

certain class of political economists may attempt to cast upon the theory, it remains forever true that the ideal State, as distinct from the various more or less imperfect forms it has assumed through centuries of war and conquest and tyranny and hereditary or traditional usage, is simply the people organized for mutual help and protection, and that the proper prerogatives of the State—rights as we have said it cannot have—are just those which are conferred upon the governing authority by the voluntary fiat of the people. Towards this ideal the political system of every free and progressive people is tending. To talk of the children under one form of political organization having rights which other children, under a different form have not, is surely worse than idle.

What, then, are the rights of the children in any State in respect to education? Precisely the same as their rights in respect to food and clothing—they are absolute and up to a certain point—the point when self-support becomes possible—unlimited. And the obligations corresponding to these rights rest, first of all upon the parents. The parents are as much morally bound, to the extent of their ability, to provide for the mental as for the physical needs of those to whom they have given being. This is, it seems to us, an axiom in both politics and morals which we do not keep before our minds with sufficient clearness in these days of State Schools and Colleges. Failing, for any cause, the fulfilment of this natural and moral obligation by the parents, the child has, in the second place, a claim upon society. This claim arises out of the mutual relations which human beings sustain to each other by virtue of their common nature and common interests. A third and distinct motive which, if necessary, should be all-powerful with society, or the community in the widest as well as in the most restricted sense of the word, is that which arises from intelligent self-interest. This is a motive of a lower order, and is, consequently, more generally available. The well-being of the whole community is promoted by the intelligence and virtue of the individuals who compose it and *vice versa*.

Where, then, comes in the office of the State? Its organized force may be used, may be found necessary, to supplement the efforts of parents, and of voluntarism in the community. It may even be found to afford the best, because most economical and efficient agency for performing the work of both parent and neighbours, and especially for the protection of society from the evils and dangers which result from failure of those whose duty it primarily is to train and educate the children. And the limits within which it may thus provide educational facilities for all is, it seems equally clear, the point at which the child becomes capable, not only or merely of self-support, but of self-education up to any desired limit.

## WOMEN AND WOMEN'S WORK IN FINLAND.—II.

The political and municipal rights of women show that Finland strongly resembles Canada in these respects, and in some instances is in advance of her, and on a par with England.

"In Finland, as well as in most other countries," says our record, "*women have no political rights.*" They have no vote, nor may they, as representatives of the people, take part in the political life. They are in duty bound to pay their taxes to the government, but they may not, in any lawful manner, exert an influence on the mode of spending the money collected by means of the taxes.

*The women of Finland have, however, some municipal rights.* "Unmarried women who are of age, widows and divorced wives, provided they fulfil the necessary conditions" (as to qualification) "possess the right of a municipal vote." (Laws of January 6, 1865 and December 8, 1873). This right, however, proves very different in the communes managed directly by municipal assemblies, from what it is in those communes (for instance, most cities) where the government and management are intrusted to a municipal board. The general rule is, that women are entitled to take part and vote in the municipal assemblies. In communes of the first kind (similar to our County Councils) they may take part in decision on their management, and vote on the election of functionaries. In communes of the latter kind, they may, as in cities belonging to them, vote on the election of Mayors, councillors and physicians, but they cannot take part in decisions on the government or management of these communes.

Women have also *parochial rights*. They, that is all but wives, are entitled to take part in parish meetings and vote on the election of the clergy and church-wardens, but a woman may not be elected church-warden.

Women may also sit as members of the poor boards. They may also sit on school committees in high schools for girls. The duties of these committees are limited to an unimportant supervision of the schools. Public elementary school boards chosen by the communal assembly or board, are of much greater importance and direct the affairs of public elementary schools in town and country. Previous to March 7, 1893, women were not eligible in all communes to fill this office, though some, in the country, were elected to fill it. Since the above date the statute decrees women to be eligible members of the school boards both in town and country.

A general growing liberality of the public mind towards women has led to their being appointed to various positions of trust. They may be trustees in cases of bankruptcy and are occasionally appointed as guardians to children not their own. Widows are the lawful guardians of their own children.

An interesting chapter on "Finnish women according to custom," shows that many of the old bands restraining even the physical liberty of women have been loosened; and their intellectual nature has received and is receiving growing recognition. In sports, as well as in intellectual pursuits, the young of both sexes are no longer restricted by regulations which practically set them on different pedestals, thus encouraging false notions of propriety, and leading to a low standard of female health. Married working-women both in town and country among the

poorer classes are still, however, left to struggle with unintermittent toil as best they may.

The chapter on "Education of Women and Women as Teachers," is a lengthy one and full of interest and instruction, but our space forbids anything but the merest outline, the introductory remarks however cannot be omitted; they are as touching as historical.

"In all classes—the higher as well as the lower—the bringing up of the daughter naturally devolves upon the mother. The girls of the middle and higher classes were for a long period brought up only for home life. Their feelings and their imagination were cultivated by means of music, singing and reading of poetry and fiction. The development of independent thought was considered much less important. Young girls learned languages chiefly in order to be able to carry on a conversation in French and German. It was thought necessary to be able to do fine needlework, and especially fancy work. Mothers also taught their daughters all sorts of housewifely duties.

"At present we try to give girls a wider horizon and the opportunity of developing their intellectual powers, so that they may be able, as members of society, to do their share of whatever that may be.

"Ever since the great Reformation, and more especially since the time of the Lutheran bishop J. Gerzelius (died 1690), the first instruction in reading has been imparted to children at home. Exhorted by the Lutheran clergy, Finnish mothers have, even in distant places and solitary northern wildernesses, taught their children to read, often at the same time themselves busy at the spinning-wheel.

"In consequence of this habit of Finnish mothers, and in consequence, principally, of the fact that the clergy are in duty bound to hold yearly examinations among all the inhabitants of their parishes, young and old when their knowledge of reading is tested there are relatively more people in Finland who are able to read than in most other European countries.

"The first religious instruction is almost in most cases given to children by their mothers and is controlled and supplemented at the above mentioned examinations.

"In those homes belonging to the educated classes where the mother is prevented from imparting to her children the first rudimentary knowledge of reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion, she is, especially in the country, replaced by a governess.

It will be seen from the above that the revival of learning that came in with the Reformation touched Finland alike with other countries where it entered. The system of public education is, however, much more modern. Its apostle seems to have been Uno Cygnaeus, of whom we are told nothing more than in this connection, except that "he died in 1891." The most essential part of the general elementary system of education established by Uno Cygnaeus and established by the law of May 11, 1866, consists of the *folkskolor*, that is the public elementary schools—which correspond to the three or four lower classes of the American grammar schools. The first *Folk-schools* according to this scheme were established in 1867.

There was, however, previous to this date an important system of education carried on