BELGIAN REFUGEES AT CHICHESTER.

HOSTEL OPENED AT SUMMERSDALE.

A PARTY OF EIGHTEEN RECEIVED.

GENEROUS HELP FROM CITIZENS.

A party of eighteen Belgian Refugees arrived at Chichester during last week, and they are being accommodated at what is for the present designated as the Belgian Hostel Farm Cottage, Summersdale.

Miss Dorothy Paget, of Shapleyke House, is acting as Hon. Secretary of the scheme under which it has been made possible to give shelter to those unfortunate people who have had to flee from their country, and she is being assisted by her sister, Mrs. Close, of Aldingbourne. For these two ladies the past week has been one never to be forgotten, but they have triumphed over difficulties and received such generous support from all classes of people in Chichester, that the work which they have been able to do must be its own reward.

This party of refugees, who have been sent to Chichester through the Catholic Women’s League, comprises members of seven families. There are five men, five women, three boys, and five young children, the youngest being a baby only three months. There is a man and his wife with two sons and a baby of ten months, a man and wife and two boys, a man and wife and a boy, a man and wife and little girl, an old couple, and a boy. One of the men is a market gardener, another a carpenter and cabinet maker, and another a blacksmith.

When a representative of the ‘Observer’ was conducted over the house on Saturday afternoon, all of them were busy in the garden and grounds. The house having been unoccupied for some time past there was much that wanted doing to make the grounds presentable, and the men had already effected a great improvement during the short time they had been there.

While the men are thus engaged in the garden, the women and children are busy with most of their time, household duties, their clothing being such that the small quantity of clothes which they possess has been sufficient to keep them occupied at this apparently favourite duty.

It is of course important that they should be kept occupied as much as possible in order that their minds may not dwell too much on the horrors through which their country has gone.

Three of the older boys have been very kindly taken in as day pupils by Mr. A. H. Tayler, at the City Grammar School, who has agreed to provide education and books gratuitously.

The majority of the party have come from the district of Molines. The old couple first went to Hermopolis from Molines; then they returned to Molines, and afterwards to Antwerp, from which place they were dispatched with thousands of others to England. All of them are in good health, but their sufferings can be imagined when it is remembered that they have been reduced homeless, and that their possessions are confined to the clothes in which they arrived.

The boys came with their pockets containing pieces of bomb shells as relics of their terrible experiences.