

EARLY CONTINENTAL EDUCATORS AND THEIR THEORIES.*

THE *Emile* of Rousseau was published in 1762. It produced an astounding effect throughout Europe. Those were days when the whole cultivated world vibrated to any touch of new philosophy. French had superseded Latin as the general medium of thought. French learning stood in the same relation to the rest of Europe as German learning does now; and any discovery of D'Alembert, Rousseau, or Maupertuis travelled with inconceivable speed from Versailles to Schönbrunn, from the Spree to the Neva. Kant in his distant home of Königsberg broke for one day through his habits, more regular than the town clock, and stayed at home to study the new revelation. The burthen of Rousseau's message was Nature, such a nature as never did and never will exist, but still a name for an ideal worthy of our struggles. He revolted against the false civilization which he saw around him; he was penetrated with sorrow at the shams of government and society, at the misery of the poor existing side by side with the heartlessness of the rich. The child should be the pupil of nature. He lays great stress on the earliest education. The first year of life is in every respect the most important. Nature must be closely followed. The child's tears are petitions which should be granted. The naughtiness of children comes from weakness; make the child strong and he will be good. Children's destructiveness is a form of activity. Do not be too anxious to make children talk; be satisfied with

a small vocabulary. Lay aside all padded caps and baby jumpers. Let children learn to walk by learning that it hurts them to fall. Do not insist too much on the duty of obedience as on the necessity of submission to natural laws. Do not argue too much with children; educate the heart to wish for right actions; before all things study nature. The chief moral principle is *do no one harm*. *Emile* is to be taught by the real things of life, by observation and experience. At twelve years old he is scarcely to know what a book is; to be able to read and write at fifteen is quite enough. We must first make him a man, and that chiefly by athletic exercises. Educate his sight to measure, count, and weigh accurately; teach him to draw; tune his ear to time and harmony; give him simple food, but let him eat as much as he likes. Thus at twelve years old *Emile* is a real child of nature. His carriage and bearing are fair and confident; his nature open and candid, his speech simple and to the point; his ideas are few but clear; he knows nothing by learning, much by experience. He has read deeply in the book of nature. His mind is not on his tongue but in his head. He speaks only one language, but knows what he is saying, and can do what he cannot describe. Routine and custom are unknown to him; authority and example affect him not; he does what he thinks right. He understands nothing of duty and obedience, but he will do what you ask him, and will expect a similar ser-

* From the article on "Education" in the new (9th) edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.