

HAPPY MEMORIES OF FINLAND.

In these days when news comes to us daily of the brutal attacks inflicted upon Finland by her powerful and tyrannical neighbour Russia, of the inspiring gallantry of the Finns, who, with superhuman skill and courage, are stoutly resisting their barbarous attackers, I cannot resist sending a few lines, giving some of my impressions of Finland and its cultured, delightful people.

That I was privileged to attend, as a Delegate from Great Britain, the International Congress of Nurses, held in Helsingfors (Helsinki), in July, 1925, leaves for me a train of pleasant thought, and I wonder if any member of the 33 countries of the world who took part in that memorable event can ever forget the uplift inspired by contact with the Finnish people.

The experience was unique—beginning with the journey through the Baltic to this land of a thousand lakes! As our boat took its course among innumerable islands in the silver midnight light, one imagined a voyage in dreamland! I remember dear Miss Margaret Breay on deck, revelling in the beauty around, despite the fact that she was busy with her gifted pen!

How well remembered is the warm welcome extended by our Finnish sisters on arriving at the City Central Station of Helsingfors! One was impressed by their courtesy and expert organising capacity—how quickly and smoothly hospitality was arranged for everyone!

In this connection, I learned that Finland had most elegantly equipped modern hotels, with every modern convenience and service that left nothing to be desired.

The beautiful horses were a very noticeable feature as they went with great speed; transit in a droschky or small carriage could be exhilarating, and the coachmen, always so courteous, seemed to drive one anywhere for a fare the equivalent of 5d. in English money, and tips were not a custom there.

How pleasing the capital to view, with its delicately tinted tiled roofs in various colours—the harbour looking to the endless sea and beautiful archipelago; the green lawns of the Park and fine buildings, old and modern, stood out boldly.

The streets, named in three languages (Finnish, Swedish and Russian) are reminiscent of Finland's history—that for centuries her country has been a battle-ground between Sweden and Russia. Only as recently as December, 1919, was the Independence of Finland proclaimed.

A characteristic of the Finnish women is an expression of calm thoughtfulness, and with their native courtesy makes a charming personality.

The women of Finland have played their part in their country's fight for freedom, shown by the fact that universal and equal votes to men and women became law in 1906.

There is so much to say and learn of the history of this remarkable country, which made this Congress so instructive, that I have only touched upon the Congress activities, and also because the social invitations gave unforgettable opportunities of intercourse with this race, to whom the civilised peoples of the world are indebted for their bravery.

During Congress Week the meetings of the Grand Council were frequent, long and interesting; visits to hospitals, welfare centres, and other institutions, run on the most enlightened lines, were much appreciated, and showed that, the teaching of Florence Nightingale in its highest sense, Finnish nursing is well advanced.

At the musical service of the I.C.N., held in the Church of St. Nicholas, very lovely was the rendering of "Heaven Glories in the Honour of its Kings" by the choir of Finnish Nurses; and works by the native composer—Jean Sibelius—were beautifully sung by the "Suomen Laulu" choir.

This wonderful week, enhanced by a heat wave, brought invitations for excursions and receptions—frequently held on some enchanting island. The journeys to and fro, in summer sunshine or in moonlight, are unforgettable; and here I come to the great event of the Congress.

An Historical Reception.

How greatly one prizes the memory of the honour of presentation to the great soldier, Field-Marshal General Mannerheim, when at a reception he stood, a magnificent personality, accompanied by the then President of the International Council of Nurses, Baroness Sophie Mannerheim, his sister-in-law. This great soldier, in his supreme leadership in the cause of freedom and the civilised world, will go down to history as the hero of this war—just as the late King Albert of the Belgians (1914-1918) emerged the hero of the Great War in the cause of humanity.

For their final victory we pray that these gallant people of Finland may retain their dearly-won freedom and resume their soulful way of life!

ALICE STEWART BRYSON.

THE BRITISH COLLEGE OF NURSES.

Owing to circumstances, including the inclement weather, the meeting of the Council has been postponed from the 3rd to the 17th of February. No alteration in the Agenda. Meeting at 2 p.m.

Since the last meeting the College has sustained very serious depletion, and the deaths to be officially reported include that of the first Vice-President, Miss Margaret Breay, S.R.N., Miss Margaret Huxley, R.G.N., M.A., Miss Annice Stuart Gray, R.R.C., S.R.N., and of Miss Dorothy E. Bannon, C.B.E., S.R.N., Matron-in-Chief of the London County Council; eminent women whose support has been invaluable in maintaining the prestige of the College.

An appreciation of Miss Breay appeared in the January issue of this journal, offered by the Editor. In this issue will be found an appreciation of Miss Huxley by her friend, Miss Alice Reeves, Lady Superintendent, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin. A short obituary notice of Miss Annice S. Gray, written by Miss Isabel Macdonald, appears this month in the R.B.N.A. Supplement, and as we go to press Miss M. S. Cochrane, R.R.C., S.R.N., is attending to represent the British College of Nurses, at the Funeral Service at St. Thomas's Hospital Chapel of Miss Dorothy E. Bannon, and offering some lovely spring flowers in its name. It will be difficult indeed to replace these four pioneers and organisers whose example should be a shining light for the younger generation of nurses.

List of new books sent for review, available if required by Fellows and Members.—"Training for Childbirth, from the Mother's Point of View," by Minnie Randell, S.R.N., S.C.M., T.M.M.G.; "First Year Nursing Manual," by M. S. Riddell, A.R.R.C., S.R.N.; "Your Baby's First Year," by Marie C. Stopes, D.Sc., Ph.D., F.L.S.; "Sue Barton, Student Nurse," by Helen Dore Boylston; "Aids to Elementary Hygiene," by Evelyn Pearce, S.R.N.; "First Aid for Everybody," by Allen Goldsmith, M.B., B.S. (Lond.) F.R.C.S. (Eng.); "The Single-handed Mother," by Lindsey W. Batten, M.B., M.R.C.P.; "Textbook of Dietetics and Cookery for Nurses," by Rosamond Wansbrough, S.R.N., D.N.; "Special Tests and their Meanings," by R. Gordon Cooke, M.D., M.R.C.S., F.R.C.P.; "The Midwives' Dictionary," by Gladys B. Carter, B.Sc. Econ., S.R.N., S.C.M.; "The Nurses' Dictionary," revised up to date by Florence Taylor, S.R.N., D.N. (Lond.); "Pleasant Food for Diabetics," by A. Sanders.

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