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Editorial.

NEW ACTS OF PARLIAMENT.

On the first day of the New Year there came into force various Acts of Parliament containing provisions which have an important bearing on the national health, and are therefore of interest to nurses.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

Under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act it becomes an offence for a person suffering from an infectious disease to continue his work unless he can do so without risk of spreading that disease. Dairy-men must notify infectious diseases existing amongst their servants, and are required further to supply the Medical Officer of Health with a list of their sources of supply if he thinks an infectious disease in a district is attributable to the milk supply. Infectious clothes must be disinfected to the satisfaction of the Local Sanitary Authority before being sent to a public laundry. Children suffering from infectious diseases must not attend school, and persons suffering from infectious diseases must not use circulating libraries. The fact that it has been necessary to deal with all these matters by Act of Parliament shows how many are the risks run by the public of contracting infection.

HEALTH OF SCHOOL CHILDREN.

We have already referred in this Journal to Section 13 of the Education (Administrative Provisions) Act under which it is the duty of Local Education Authorities to provide for the medical inspection of children at the time of their admission to a public elementary school and at least on two other occasions during their school life. This medical inspection has an important bearing on the duties of nurses whose work must supplement that of the medical inspector if the latter is not to lose much of its value.

THE VACCINATION ACT.

Under the Vaccination Act the "conscientious objector" to vaccination is exempted from appearing before a Magistrate in order to prove his objection. He is now required to make a statutory declaration, such declaration being exempt from stamp duty.

THE FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT.

An important point about this Act is that it extends factory and workshop legislation to charitable institutions which hitherto have not come under the Act. It deals with the hours of employment of women in laundries and makes regulations to be observed in these places. The effect will undoubtedly be to put an end to hours of work at present in force in some laundries run as charitable institutions which are illegal in those which have hitherto come under control, and it is a useful piece of legislation protecting a class of workers who have very little power of self-protection.

THE MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT.

This Married Women's Property Act has already been briefly referred to in these columns. Its effect is to remove from married women who are appointed as trustees, with active duties to perform, a vexatious disability from which they have hitherto suffered. Up to the present time, if a married woman, as a trustee, has had to convey real property her husband had to join, and the deed had to be formally acknowledged by her. Now however she can act independently in the same way as a single woman.

With the scope of all these Acts nurses should be acquainted. The majority intimately affect their own work, and such an one as the Married Women's Property Act should be known to them. As public servants, and as intelligent members of the community, they should make a point of being conversant with any Acts affecting the public health or the conditions of women.

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