

The Home has been taken over by the Belgian Refugee Committee, who will, I know, be most grateful for any gifts of men's and boys' boots and clothing, as well as garments for the women and children.

Folkestone has become a town of Belgians, and one hears little but French and Flemish spoken in the streets.

Regardless of the lateness of the hour, and not being visiting day, we begged permission to peep into the temporary hospital for the Belgian soldiers, which was rather reluctantly given. Only a few men appeared to be confined to bed; happily, most are now convalescent and were reading, smoking, or playing games in the recreation room, where they appeared to thoroughly appreciate the comfort by which they were surrounded after the terrible experiences through which they had so recently passed.

MARY BURR.

#### MATERNITY AND HEALTH VISITING.

The London County Council at its last meeting considered a recommendation from its Local Government, Records and Museums Committee in connection with St. Katharine's Hospital, concerning which, in the rules recently made, it was declared to be the wish of Her Majesty Queen Alexandra to restore to the poor of East London the benefits of the foundation, and that for this purpose there was to be established "as near as may be to the site of the ancient foundation of St. Katharine-by-the-Tower" a College for the provision of duly qualified resident health visitors to devote themselves mainly to maternity and health visiting working in the poorer districts of East London, and for the training of students for such work. The Committee understands that premises at Poplar have been taken temporarily for the purposes of the college and that four health visitors have already commenced work there. The premises are about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  miles from the site of the ancient hospital and the Committee recommended "that the Council expresses to the Chapter of the Royal College of St. Katharine-by-the-Tower its regret that in the recent leasing of premises for the purposes of the College the claims of the district contiguous to and in the immediate neighbourhood of the site of the ancient foundation have not been adequately recognised and hopes that in connection with any extension of the work or the establishment of a permanent institution therefore such claims will be fully met."

#### MEALS FOR NURSING MOTHERS.

A scheme has been inaugurated under the joint auspices of the Bradford Health Committee and the Bradford Maternity Care Committee for the provision of meals for poor nursing and expectant mothers. A dinner is to be provided each day. The food is cooked at a central kitchen and then taken by motor van to different centres.

#### A WELCOME CHRISTMAS GIFT.

Her Majesty the Queen has graciously sent a Christmas Donation of £10 to the East End Mothers' Lying-In Home, 394, &c., Commercial Road, E.

#### INTERESTING ITEMS OF KNOWLEDGE.

From the *American Journal of Nursing* we gather the following interesting items of knowledge:—

**INFANT MORTALITY.**—*The Canadian Medical Association Journal* says that the decimation of armies by war, and of nations by pestilence, is a tragedy which is exceeded by the infant mortality which we regard with calmness. A new-born child has less chance of living a week than a man of ninety, and of living a year than a man of eighty. Over 3,200,000 infants, less than a year old, perish annually in the countries forming the civilised world, or, in other words, one infant dies every ten seconds, every hour of the twenty-four.

**THE RÖNTGEN RAY AND INFANT FEEDING.**—At a meeting of the New York Academy of Medicine it was stated that radiography has shown the fallacy of the old idea that the stomach is vertical in infancy. The posture of the child after feeding is therefore of importance. It is recommended to hold it upright against the mother's shoulder to give an opportunity to get rid of an accumulation of gas, and to interrupt the feeding, if necessary, for this purpose. Colic, indigestion and regurgitation may be lessened or prevented by posture. If regurgitation is feared, the child should be placed in bed in the prone position, with the head of the bed somewhat elevated.

**IMMEDIATE RELIEF FROM PAIN UNDER RÖNTGEN RAYS.**—A writer in a Berlin medical journal says that not enough attention has been paid to the analgesic action of the Röntgen rays. A sprained hip-joint causing constant pain was immediately relieved by exposure to the rays. There was no pain for a week, then a mild recurrence which subsided after a second exposure. It has also been effectual in relieving pain in tumours, leukaemia and pelvic disease. It will probably prove equally potent in neuralgia, gout, deforming arthritis, furunculosis, malarial spleen and tuberculosis.

**NITROUS OXIDE ANÆSTHESIA IN OBSTETRICS.**—In a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* it is stated that the administration of nitrous oxide during labour retards the process very little, if at all, it does not produce muscular relaxation beyond that of normal sleep. Its action is rapid and transitory, not irritating or unpleasant to inhale, gives relief from pain and accelerates labour without disastrous results. There is no predisposition to post-partum hæmorrhage and involution is not delayed.

There seems no reason to deprive women in labour of this merciful alleviation of pain.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)