for each district. The Church of England had two visiting societies. Ladies made regular visits, gave aid and saw that no one starved. They did not attend the sick. The Report concluded that a trained nurse to attend persons in their own homes would be a great advantage to the town. There was no paid midwife. The Commission recommended that all denominations work together, that charities were well supported, helped by 'raising the poor law phantom'.(9)

Over the years the work of the hospital increased. At times the nurses had to give up their rooms to accommodate patients. The house surgeon needed help with the dispensary and with his outdoor visits. In the annual Hospital Report for 1886 the Committee reported that Mrs Spencer Walpole, wife of the Governor, had started a scheme to raise money to pay for a trained nurse to attend cases of sickness in their own homes. However, there was already such a scheme in operation before that date. The 'Town Nurse' lived in the hospital, worked under the supervision of matron. The scheme paid for the nurse and her accommodation, and was no cost to the hospital funds.

A later Report contains the following description of these 'Town Nurses': "Blue cloaks on their backs, white strings to their bonnets, baskets on their arms. The nurse is as good as one doctor at least, no-no, perhaps as half a dozen in this town".

It is probable that the matron, Miss Steele (Matron, Douglas Hospital 1883-1887) had suggested this 'Town Nurse' scheme to the ladies of the committee and had one of her nurses helping the doctor. Before coming to the Isle of Man she had worked in Liverpool with Miss Agnes Jones for six years and had been trained by her. It was during Miss Steele's time as matron in Douglas that lectures were given by the doctors to the nurses.(10)

By 1892 the visiting nurse scheme was working well. On the advice of the matron the Committee agreed for the visiting nurse to be a skilled nurse from the hospital, and that the matron would supervise her. The nurses were to take it in rotation to visit. The nurses did sixteen to seventeen visits each day. The scheme was so successful that better-off patients began to demand a similar service and a private nursing scheme was begun. On matron's request two more nurses were appointed to cope with the expansion.

In 1888 a new hospital was built on Crellin's Hill and named Noble's Hospital and Dispensary. Mr H.B. Noble had provided the finance for this and the new hospital was from the beginning out of debt with a trust fund for further development.

The Town Nurses Fund was finding difficulty in raising enough money to cover the expenses of the increasing demand for nurses to work in the town. The organisers appealed to the Hospital Committee for help. They agreed to give an allowance from the Trust Fund on condition that a nurse gave two to three hours each morning attending the dispensary.

The nurses' salary was £90 p.a. with another £20 to cover the costs of dressings and medicines. Noble's Trust Fund gave £60. The remaining