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## Editorial.

### The Passing of a Great Soldier and Statesman.

ONE OF FINLAND'S greatest men and former statesman—Field-marshal Baron Mannerheim—of the whole nation the most beloved as their great leader and deliverer—died on Saturday, January 27th at the age of 83.

A Swedo-Finn or Finlander, General Mannerheim was a descendant of a noble Swedish family, of whom his paternal ancestors for some 150 years were notable figures in Finland's history. Of these the most outstanding was his great grandfather—Count Carl Erik, the eminent statesman, who founded the system of free institutions, granted to Finland after the Russian conquest of 1808, and who for some years was Prime Minister.

General Mannerheim received his military training in Russia. It was accepted by Finland that the leading families should enter the Russian Army because the Russian authorities recruited their administrators in Finland from this source. His charming personality, brilliant horsemanship and high spirits made him an outstanding figure. His military ability saw him Lieutenant-Colonel at the age of 37 and some six years later, Major-General. A great traveller, he distinguished himself in his famous trans-Asiatic expedition, lasting some two years, in which he fulfilled the object of his mission in obtaining military and cartographical information, and bringing back a valuable collection of antiquities and works of art, now treasured by the nation. In later years when he had leisure he enjoyed much travel and sport, in the latter he was especially fond of shooting and fishing.

This article is not primarily concerned with General Mannerheim's military achievements, great as they were, but with his important work concerning the health of the nation—The foundation of General Mannerheim's

League for Child Welfare in 1920—the appeal in this movement from the General who set Finland free to the citizens, met with so great a response that within some five years (by 1925) no fewer than 250 local branches had been formed.

Their great General and leader in the long and bitter struggle of the War of Liberation in his broad-minded attitude and generous appreciation of women's work, paid tribute to the women of Finland in the following words:—

“ Among those who have been mentioned in dispatches for heroic deeds are also many women. Some of them have been decorated for valour, others have under enemy fire courageously prepared food for the troops; others have by their hardiness and bravery inspired the men with still greater courage, others have under heavy fire carried wounded to the ambulances. But the despatches do not tell of the self-sacrificing tireless work which Finland's women did during the War of Liberation, do not mention the dangers and privations they suffered. The men who died of their wounds cannot tell of the loving hands which to the last tended them. How many women did not expose themselves to danger which were connected with the distribution of arms in the districts occupied by Red troops, how many did not endure terrible suffering when accompanying the troops during their often fatal advances? The calm and composure with which the

mothers received the news of their sons' deaths, the wives of their husbands', proved that the women possessed the spirit which made them fit to mother a generation which at the momentous hour was ready to sacrifice itself for freedom.”

How greatly one prizes the memory of the honour of presentation to the great soldier, Field-Marshal General Mannerheim, some 25 years ago, when at a reception held in Helsingfors, he stood a magnificent personality, accompanied by the then President of the International



Photo:

The late Field-Marshal Baron Gustav Mannerheim

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