

NURSES' ORGANISATIONS.

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES.

As the time for the International Congress of Nurses, convened to meet at Helsingfors, Finland, from July 20th to 25th, draws near, increasing interest is being taken in the country in which the meeting will be held, of which so little is known by most nurses.

One of the experiences commended to travellers to be enjoyed, by the Tourist Association of Finland, is "shooting the rapids," moreover it tells us in some detail how this is done.

The waterway from Vaala to Oulu down the river Ule, F. Oulujoki, offers an incomparable experience which at moments even seems to be adventurous. Tar-making is an important occupation in the forests of the far north, and the tar barrels are conveyed down the rivers to the coast in long, lithe boats specially built for shooting the rapids. The

Tourist Association has fitted some of these boats with seats for the convenience of passengers, and they make the trip from Vaala to Oulu on five days in the week starting after the arrival of the Kajaaniboat. The first rapids to be shot are close to Vaala, Niskankoski, 5 miles long. A certified steersman takes the steering oar, and the boat glides among the foaming waves, close to a lowering rock. Every moment it seems as if the fragile craft must be dashed to pieces, but the steersman foresees its every move-

ment with marvellous coolness and certainty, and after a time calm water is again reached. The stretch of quiet water is crossed in a motor boat, and then another river boat is waiting to shoot the next rapids. The longest and largest rapids, the mighty Pyhäkoski (the "holy rapids") are eleven miles long. By this time the traveller is well accustomed to the dizzy pace, it has become intensely exhilarating, it is a joy to spin down past the high, gloomy forest which clothes the banks. At Muhos we leave the river boat, and can have a simple but highly appreciated dinner at the house of a trader, Mr. Ohrberg. When we go on board the steamer, which takes us down to Oulu, we feel that the day thus spent in the bosom of primitive nature, has imbued us with a fresh sense of strength and joy in life.

We do not know if this is the "Boat Ride" on the Congress Program, but it seems as if "Shooting the rapids" is a pastime which will commend itself only to the more adventurous amongst us.

The picturesque town of Viborg, Mr. Harry de Windt, F.R.G.S., tell us, nestles against a "background of pine

forest, and blue waters of the harbour sparkling under a cloudless sky. Many of its dwellings are built of wood, which, however, is generally stained a dark red colour, cleaner and more cheerful looking than rough, weather-bleached logs. Pleasant, also, is it to saunter through the picturesque old streets, to ransack the silver shops, and come suddenly upon a market place, lying in the shadow of quaint old gabled houses, where the rosy-cheeked peasants, carts and cobbles, and canvas booths packed with fruit and vegetables, recall some old-world town in far away Brittany."

Abo is the terminus of the Finnish line of steamers which leave Hull for Finland every week via the Kiel Canal. "It makes quite a venerable impression on the visitor who sees it first from the landing stage, with its thirteenth century castle, the windows of which are sparsely dotted high up in the naked walls. It has rightly been named "the cradle of Finnish culture. There was a trading centre here even in heathen times, and it was here that the first Swedish Crusaders landed in the year 1157."

Many visitors to the Congress will want to see something of other countries in Scandinavia.

Sweden, Land of To-day and Yesterday.

Sweden is the largest country in Scandinavia, and nearest neighbour to Finland. Stockholm, the capital, is one of the most beautiful cities in Northern Europe, a "Venice of the North," with palatial public and private buildings. Many interesting Royal Palaces are situated in the pretty surroundings and can be reached in half or

whole day excursions. Uppsala, the ancient university city, is one hour by rail from Stockholm. Visby, romantic city of "Ruins and Roses," with memories of bygone days on the Isle of Gotland, is reached by steamer overnight. The Gota Canal is an interesting two and a half days' water trip from Stockholm to Gothenburg, bringing us right across Sweden, passing interesting mediaeval castles and churches. Dalecarlia is the "heart of Sweden," one day by rail from Stockholm. Here the peasants can still be seen in their picturesque costumes.

Norway, Land of Fjords and Midnight Sun.

No country in the world offers to the tourists such a varied combination of scenic beauty as Norway. The beautiful Hardangerfjord has its shores covered by luxuriant verdure and is dotted with picturesque, red-painted farms, while snow-capped mountains tower above. The storn Sogne Fjord, reaches with its arm the Narrow Nacro Fjord, 111 miles into the heart of the country. Perpendicular mountain walls soar up to 7,000 feet into the sky from all sides, and in between the mountains are deep,



SHOOTING THE RAPIDS.

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