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SUOMI
THE LAND OF FORESTS

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SUOMI, Finland, one of the youngest independent States of Europe, about the geographical position and area of which the map at the side gives some idea, is with the exception of a few regions in the south a comparatively thinly populated country, abounding in forests. In summer-time the Baltic provides access to the outer world, and in the north a small tongue of land shoots out into the Arctic Ocean.

The climate shows great changes during various seasons of the year. During the winter the country is thickly covered with snow right down to its southernmost coasts. As the lakes and the coasts are ice-bound, connection with the rest of the world can then be kept up from the southwestern part of the country by the aid of ice-breakers. The nights are long during the winter, and on the northern side of the Polar Circle, where the sun in midwinter does not even rise above the horizon, there is light only for a short time at midday. All the greater is the summer light. In the northernmost parishes of the country the sun can then be seen in bright weather during 73 days and nights consecutively, and at midsummer even in the southern parts of the country midnight only changes into a quickly passing twilight. On account of the generally prevailing favourable southwestern winds, and also owing to the influence of the comparative warmth of the sea, the average annual temperature is -1°C ., whilst the average temperature of regions on the same latitude is only -5°C . The rainfall is fair, averaging about 300—660 millimetres. Snow amounts to about 40% of the rainfall. The seasons vary in such a way that the winter months, when the white snow covers dormant nature, are those from November to March. In April there are clear signs of spring. The snow melts rapidly, and ere long the lakes throw off their ice cover. In May the trees already burst into leaf, and the grass begins to turn green. Even the most cautious birds return from their southern abodes. The actual summer only lasts through June—August, the autumn begins in September, and in November there is winter again. As the country extends for a long distance