

ADOLESCENCE

BY CEPHAS GUILLET, PH.D., TORONTO.

It is about 150 years since the publication of Rousseau's "Emile," which was a protest against the artificial, cut-and-dried methods of education that then prevailed, and, strange to say, still too largely prevail. His slogan was Back to Nature. All is good, he said, issuing from the hands of the Author of things; all degenerates in the hands of man. The aim of education should be that of nature. The educator should do nothing but study under the head mistress, nature, and hinder her cares from being nullified. To the nature of the child himself, however, Rousseau seems to have given little attention. He seems generally to be thinking of physical nature. We must, he says, bring the child into direct contact with nature, with things, which will of themselves develop him aright. And he has a strange distrust of human nature, especially as seen in the family and in society. Hence Emile was hardly trained to be a social being. Rousseau thought much of the training of the senses and of the reason, but little of the training of the feelings. And yet, if the senses are the source, and sensations the raw material, of knowledge, the feelings are the source of power, the raw material of action. Indeed, emotion is the motive power of both thought and action. It is the root and spring of all the activities of body, mind, and soul. A strong body, with keen senses, must be inhabited by a soul rich in instinct-feelings to produce a noble, effective, well-rounded personality. The lack in Rousseau's great book was partly supplied for childhood by Froebel's "Education of Man," which was published in 1826. The lack has again been supplied in part by a work which has been only recently issued, and which promises to be as epoch-making as the "Emile" and the "Education of Man." I refer to Dr. G. Stanley Hall's "Adolescence." He insists that education must be based upon the study of the nature of the human being in all its aspects and throughout all the stages of growth and development.

Rousseau's work was rather destructive than constructive. Its merit lay in calling attention to an evil and in pointing

Reprint from the "Christian Guardian" of March 7 and 14, 1906.