

International Council of Nurses Conference. A Day in Uppsala.

WHEN I opened my blue folder containing the congress literature, I was delighted to see that I had been placed in the group going to Uppsala for the day. There was my ticket and my time-table.

We started out, about five hundred of us, at 9.20 a.m. from the Central Station, where we had all foregathered under the guidance of a group of Swedish nurses who spoke excellent English. On the train we were each given a tag bearing a "pink three", we were also introduced to our guide for the day who carried a "pink three" on a staff. Other groups were formed with other numbers, each group had a nurse as guide. The groups consisted of about twenty people. An excellent arrangement that gave us the chance to ask questions. This we freely did.

On arrival at Uppsala station we were asked to walk up through the town to the University. A long crocodile formed and we walked, processed is perhaps a better word, to the University Hall. Here Professor Fr. Berg delivered an address of welcome, telling us something of the history of the University and mentioning some of the artistic treasures which could be seen there. The hall in which we were sitting was beautiful. It was semi-circular in shape with a gallery, seating in all I should say about a thousand people. The domed ceiling was decorated in panels of blue and gold. The platform, or stage, had a raised dais at the back of which were seats.

After the address we had time to look over the University building. We saw very modern lecture rooms equipped with projectors, and every modern aid to teaching. Near these were the old and beautifully furnished Board and Faculty rooms with their heavy tables and leather covered chairs, the walls hung with many portraits of past Chancellors and Professors of the University. The great treasure was a wonderful ebony cabinet inset with mosaic pictures. These were done on flat stones of a clear milky texture and arranged on all sides of the cabinet. I particularly noticed those on the doors which depicted scenes in the life of Our Lord, and were particularly beautiful. The whole cabinet has to be seen to be believed.

When we had seen all that the time permitted, we again entered the buses in company with our guides and were driven to the University Hospital. Here we re-formed the groups, and we followed our guide with the "pink three", who took us on a tour of the hospital. We visited the Nurses' Home, also the school where Miss Dillner, the Head, told us many interesting points about the training curriculum and the block system now in use. We then visited the dining- and sitting-rooms, and saw the charming little Chapel which is in an alcove off the sitting-room. This can be closed off by sliding doors when not in use.

Next we visited the medical block or clinic as it is called. The physician in charge was present to answer any questions we liked to ask, and to show us round. The Head Sister of the ward also spoke English, so she too was asked many questions.

The wards are small, containing never more than ten beds, and often less, and are very light and airy. The clinic contained about thirty beds, day rooms, clinical rooms and kitchen. We were amused at the lack of bathrooms, there seemed to be only showers provided. This is quite usual apparently, as the Swedish people are accustomed to using them. Indeed, in the summer season, there is even a shortage of hot water, due to the shortage of fuel. The hospitals do, however, have a reasonable supply of this necessary commodity.

I was very struck in Sweden by the flowers and creepers grown inside the houses. The hospitals were no exception,

and where possible, in day rooms and Sisters' office, there were many growing, adding so much to the air of charm and homeliness.

I was particularly interested in the Eye clinic. This was small but well equipped; the outpatient department having some beautiful instruments for eye examination, well placed in the dark room. The eye theatres were much the same as ours in England but with black walls. Here also the Doctor in charge was present to answer our questions and to show us round.

We passed next to the Nurses' Home. This was planned much as ours in this country, but all the nurses in training shared rooms, two nurses to a room. The beds were built rather like seats attached to the walls, with a drawer underneath for the pillows. This made the room less like a bedroom during the day. The wash basins were hidden behind a small partition, corresponding to the head of the bed. In this way, washing paraphernalia were hidden from view. The nurses made the rooms look very charming with their own personal belongings.

Lunch was provided in part of the Surgical Block. Everything was, as always, beautifully arranged. A most delicious array of salads and hors d'œuvres was set out, everyone helping themselves. Later coffee was served on the lawn outside.

After lunch, our guide gathered us together again, and we set off to see the Maternity Block. This was arranged on similar lines to the other clinics we had seen, with the addition of nurseries and labour wards. All were very well equipped. The babies' cots were of steel, rather like boxes in shape. They seemed cold to us, but were, of course, very easy to sterilise. We saw one lovely little boy being dressed up for his Christening, which was to take place in the Hospital Chapel. The custom seems to be to have all babies christened before they go home. Relatives and friends attend the Chapel ceremony, some may have tea with the mother afterwards. It is only done by choice, but I expect it saves the mother a good deal of trouble, and it seems to be popular.

From here we again gathered into the buses and were driven down to the wonderful old Cathedral of Uppsala. Here a short service with two hymns and an address took place, followed by singing. The choir was composed of nurses; one with a lovely soprano voice sang a solo.

This over, we had a short time to see something of the building. The style is gothic. The sweeping stone pillars and arches, were to me, reminiscent of Salisbury cathedral. The building itself is of red brick. There is much gold ornamentation over the pulpit and over the royal seats. It does not look garish, only rich and beautiful against the red walls. We saw the shrine of St. Erik and the tomb of Gustav Vasa who was King of Sweden in the early sixteenth century. Time did not permit of more than a walk round, however, and we again mounted the buses.

This time we were driven round the town and many places of interest were pointed out to us by one of the town's officials who had offered to act as guide. We then drove outside Uppsala to the old home of Carl von Linné, the famous naturalist, whom the Swedes call the Flower King. This old house is preserved as a monument. It stands just as it did in Linné's life time (1707-1778). The garden and grounds are also kept just as he kept them. One old crab-apple tree is still growing where he planted it. We could have lingered here, there was so much of interest to see—the quaint old furniture in the house, the old clocks, still ticking, and above all the drawings of flowers sent to Linné from Brussels. He admired them so much that he pasted them on the walls of his room. There they can still be seen.

Time was limited, however, and once again we were carried away in the buses back to Uppsala. To end the day we were all invited by the County Council of Uppsala

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