

was undertaken, four million marks yearly being granted by the Finnish Diet for food and clothing of necessitous cases. The State contributes fifty per cent. of the running expenses, and the parishes and school boards do the rest. Voluntary workers are encouraged, and a member of the Finnish National Council of Women supervises the whole scheme, and has done excellent work in spreading information on the subject. The State of Finland has made itself responsible for the care of war orphans; but here, again, voluntary workers play a splendid part. Indeed, the social welfare work of Finnish women cannot be too highly praised! one only regrets the sad necessity of the aftermath of war which has so enlarged the field for their labours. As one Finnish lady said to the writer: "Had we many more training schools for social workers we could fill them all; the work is almost more than we can manage with our existing organisations."

Since 1914 child-saving societies of every variety have multiplied in Finland—children's homes, orphanages, crèches, day nurseries, etc. The women of Finland are tremendously keen on the moral standard of their country. In 1917 the chief women's organisations convened a great congress to discuss various aspects of the social evil, and undoubtedly, in spite of the lowering of the moral standard which the demoralising influences of the war years brought into being, the congress aroused a great deal of interest, and one immediate result was the appointment of a number of women police. A permanent committee, afterwards affiliated as a sub-committee to the National Council, is now occupied in planning a series of rescue homes in country places. Legalised prostitution was abolished in 1907, but as some system of police control and medical examination of women only still exists, the Women's Organisations of Finland feel that the whole question needs careful watching. The Finnish Parliament has passed a law this year on the subject of illegitimate children.

In 1919 Finland "went dry," but here, again, the practical experience of the women teaches them that much educational work still needs to be done if really good effects are to be obtained from the law, and its sanctity respected as it should be.

Women have entered practically every profession in Finland save that of the Church and the Army! They are professors and lecturers at the University and Schools; they have entered the Civil Service, and are found in post offices, banks, and offices. They hold office as trades' inspectors, municipal doctors, and chemists. There are several women architects, and many of the women doctors and surgeons have been working for a number of years and have built up large private practices. Women are employed in Government offices, but the highest and most responsible posts are only open to men. Hospital nurses and midwives are well trained and organised, but are not particularly well paid. Agitation on this subject will probably result in an alteration in their economic position.

Finland is a very democratic country, and frequently a close co-operation between the peasants

and the educated classes takes place. The "Martha Association," one of the largest and best organised societies for the teaching of domestic science and market gardening, having a membership of nearly 25,000, has as its aim the awakening of women to their great responsibilities as guardians of the home and education of the youth of Finland. This Association works with a great amount of solid success, and its promoters are tactful, capable women, able to surmount any little difficulties which a lack of the co-operative spirit, liable to be found among the townspeople and the landless peasants—a ready prey to Bolshevism—may bring them up against. The Martha Association did splendid work during the war years.

The women of Finland are full of hope in the future of their country, and very proud of the part they played in the institution of the free Republic. They are following with the keenest interest and intelligence the progress of the woman's movement in Great Britain: sympathetic with the struggle for fuller recognition of the rights of citizenship, a little puzzled and critical—as well they may be!—of those who remain indifferent or even hostile to the progressive programme of today. The knowledge that the smaller nations are watching our steps should stimulate us to a still keener interest in the pressing questions which still await solution in Great Britain relative to the well-being of women and children.

E. CHIVERS DAVIES.

(From *The Woman's Leader*.)

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

"LITTLE CUCKOO FLOWER."

We are glad to learn that after the holidays it is probable that the Six Point Group will make arrangements for a mass public meeting to discuss child assault. It is high time more determined action was taken by women in condemnation of this appalling crime, and we feel sure our readers will wish to support such a meeting.

Amongst the Bills to receive the Royal Assent, before Parliament adjourned until November 14th, was the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. While not incorporating, as finally passed, all that its promoters hoped, it raises the "age of consent" to sixteen, and abolishes as a defence to a charge under the Act, except in the case of a first offence by men under 23 years of age, that the offender had "reasonable cause to believe" that the girl concerned was over the age of sixteen.

At the beginning of October the Prime Minister will receive a deputation organised by the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship, the object of which is to present a memorial signed by 222 members of Parliament asking the Government to carry legislation which will give the vote to women on the same terms as men, before the next General Election. The memorial is also supported by a large number of nationally organised associations.

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