian coast after having been altogether 73 hours in the air. Switzerland thus not only won the race, but had also beaten the world record of duration flight. For the first time therefore our country was entrusted with the arrangements for the next competition, which was held at Zurich, at the beginning of October 1909. Switzerland was then represented with three balloons: "Azura" (Captain E. Messmer, the companion of Colonel Schäck in 1908); "Helvetia" (Colonel Schäck) and "Cognac" (Victor de Beauclair) and took 3rd, 4th and 7th place. The winner of this race was the American Mix, with balloon "America II," and second the Frenchman Alf. Leblanc with balloon "Ile de France." A strong west-wind blew the balloons over Austria, Czechoslovakia and as far as the Russian Frontier.

Eleven years later (1921), victory again came to Switzerland. M. P. Armbuster from Berne, started from Brussels, where 14 balloons were entered, having been blown towards the open sea,

Last Saturday and Sunday, at the Auslandschweizertag in Montreux, we were given detailed information of the forcible dispersion of the various Swiss Colonies in Spain. In face of their desperate need and danger, it was again demonstrated that the Swiss People are not behindhand with their help for their unfortunate compatriots, once they understand the position. The N.S.H. collection is making rapid progress throughout the country.

We Swiss in Great Britain must not let it be said that we are not of the same mind. Let us simply imagine ourselves for a moment in the same dreadful predicament in which our Compatriots from Spain find themselves to-day. Then we could not *Give* help, but we would *Expect* help from those who are of our blood and our race.

The one thing is clear in our hearts, that we *Must* help, and help *Quickly*. Each one of us must give that which he can, taking everything into consideration. Each one of us must speak to his friend and induce him to take part in this collection. Each one of us must bring forward this urgent matter in his Society, so that the excellent example of the City Swiss Club and the Swiss Mercantile Society, may be followed. In this way will the collection grow to an amount which will be a token of our love for our compatriots and a very real help in their utter despair.

EINER FUER ALLE — ALLE FUER EINEN!

(All subscriptions received will be acknowledged, week by week, in the columns of the Swiss Observer, cheques and P.O.'s should be made out to "Swiss Observer, Relief Fund."

he risked the journey over the water, and landed safely on the island of Lambey, near the Irish coast, 766km. away from the starting point, and once again the beautiful Gordon-Bennett cup, which is valued at 10,000 Swiss francs, was entrusted into the safe-custody of Switzerland.

In 1922 the race was held at Geneva, where 19 balloons competed, amongst them three under the Swiss flag. The winner of this race, was the Belgian Demuyter, who also won the next two races and consequently the cup became the perpetual property of the Aero-Club of Belgium. Gordon-Bennett, the proprietor of the New York Herald, then offered a new cup, an exact replica of the first one, this new cup was won again by a Belgian. Then W. T. Orman, an American, appeared on the field, and in 1928, after three consecutive wins, the trophy was won outright by the Americans.

After Henry Ford had provided a new cup, the Gordon-Bennett race continued in 1929 at St. Louis (U.S.A.) and 1931 (1930 no race took place) in Cleveland (U.S.A.); in 1933 America won the cup outright. The American Aero Club offered a new cup, which was won in 1933, 1934 and 1935 by Poland.

Poland, by having won the race three times in succession, became the permanent possessor of the trophy.

For this year's race Poland offered a new cup.

The official results of the Race, are as follows:—

- 1st balloon "Belgique" (Demuyter Hoffmann, Belgium) 1,710 km.
- 2nd balloon "Lopp" (Janusz-Brenk, Poland) 1,560 km.
- 3rd balloon "Zurich III" (Dr. Tilgenkamp, ten Bosch, Switzerland) 1,525 km.
- 4th balloon "Deutschland" (Goetz-Lohmann, Germany) 1,500 km.
- 5th balloon "Warsaw II" (Hynek-Janik, Poland) 1,470 km.
- 6th balloon "Polonia II" (Burzynski-Bonanski, Poland) 1,440 km.
- 7th balloon "Sachsen" (Bertam-Schubert, Germany) 1,220 km.
- 8th balloon "Maurice Vallet" (G. Blanchet, France) 1,200 km.
- 9th balloon "Augsburg" (Frank-Bauderer, Germany) 950 km.
- 10th balloon "Bruxelles" (Quersin-Van Schelle, Belgium) 800 km.

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LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND.

During the first six months of 1936, Switzerland's foreign trade has been characterised by a slight increase in exports and a decrease in imports. Switzerland has bought 542 million frs. worth of goods from abroad, and sold goods to the value of 396 millions, as compared with 402 millions in 1935. It must, however, be pointed out that since the beginning of 1936 bar gold no longer figures on the lists of goods exchanged and that actually the exportation of goods other than gold has progressed.

In July foreign trade remained about the same: a slight decrease in imports and a slight increase in exports. It would therefore not be unwarranted to assume that the backward movement in Switzerland's foreign trade has ceased, which gives rise to the hope of more favourable conditions in the export trade in future. This amelioration is already perceptible as regards the trade in machines, metals and watches. As a matter of fact, the increase in the weight of the machines exported greatly exceeds the increase in the price, which serves to prove to what extent the Swiss manufacturers have adapted their prices to those of the World Market. The progress made by the watch-trade is especially worthy of note. This progress is due mainly to the efforts of the manufacturers who, although they have dropped their prices, have devoted themselves to improving still further the quality and accuracy of their goods.

As regards financial matters, it has just been announced that the total of the balance-sheets of the big banks has greatly increased during the first six months of 1936, which gives proof of the increased activity in the different branches of industry.

On September 21st a subscription list for the Federal Loan for National Defence will be opened to the public. The Government feels that this should not be treated as an ordinary financial operation, but rather as a loan the conditions of which would permit everyone to participate in it.

The index figures of the cost of living have varied but little during the first half of this year. The fluctuations have mostly been seasonal, but rents have shown a marked tendency towards decrease. This evolution is welcomed by the industrial circles who see in it the possibility of a more satisfactory adaptation of the general level of prices. As for unemployment, this has grown considerably less during the first half-year, but the number of persons unemployed at the end of June was still 75,000, which is a higher figure than that for 1935. As in the preceding months, this is largely due to the bad state of the building trade, which is itself responsible for one half of