

The Hospital World.

THE NEW GENERAL HOSPITAL, BIRMINGHAM.

THE opening of the New General Hospital, Birmingham, which we noticed in our columns last week, took place just as we were going to press; we are therefore giving further details of this interesting ceremony. For weeks beforehand the excitement in the hospital had been intense, and little but the great event was talked about. It is well known that Birmingham, though professedly a radical place, is perhaps more keenly appreciative of a visit from Royalty than any other city. Like the child in *Punch*, who was in a wild state of excitement because by craning her neck she could see under a circus tent the "'oofs of the 'orses' 'eels," the Birmingham democrat will patiently wait for many hours on the chance of knowing when Royalty is passing, though too tightly impacted in a seething crowd for there to be the faintest chance of his seeing the august personage, for the sake of which he has ventured much. His principles and his practice do not go hand in hand, and if it is desired that Birmingham should become a conservative city, we are convinced that the residence of a member of the Royal Family in or near the city would speedily effect this transformation.

The nurses of the General Hospital, under the superintendence of their charming matron, Miss Zara Stevenson, were in no way backward in their desire to express their appreciation of the honour which was being done to their hospital, and worked their hardest to make their part in the day's proceedings an entire success.

The arrival of Princess Christian at the Hospital was eagerly awaited; when at length she arrived she was met by the reception committee in which the matron, who had the honour of being presented to Her Royal Highness, was included. The nursing staff, in spotless caps and aprons, collected in the large out-patients' hall as soon as the Princess had retired for tea, and formed two long lines through which the procession passed. Here Her Royal Highness was presented by the matron with a bouquet of red, white, and blue flowers, tied with the royal colours, on behalf of the nurses. The Princess received it most graciously, and thanked the nurses warmly for their gift, being seemingly much pleased with the whole proceedings.

Invitations had been courteously issued to matrons, and representative nurses, from all the neighbouring hospitals, and good places were allotted to them in the pavilion, thus enabling them to share in the enjoyment of what will

always be a red-letter day in the annals of the General Hospital.

The scale upon which this Hospital has been erected may be estimated by the fact that its longest frontage is over a quarter of a mile. It is built on the pavilion plan, the pavilions being six in number, and usually of three storeys. The operating theatre measures about 40 ft. by 30 ft. It is admirably lighted, having windows all round, and a portion of the roof being glazed. The walls are encased in alabaster and marble, and the floor laid with terrazzo. The main blocks of the Hospital are connected with the nurses' home by a large conservatory, given by Mr. J. C. Holder. This will be fitted up with easy chairs, and is keenly appreciated by the nurses, as it will be a great boon on wet days.

The chapel is a special feature of the new hospital. It also is lined with alabaster, and has beautiful windows. The slab of the altar is of fine alabaster, as is also the reredos, and there is a richly-carved cross of the same costly material. No expense or trouble has been spared to make the hospital in every way perfect, and the result is an institution which is a credit to the City of Birmingham. Its future will be watched with interest by all who are concerned in hospital management. The nursing staff are naturally delighted in belonging to such an institution, and take a keen interest in making their own department as perfect as possible.

The Committee is fortunate in possessing for its executive officers a house governor like Mr. H. J. Collins, whose ability and zeal is well known in the hospital world, and a matron who has the interests of the institution so much at heart, and who is so well fitted to control and supervise the nursing department, as Miss Stevenson. The tone of the hospital under her supervision, the high standard of the training given, and the quiet and professional appearance of the nurses of the General Hospital, Birmingham, are well known.

We may draw attention, in conclusion, to a special feature of the hospital, in which a record of the occasion of its erection is perpetuated. In the quadrangle to the right of the main entrance is a handsome fountain of terra cotta, the gift to the hospital of Sir J. Doulton, through the architect Mr. Henman, who designed it. Round the lip of the bowl runs an inscription which records that it was erected in commemoration of the opening of the new buildings of the General Hospital, in the 60th year of the glorious reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. We congratulate the City of Birmingham on its allegiance to its Sovereign Lady, and upon the practical proof it has given of this in the erection of the noble institution recently opened by Princess Christian.

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