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## EDITORIAL.

### TRAINING AND APPOINTMENT OF HEALTH VISITORS.

The Minister of Health has issued a Circular (080) to Local Authorities carrying out Maternity and Child Welfare Schemes on the subject of the training of Health Visitors, referred to in Circular 557, issued last year, and stating that he has approved the Royal Sanitary Institute as the central body to conduct examinations for Health Visitors, and to issue Health Visitors' Certificates. The Certificate will bear the heading "The Royal Sanitary Institute Health Visitors' Certificate issued under conditions approved by the Minister of Health."

Attention is drawn to the fact that on and after April 1st, 1928, he will not approve the appointment of a woman for the first time as a whole-time officer of a local authority with health visiting duties unless she has obtained this certificate, but that it should be understood that the Diploma issued to students who, before April 1st, 1925, began a course of training approved under the Board of Education regulations, 1919, is regarded as equivalent to the new Health Visitors' Certificate, and arrangements have been made to endorse such Diplomas if they are forwarded to the Department certifying that their holders have fulfilled the conditions required by the Minister of Health for the issue of a Health Visitors' Certificate. There will therefore be no necessity for Health Visitors who possess the Diploma issued under the regulations of 1919 to enter for the examination leading up to the new Health Visitors' Certificate.

Those Nurses and Health Visitors who are entitled to this endorsement should forthwith send their Diplomas to the Department (Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W.1) for this purpose.

The Minister further states that from a perusal of the advertisements issued by Local Authorities it appears to him that in some cases there is misapprehension as to the qualifications at present required for the post of Health Visitor and as to the value of various Certificates which have been issued in the past. He points out that from January 1st, 1923, the approval given by the Local Government Board under the Health Visitors (London) Order, 1909, to the certificates for Health Visitors of the following bodies has been withdrawn—viz., the Royal Sanitary Institute, the Royal Institute of Public Health, the National Health Society and the Battersea Polytechnic, and that therefore until April 1st, 1928, either the new Health Visitors' Certificate or the certificate prescribed by the Regulations of the Board of Education, or three years' training in a general

hospital, or full training in a children's hospital, together with either the C.M.B. Certificate or the Certificate of a Sanitary Inspector should be required.

### THE REGISTRATION OF NURSING HOMES.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to consider and inquire into the question of the Registration of Nursing Homes, and to report what legislation, if any, is necessary or desirable for this purpose, has appointed Sir Cyril Cobb as Chairman, and Captain Diver as Committee Clerk, and heard evidence for the first time, on Thursday, March 25th, at 5 p.m., in Committee Room 11.

The next hearing will be on Tuesday, March 30th, at 4.30 p.m.

The question of the Registration of Nursing Homes is likely to arouse widespread interest, for it is one which not only affects the Medical and Nursing Professions, but a very wide section of the public who increasingly use them.

Without doubt a patient benefits greatly by being cared for in a Nursing Home which is suited to the purpose, where the nursing is supervised by a skilled and experienced Superintendent, who with every member of her staff gives the public the guarantee that she is a Registered Nurse. How many Nursing Homes to-day fulfil these conditions?

Moreover, very few such Homes are built for the purpose, but are houses which have been adapted. Then the financial position is often far from secure. Often a nurse, who may not be a good financier, invests her savings in a venture of this kind, and the double anxiety of conserving her capital, and attending to her absorbing duties of Sister-in-Charge, may result in overstrain and consequent breakdown.

Again, the capital may be borrowed, when the anxiety is doubled, especially should the balance be on the adverse side.

But there are Homes, not a few, which are not managed primarily in the interests of the patients, but as commercial ventures. The proprietor may, or may not, be a trained nurse, and the staff may include very few trained nurses, or even none, being largely composed of so-called probationers, who should never be employed in a Home which purports to supply the public with skilled nursing care.

We are of opinion that many persons will desire to give evidence from many points of view before the Select Committee on Nursing Homes, and anticipate it with interest.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)