

Finding clothing for child evacuees

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*Woman's World*

## FINDING CLOTHING FOR CHILD EVACUEES

### “Joan” Describes Work Of A Worthing Centre

IF you can imagine a small room stacked high with an assortment of clothing of every conceivable size and colour, and three women helpers with only just enough space in which to move, you will get some idea of the state of affairs at the annexe of the Literary Institute this week.

Christ Church Women's Guild is running a clothing distribution centre for evacuees under Mrs Doherty, wife of the Vicar of Christ Church. Up to the present the centre has been used as a receiving office only, but beginning from this week demands have been coming in for clothing. A permit for necessary clothing is issued from the evacuation headquarters at Beach House to the different L.C.C. school teachers in the district, who, it is thought, should be able to judge the requirements of the children.

As far as I could see this scheme is working fairly well, but there are always some people who can't or won't understand any official procedure.

I spent a morning at the centre this week, helping or hindering, whichever way you like to look at it.

#### A Morning's Work

WHEN I arrived a small boy was being fitted with a new pair of pants. He was a singularly quiet little boy, and not too anxious to exhibit a pair of very worn khaki shorts to the general company. His teacher was explaining that as these shorts were his only possession, he would have to have something warmer for the winter months.

Diving into a pile of clothing one of the helpers succeeded in finding a new pair of grey flannels. Exit small boy clutching his new trousers and looking slightly happier.

Two youths bearing a large parcel of clothing were the next visitors. All clothing received is entered and a receipt issued by Miss Jenkins, who is in charge of the centre during the mornings. In the afternoons this job is done by Miss Boorer.

#### Unsuitable Clothing

“WE hope to be able to re-sell some of the clothing received and buy warm, woolly garments with the money,” said Miss Jenkins. “This is necessary because we have received quite a large amount of clothing unsuitable for children—dress suits, adult's shoes, and women's silk dresses.”

The most urgent need at the present time is children's shoes. The evacuated children spend a considerable amount of time out of doors, walking and playing, and consequently their shoes are wearing thin. Shoes and winter underclothing are the absolute essentials.

Number three visitor was an old lady in great trouble.

“I have five children billeted with me, and they all want clothes,” was her opening remark.

It was explained to her that application for the clothes would have to be made through the children's teachers and a permit obtained. No clothing is allowed to be given out without this permit.

This statement really upset the old lady. She sat down on a chair most annoyed with everyone in the room. In a long monologue she told her troubles. The main point seemed to be that she felt that five children were too much for her. She was told that this could be remedied, but it did not seem to impress her very much. After a while she left, and everyone in the room felt very sorry that they were unable to do anything for her.

Two small, very fat, very solemn girls were next on the list.

They wanted shoes and underclothes. The smaller of the two was fortunate; we managed to find a pair of shoes to fit her, but the other one was not so lucky. Wanted—a pair of shoes, size 12. Perhaps someone can supply them?

Just before I left, a parcel was brought in containing an assortment of children's woolly jumpers, night-dresses and blouses. These were quite new and had been made specially for small children.

Judging by the way people have responded to this appeal for clothing it should prove a very successful experiment.