

On the subject of "working-class widows," Miss Loane has many tales to tell, of which only one can be quoted. "A widow lost her dog, a fine retriever, with a useful though entirely undeserved reputation for courage, and as she lived with two young daughters, and was known to be very nervous, I offered my sincere condolences. 'Yes,' she replied mournfully, 'I always said he was just like a husband. He'd be abed upstairs in the cupboard till the fire was lighted, and then he'd set himself in the middle of the hearthrug and the rest of us might squeeze in as we could. I do miss him something dreadful.'"

The following story is an excellent example of the kindness of the poor to one another.—A daughter told Miss Loane: "I mind me in special of one thing that my mother did. Every year troops of Irish girls used to come over to our parts to do field work. There was no banks in those days, not for low people, and my mother's heart swelled with love and pity for the poor furriners, when she saw them toiling through the summer, and then going away hardly a penny the better for all the work and danger they'd been through. They'd spend every penny, and even if they tried to save a bit they had to carry it on them day and night, and might be robbed or murdered. Well, my mother had a lovely bewraw in the back room, with drawers and locks, and when these poor Irish girls came to the shop, she'd show it to them, and say: 'Now, wouldn't you like me to keep your money for you, and then you'll have a nice bit to take home with you and carry you through the winter comfortable?' And they'd say, as joyful as could be: 'Sure by St. Patrick and St. Bridget we would!' And they'd tell one another, and all bring their money, for the Irish is real trusting and loving hearted if they take to you. Then my mother put down every penny that they brought, or took, in a ruled book. She was so regular in her ways that it cost her a lot of time and trouble, but she thought nothing of that."

One point of nursing importance mentioned by Miss Loane is that "one extremely practical reason why a nurse or any other district worker ought to know what is being read in the houses that she visits is in order that she may stop the use of library books in rooms infected by phthisis, etc., replacing them by illustrated newspapers and cheap reprints, given on the sole and unvarying condition that they are never to leave the patient's room until reduced to ashes."

"Mentally undeveloped patients," says Miss Loane, "often positively dislike attendance. The almost hourly ministrations of hospital nurses are a vexation to many sufferers. When working in a London hospital, I have known a man crawl out of his bed, and insist on being sent to an unreformed workhouse infirmary, 'where they lets you lie in peace.'"

Messrs. Putnams will issue early in September the initial volume of their new "Mauve Library." The first volume is "Everybody's Lonesome," by Clara E. Laughlin.

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

WOMEN.

Miss Rosalind Travers contributes to the current issue of *The Englishwoman* a very interesting article on "The History of Women's Suffrage in Finland," in which she relates that "during the really black years from 1899 to 1905, the women of Finland, who had no citizen rights, and had hardly yet put forward their claims to any, showed how well they understood their citizen duties. They did their share in the underground politics of those troubled days as quietly and thoroughly as they had taken up the work of independence. They distributed forbidden literature, "made propoganda," educated the peasantry, gave secret political addresses, and sheltered fugitives, all at the risk of their homes and lives, so that when the great opportunity of self-government came there was never any suggestion of excluding the women. Their claims were just and evident. For the last six years they had proved themselves fully capable of understanding politics and sharing in public life. So they first exercised their citizen rights four years ago, and neither then nor since has any voice been raised against this act of justice."

As our readers know, women in Finland have had, since 1907, not only the right to vote at Parliamentary elections, but the right to sit in Parliament, although, since the Bill for Imperial Legislation was passed in 1910, all real legislation is carried on by the Duma, to which the Finns may send five members, and the Council of Empire, to which they may send one.

During the three years 1907-1910 Finnish women showed what they could do as electors and representatives, and, at the first election in 1907, of the 200 Members of Parliament returned, 19 were women, who were divided among the various political groups in almost exact proportion to the numerical strength of these. One of them, Mina Sillanpää, had begun life as a maid-of-all-work. "Her remarkable influence and power of organising early revealed themselves, for she not only founded the Domestic Servants' Union, but also did much to strengthen the women's branches within the 'National Organisation'—the Federation of Finnish Trade Unions. During the great strike she was certainly placed in a position of high responsibility, though the story that she was for a time Head of the Admiralty, and signed warrants for Russian warships to go in and out of Helsingfors Harbour, is probably more picturesque than true. Again and again she has been returned to the Landtdag, for she is a solid worker, and a fine speaker as well."

In Berlin there are 30 women constables, and Dusseldorf has also a number. Policewomen are also employed in Christiania, especially

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)