THE HOSPITAL AND WARDS

The hospital usually has two main parts:

1. An outpatient department It is either on the ground floor of the main building or in a separate building and consists of rooms where the records are kept, waiting rooms and consulting units for the various departments.

2. An inpatient department It is the main building and is composed of wards. These are the units to which patients are admitted for treatment, and their size is determined by the number of patients that one ward sister can supervise. The most important personality in the ward is the **head nurse** (in G. B. she was often called the matron). She has complete responsibility for the nursing staff, for the running of the wards and the standard of nursing and training.

Each ward unit is under the charge of a **ward sister** who is an experienced nurse, responsible to the head sister for all matters of nursing. She is assisted by Staff Nurses - their number depends on the type of work done on the ward. The rest of the nursing staff is made up of the probationer nurses and auxiliary nurses. They learn the menial tasks and the basic art of nursing including bed making, washing patients, bedpan rounds and more complicated techniques as giving medicine, managing transfusions, conducting complicated investigations, etc. The ward sister is responsible for their ward training. They change wards so that they can obtain experience in all types of nursing.

A ward unit usually consists of the rooms for the patients, a day room for patients, an admission room, a treatment room, sister's room, small laboratory and bathrooms and lavatories. The important part of many hospitals is the **casualty department**, where all emergencies are brought in and most of its work is surgical. There also may be any number of special wards and departments with a permanent staff which have been set up for special purposes, e.g. the accident unit, burns unit, head injury unit, intensive care unit, etc. There are also laboratories, a blood transfusion department, rehabilitation department, department of physiotherapy, X-ray department, plaster rooms and others.

The general plan of a day's work is ward rounds, operating, outpatient sessions and special treatments. The patients are sent to the hospital by general practitioners and, if it is necessary, they must stay in hospital for another treatment and they become inpatients.

