

homes are visited. A very small excuse is sufficient to gain admission to the home, and there is, then, no lack of subjects on which a little advice can be given, while indirectly much information can be gained as to sanitary defects, the existence of nuisances, etc. It is generally felt that the visiting, so far as possible, should be *friendly* rather than *inspectorial*, and on that account the designation of "Health Visitor" is to be preferred to that of Sanitary Inspector. The people, as a rule, are pleased to be visited—for example, the writer, after nearly five years experience in a manufacturing town, paying 1,500 or 1,600 visits each year, cannot remember a dozen cases where she has been rudely received. The difficulty is to persuade the people to *carry out* the advice given, as for the most part they are very conservative in their objection to change, and almost fatalistic in their resignation to the existing state of things.

It is impossible as yet to foretell what arrangements will be made in the future with regard to the work involved in the systematic medical inspection of the school children. In some cases, perhaps, "School Nurses" and not Health Visitors will be employed; but as the Memorandum just issued by the Board of Education advises that the work should be done under the supervision of the Medical Officers of Health, and speaks of the importance of attention to sanitation, both in the schools and the homes of the children, it seems probable that at any rate in many instances the Sanitary Inspectors' certificate will be a necessary qualification for appointments made under the new Act.

An Important Meeting.

An important meeting of the Provisional Committee of the National Council of Nurses will be held in London on January 31st to consider a Draft Constitution for a National Council of Nurses of Great Britain and Ireland, at which every member, if possible, should be present. The Hon. Secretary, in summoning the meeting, will enclose a printed copy of the Draft Constitution, and each member should carefully consider its clauses beforehand. We hope the Scottish and Irish representatives will note this date, and make an effort to be present and take part in the deliberations. The Quinquennial Meeting of the International Council of Nurses, to take place next year, is close upon us, and our Council should be in full working order, so as to take its rightful part both in the business and conference sessions, which cannot fail to be of deep significance and interest.

The Children's Hospital, Paris.

The Children's or Foundling Hospital at Paris was founded by St. Vincent de Paul and one of its traditions is that a basket was placed outside the door, in which unwanted children are placed, the bell rung, the door opens, the child is received and cared for, and no questions asked. Knowing this, when recently visiting this hospital, one of our first questions was about the basket. "I have never heard of it, and don't know that it ever existed, anyway it is not here now," said our guide. Whether there ever was any basis of fact in the story no one could say, so it remains one of the many traditions of an interesting past.

The method of procedure to-day is much more practical, but none the less effectual or comprehensive.

On duty in an office quite close to the entrance is a *surveillante* whose duty it is to admit all children who may be brought or who come to ask for admittance.

Whilst we were there looking over the admittance papers, three small children came in, the eldest a girl of about 9 or 10 years, the youngest about 2½ years. "Why do you come?" our guide asked the child. "Mother is in hospital, and father is away," was the answer.

Without any trouble save a few questions as to name, age, and the address of the hospital where the mother was detained, the children were admitted. The girls were decorated with a string of pink beads, upon which was hung a tiny metal disc recording the number of the child in the books, the boy had blue beads with his disc; so all children admitted are marked, so to speak, and their records easily available. These children having a parent are only temporary guests during the mother's illness or until such time as she herself can again maintain her little family.

When, however, the child is a "not wanted" one then it is adopted by the State, and its distinctive badge is a string of white beads with its numbered disc.

These State children comprise, of course, many illegitimate children whose mothers do not wish to keep them, although efforts are made whenever possible to induce them to do so. Also orphaned children and those whose parents or relatives cannot through poverty or ill-health adequately provide for them.

Then, too, as already stated, children are admitted temporarily whilst the parent or parents tide over a time of sickness or unemployment.

The building is, of course, a very large one,

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)