

INTERNATIONAL NEWS.

TO FINLAND.

International Nurses' Conference in 1925.

Occasionally Finland and the North Pole are mentioned together in America. But as we in Finland hope to have a large number of American nurses visit us, we are very anxious to remove the idea of ice and polar regions from their minds.

In 1925 the new and old world's nurses meet together in Finland, and we are living in hopes that all the American nurses want to come to us.

Finland is called the land of the midnight sun and the land of a thousand lakes.

The flag of Finland is a blue cross on a white ground, suggesting northern bright blue sky and the snow-white covered fields. The cross is the symbol of the great revolution and its resulting freedom to Finland.

The summer in Finland is very short but bright. It is as if nature had wanted to fill this short period with its most cherished treasures. June 27th is the first night when the sun does not set. There are no shadows, only continual, mysterious brightness.

The fragrance of the many flowers fills the air. It seems as if, in that short period of their duration, they wished to give their utmost. This night is celebrated by the Finnish people. All over the country they build enormous bonfires, the flames reaching heavenward as an offering to the Great Ruler of Nature. Thus worshipped our forefathers. The people dress in national costumes, singing, dancing and playing throughout the long night. For weeks the sun does not set. The season is one of continual, clear, light nights. The air is warm, temperature rising as high as 108F. in the sun.

The area of Finland is larger than England, although the population is only one half of New York City. The people are interesting, hospitable and cordial. We, as Nordic people, are very slow to make friends, but the friendship once formed is lasting.

Finnish mythology says: Music is made of sorrow. We must admit that in everything there rings a tune of melancholy. This is easily understood after one knows the conditions in which we have lived. Life has been a continual struggle for existence against frost and cold, which has drawn us close to nature.

Finland has suffered a great deal by continual wars. Sweden and Russia have continuously fought for her possession. Through all their struggles the Finnish people have stubbornly clung to: *Swedes we are not, we will never become Russians, we shall remain Finns.* In the midst of poverty and depression the seed of freedom has taken root. Mothers sang songs of freedom to their children while enemies were on the very threshold. Throughout all the ages no sacrifice has been felt to be too great.

In 1917 Finland declared herself a Republic. In 1918 the price of freedom had to be paid with blood. Again the clash of swords was heard and the white snow fields were again coloured with blood. But now it became a question of a free nation, and gladly we gave everything with that in view. This has been our nation's struggle.

Now, as a young Republic where, through the ages, the fire of culture has been burning intensively and protectively, Finland stands erect, her face to the sun, a nation among other nations.

Would you like to know these people better?

Decide now, and then in the summer of 1925 cross the Atlantic Ocean to Finland. Spend your summer vacation with us. Come to celebrate our first summer night! Live the short summer weeks with us! With all our hearts we will welcome you.

KYLLIKKI POHJALA, R.N.,
In the "Canadian Nurse."

LETTER FROM HOLLAND.

It is a pleasure to us to comply with the invitation from the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING to Nosokomos to tell something about our views and the standard of Nursing in Holland.

We think it cannot but be very instructive and broadening to the mind to learn of the international endeavours of our fellow nurses to raise the standard and enlarge the field of their work.

Before the war there was a fairly regular contact between the different associations that joined the International Council, and many readers of the *B.J.N.* will remember the letters of Jeanne Landschot Hubrecht which were printed in that Journal.

We in Holland are very pleased to be once again in touch with our colleagues abroad, and we hope that English nurses who think that an exchange of views on their work and interests will be useful will not overlook our Journal.

Nosokomos has edited for many years a weekly paper which aims at keeping its readers informed of current movements in nursing matters, both in Holland and elsewhere.

The editorial staff consists of five nurses, who all have a live interest in the work.

For those who have never heard of our Association, it should be explained that Nosokomos is a purely professional union of which only trained nurses may be members and participate in the management and editing of the Journal—probationers in hospitals may be aspirant members.

Nosokomos concerns itself with the improvement of the conditions of employment of the nursing profession. It recognises that first of all a good Registration law with State examination and State protection for our Diploma is necessary, and that the nursing profession should be given a voice in its framing.

Although gratifying progress has been made in so far as that on January 1st, 1924, the law regulating training and examinations and protection of our Diploma was put into force, we can only consider it as the first step towards the end we have in view.

This law, although good, does not in our opinion provide for the training of nurses in quite the way we could wish. The nurses, indeed, are given the possibility of a voice in the matter, but that voice is not assured.

Nosokomos has worked for twenty-three years to improve the training of nurses, and its views are beginning more and more to gain ground. Were it not that in Holland, as everywhere else, there is a call for economy, we should record more success than is now the case.

Besides the training we took a great interest in bringing skilful nursing within the reach of the middle classes, and in extending the field of work of the nursing profession by better organisation and arbitration.

Our Association tried, by holding its own examinations, of which the scope was more in accordance with our views, to influence existing training. We also projected a training scheme which we brought to the notice of the Authorities.

Nosokomos has a circulating library, and has started editing textbooks on advanced training. The first volume edited was "Knowledge of Medicine for Nurses," by Schuurmans Stekhoven, M.D., a young medical man who takes a keen interest in the right training of nurses, and who, with his gifts as a teacher and author, is a very valuable contributor. A second textbook is in preparation, and is entitled "Laboratory Knowledge for Nurses."

Our office, which is open every working day, is making good progress, and many nurses have found their way to it. They know that they will find there people interested in their work and understanding their difficulties.

A supporting fund, maintained by nurses, helps the members during illness. The fund belongs to us all, and

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)