

BILBAO TO BEACH HOUSE

It is a far cry from shell-devastated Bilbao on the coast of Spain to the peaceful grounds of Beach House, Worthing, yet when I visited Beach House on Saturday morning the sixty boys and girls who constitute Worthing's share of the 4,000 child refugees had taken less than sixteen hours to settle down. They must have a measure of a child's blessed quality of adaptability, because although they had only arrived the night before they were lying lazily in the hot sun or playing games in little groups without any visible signs of unhappiness.

FACES TELL A TALE

Perhaps that is not quite true. The younger ones, particularly the small girls who vary from darkest brunette to fairest blonde, smiled confidently at every stranger and transcended all difficulties of language when they wanted to make friends, but the older boys and girls showed in their faces the abnormal life that they have been living which has made them distrustful even of security. The most healthy sound of all is the amount of noise that the youngsters make, so that every room and passage in beach House seems to be full of the sound of children's voices, talking a strange and soft language.

PICKING UP OUR LANGUAGE

The English words that they know at present are "O.K." and "Thank you", but they are picking it up as quickly as the English helpers are picking up Spanish. There is at present only one interpreter, and as the two Spanish lady teachers with the children speak no English, a little mutual exchange is essential.

The Worthing Gazette 2nd June 1937