

T H E S I S .

Subject, Funston and His Education of Girls,

Name, Ethel H. McCarty.

In studying Fenelon's Education of Girls let us notice first what influenced the author to write this book and how he succeeded in life.

Francois De Salignac de la Mothe Fenelon was born August 6, 1651 at Perigord, France. His uncle educated him. After he had completed his education he wished to devote himself to foreign missions, but his desire was overruled. He preached for three years and then was appointed superior of the society of Nouvelles Catholiques established for instruction of women.

The treatise on the Education of Girls was written in 1680 to assist his friends the Duke and Duchess of Beauvilliers in the education of their daughter. He did not write the book for the public and it did

not appear for a long time. Fenelon was the instructor of the Duke of Bourgoyne. It was in this position that he gained for himself the reputation as one of the most successful educators of princes.

For a short time there was a slight upon Fenelon's reputation on account of his supporting Mme. Guyon in her religious views. But soon his character was seen in its brightest light. He devoted most of his life to works of charity.

The Duke of Bourgoyne became dauphin upon the death of his father. Fenelon addressed to him a "Plan of Government" and had the prince lived to reign it is thought that Fenelon would have been his prime minister. Fenelon did not long survive his pupil. He died January 7, 1715.

Probably we would have felt better if this treatise of Fenelon on the Education of girls had not been planned in a house where girls were torn from their mothers and wives stolen from their husbands and confined in its walls. In this book he advises mothers to keep their daughters with them and not send them to convents.

The education of girls is sadly neglected. Of course not to as great an extent today as years ago in Fenelon's time. At that time parents thought it impossible to neglect the education of boys but did not think it necessary to educate girls. We now see the folly of this idea and both men and women of the present day see that it is necessary to educate both sexes.

Women, as a rule, are the greatest factor of home life. Fenelon expresses this thought well when he says: "Is it not women, who ruin or uphold life, and who consequently decide what touches the whole human race most nearly? A discreet, diligent, pious woman is the soul of an entire large household."

Some of the deepest and most lasting impressions are made on children in the first period of their lives. This period they spend with their mother. Should women then not be well educated in order that they may give children proper instruction?

Fenelon thinks the most important point during childhood is to watch after the child's health. He also advocates

this but we also believe in teaching the child in a simple way many important things.

Children are naturally very curious and this period paves a way for instruction. When children ask you questions concerning a certain thing you should give them a full explanation concerning it, for what they get in this way they retain longer than knowledge which they acquire from text books. We of the present day see the truth of this and advocate it.

When we find that a child is beginning to love we should turn its heart towards those persons who are good examples and will prove beneficial. If there is any disposition among children which education cannot affect it is those who appear more docile than

thous but who deceive their parents.

Fenelon advocated at that early period what is strongly advocated today, namely story telling. If you tell children something in a story form and make your pictures living they gain twice as much as if they were to sit down and read it. But when the teacher tells a story wherein there is a moral he must be in earnest and always be an example for his pupils.

Fenelon believes in gently turning the first use of a child's reasoning towards finding out doubts. Get them to believe the truths of Christianity but do not give them any grounds for doubt. In teaching religion bring into use many of the biblical stories. By telling the children these stories they become familiar with the bible. Talk

7
to the children until they are anxious
to know the reason of the ceremonies
and words which are a part of
the service which they listen to.

In educating a girl confine her
to reasoning connectedly, examine
her thoughts, teach her to set them
forth briefly, and to keep silent.

Fletcher thinks that persons are
artful only because they wish to con-
ceal their true selves. We should do
all in our power to undo this. We
should deprive children of what
they like because they try to get it
by artifice. Teach them to be perfectly
frank. Teach girls not to be vain.
Beauty and adornments will never
make a perfect girl. Teach a girl
to love honor more than anything
else and then you will be aiming

at perfection. Fenelon believed in educating a girl to her special duties. Looking at it in this light the education of girls would vary but in the main would have the same foundation. He enumerates her employments as follows. To her is intrusted the education of her children; the care and conduct of her servants; of every item of expensiture; of the manner of arranging everything economically and creditably; and usually even of managing the estates and receiving the income. His views correspond with many persons of today.

This one thought of Fenelon's: In the education of a young girl, you should take into consideration her rank, the places where she is

likely to spend her life, and the
calling she will in all probability
take up. Guard against her enter-
taining hopes above her means and
station; sums up his idea of
the proper education of girls.

References:

- Funelon's Education of Girls.
- Compayre's History of Pedagogy.
- American Cyclopaedia.
- Painters History of Education.
- Johnson's Cyclopaedia.