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## Birmingham.

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(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

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THE success of the Extern Nursing Department of the Queen's Hospital is exciting a good deal of interest in Nursing circles here, and is a matter of much concern to all Provincial Nurses. With certain exceptions, we know that the fees commanded by the leading Metropolitan Medical Practitioners are not reached in provincial towns or country districts, and hence the Nursing fees are proportionately less than in London.

By the arrangement at the Queen's, Nurses have all the advantages without any of the attendant risks and expenses of co-operation, which require large Nursing fees to keep up the Home efficiently, *continuously and independently*; for anything in the way of subsidy begs the whole question.

The plan is altogether admirable; it is entirely distinct from the Hospital service, which in *no wise* suffers by it; none but the most competent Nurses are sent out, and the Public know that their sick are in safe hands; the Nurses receive a fair percentage on their fees which gives them an interest in their work; when off duty, they reside at the Hospital, and become identified with it, and zealous to maintain its high character for Nursing efficiency; it also keeps them *au courant* with Nursing matters, changes and improvements, and does away with all risk of getting "rusty" by isolation from Hospital work, which often happens to Private Nurses without these advantages.

A similar scheme would have been carried out long since by the Committee of the General Hospital but for the difficulties attendant upon providing accommodation for the Nurses, but it will eventually be a feature of the organisation of the New Hospital in due time, and Extern Hospital Nursing become a recognised system at other Hospitals in Midland towns.

The "translation" of Miss Busby, ex-Matron of the General, to a better (atmo)sphere—Ventnor; the resignation of Dr. Coghill, lately House Governor; and the retirement of Miss Johnstone, on her marriage to the former, like coming events that cast their shadows before, seem to mark the beginning of the transition from the old lines to the new, that cannot for long be deferred—and there are few changes that do not give rise to regrets.

The General had a fairly good harvest on their Hospital Saturday, nearly £12,000 being garnered in. I met in the region of Summer Lane early on that morning, a young flower girl I have known from her childhood, hurrying along with her tray of flowers fresh from the Market. Instead of stopping me, as usual, to tempt me with her wares, she passed on. "Where are you off to?" I asked, "Are you not going to let me have any flowers this morning?" The girl reddened. "Not to-day, Ma'am, I am going to give them to the 'Orsepital to be sold." I must mention that on Hospital Saturdays the entrance gates are thrown open, and on each side a Nurse, *en grande tenue*, of course, "sits at the receipt of custom," to receive the contributions of the faithful—flowers included.

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