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WORTHING WELCOMES BELGIAN REFUGEES.

Worthing has given a welcome to 50 Belgian refugees, a special fund being raised to meet the cost of providing for them. The offer was made in reply to a telegram from the Local Government Board, received by the local Relief Committee, that many Belgian refugees were arriving in England, and that further offers of hospitality would be welcome. Some little time ago Sir Edmund Loder offered the use of Beach Houses to the Central Belgian Refugees Committee. The only difference of opinion expressed by members of the local Relief Committee was as to whether the expenditure should be met from the Relief Fund or by a special fund. After forwarding £1,000 to the National Fund, and expending £431 in relieving local dependents of soldiers and sailors, &c., the local fund was stated to total approximately £2,560; and the distribution of relief was said to have averaged £65 per week. This expenditure has tended to decrease instead of increase, in consequence of the larger Government allowances, and last week the distribution was £58 11s. 2d. The ultimate decision was to raise a special fund for the relief of the Belgian refugees, but to make advances from the Relief Fund if necessary—a contingency hardly like to arise, inasmuch as something like £40 was subscribed to start the special fund at the committee meeting, although the attendance was not large. As a special committee to obtain offers of hospitality from householders, and to arrange for them at boarding-houses where necessary, the following were appointed:—Miss Edith Barnett, Councillor Ellen Chapman, Miss Wilgress, Alderman White, Councillor Whyte, Mr. A. B. Dixon, and Mr. F. Martin. Councillor Whyte suggested that some of the money spent in providing for refugees might serve a double purpose, as the boarding of refugees with lodging-house keepers might tend to prevent the necessity for some of the latter applying to the Relief Fund for direct help. At short notice, the need being so pressing, the Belgian refugees who had been promised a welcome at Worthing arrived on Saturday evening, being met at the Railway Station by the Town Clerk, the Medical Officer, and several members of the special committee. Only a few of the refugees were of the poorest class. Some were given hospitality in the houses of residents, some sent to boarding houses, and others were quickly quartered at Saltley Lodge, a large house in Broadwater-road placed at the disposal of the committee. Gifts of furniture to make Saltley Lodge habitable—it has been empty and unoccupied for some time—were sent by many householders the instant they knew of the need.