

THESIS.

Subject, Russell and His Work.

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1.
Almost two hundred years ago there was born in that beautiful Swiss city of Geneva, a child, which afterwards became one of the greatest educators ever known. So great indeed, and so far beyond his fellows of that time in thought that his writings and methods of teaching were not fully appreciated. There is no better evidence of the excellence of his advanced theory than the fact that his idea of true education has been tested by men of great thought and experience for almost two centuries and is still acknowledged to have good principles.

Jean Jacques Rousseau's life began during the time of the religious disturbances in Europe and about the close of the wars of the Spanish Suc-

cussion, which made all the continent
 tremble with fear. The mother having
 died, when Jean Jacques was quite
 young, and his father being a violent,
 illtempered watchmaker, this orphan
 boy was compelled to seek mercy at
 the door of some relative. He was given
 but little training. His father was
 of a very quarrelsome disposition. On
 one occasion he was compelled to flee
 from Geneva, and Jacques there after
 saw but little of his father.

Jean Jacques began the study of
 law but having few friends, no inheri-
 tance, and no home he became embitter-
 ed toward others and wandered from
 one place to another, seeming to seek
 for a place he might call home, -
 that one thing so needful to the young
 of any land. But probably it was

through the trials in his early life that he saw those things which are so needful to make man a blessing and not a curse to his fellow beings.

He delighted to study the writings of Montaigne and Plutarch, in which he received inspiration. Although these writers were educated, his influence had a much wider range. His soul was full of music and if he had had the training he would have doubtless ranked among the great musicians. His failure in teaching music was probably, to his disagreeable manner and his inability to teach that which he had never studied.

Jean Jacques chose for his wife a lady with no charms, yet she was a blessing to him, for she gave him pleasure for many years. It seems strange to

to a woman's earnest inquiry, as to how she should train her child. How many good principles came from that earnest question! It was as if he smote a rock, from which came an abundance of new ideas, which flowed on until every part of Europe was reached.

One of Rousseau's well known sayings is, "Take the road opposite to that which is in use and you will almost always do right." We find this was true in one instance, at least. In his *Emile*, he advocated theories which were directly contrary to the teaching of his time, and which some would have feared to give. We should admire Rousseau for being able to stand by and give his convictions, which he knew the world would not accept.

Society was so corrupt in those times

that Rousseau thought the young child should be in a home away from his companions. No training should be given until he is twelve years old. He is then free from injurious habits and from prejudices. He said the first thing in education consisted not in teaching virtue and truth but in keeping the heart from evil and the mind free from error. It being better to keep the heart from evil than to attempt to break down the evil which has been implanted in the mind.

Many people now do not try to see things as the child sees them and not a few teachers try to give the child things to learn that are far beyond his ability to comprehend. Neither does the average teacher see the differ-

7.
ence in the needs, of different children.
Yet Rousseau taught those principles
a century and one half ago. He said,
the teacher should strive to bring his
thoughts down to the child and study
the child as to its likes and dislikes,
how it is encouraged and his difficulties.
The needs of the child would then be met
and the time spent in his training would
be much more beneficial to the child
and more satisfactory to the teacher.
If the teacher brings his thoughts
down to the child he can get them
interested in nature which prompts
him to express his thoughts in language
or drawings. Such expression, though
very imperfect, should never be
quelled. Almost all lies in the skill
of the teacher to arouse

the spirit of the child. Rousseau's *Emile* abounds in truth as well as error, but it should be carefully read, for many of its truths are essential and have been very frequently quoted by the greatest thinkers of our age.

Rousseau died July 2, 1778. In 1794 his body was taken to the Pantheon but later was taken to a small island in Lake Geneva called Rousseau's island. There a monument and statue are erected to his honor. Although he is dead, his works do live after him. It is sad to think of his early life, but could he have done a nobler work for mankind?

Among those who sought to carry out the reforms of Rousseau are Paine and Campbell.

Quick's Educational Reformers.

Rousseau's Emile.

Compayre's History of Pedagogy.

Gaine, Chapter VIII.

Britanica Encyclopedia.

Johnson's Encyclopedia.