

**THE PORT-ROYALISTS ON EDUCATION;  
EXTRACTS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL  
WRITINGS OF THE PORT-ROYALISTS,  
SELECTED, TRANSLATED AND FURNISHED  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES**

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The Port-Royalists on education; extracts from the educational writings of the Port-Royalists, selected, translated and furnished with an introduction and notes by H. C. Barnard

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**H. C. BARNARD**

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# THE PORT-ROYALISTS ON EDUCATION

EXTRACTS FROM THE EDUCATIONAL  
WRITINGS OF THE PORT-ROYALISTS

SELECTED, TRANSLATED AND  
FURNISHED WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
AND NOTES

BY

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PREFACE

THE contribution which the Port-Royalists made to the cause of education and the influence which they exerted, not only in France but in other countries also, entitle them to a conspicuous place among the world's greatest educators. As such, they merit the attention of all who are interested in the history of European civilisation ; while those whose mission it is to teach the young will find their theories and methods endlessly suggestive. To facilitate the study of education at Port-Royal, therefore, I have endeavoured in this book to give, from the writings of the Port-Royalists themselves, a fairly complete account of the educational doctrines and teaching methods which are associated with the " Little Schools." I have also appended a translation of those sources from which is derived most of our information as to the organisation of the convent-school for girls at Port-Royal des Champs. For a more critical study of the whole subject and for an attempt to estimate the place of the Port-Royalists in the general history of education the reader may be referred to my *Little Schools of Port-Royal*.

In rendering the original extracts into English I have been guided largely by the rules for translation which the Port-Royalists themselves laid down. I take this opportunity of formally thanking my wife and my colleague Mr E. J. A. Groves, L.-ès-L., to both of whom I am indebted for many helpful suggestions.

H. C. B.

March 1918

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ERRATUM

p. 50, l. 23 *for* daughters *read* cousins

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## INTRODUCTION

### I. A GENERAL SKETCH OF EDUCATION IN FRANCE IN THE XVIIITH CENTURY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SCHOOLS OF PORT-ROYAL

THE seventeenth century is one of the most noteworthy epochs in the history of the French nation. It witnessed the setting-up of a strong centralised administration, typified by the *Grand Monarque*—the symbol of patriotism and unity. It saw the French language finally perfected into its present form as one of the clearest and most flexible methods of human expression; and it included a period which is rightly considered to be the golden age of French literature as regards prose and poetry alike. During this century, too, the Church of France, hampered no longer by the Wars of Religion and inspired by the high ideals of the Counter-Reformation, purged herself of many abuses and laid seriously to heart the precepts of her divine commission. It is but natural that, in such a period of awakening, educational activity should be most marked and most fruitful. The beginning of the century saw a reform of the University of Paris; a little later secondary education was exemplified in some of its most striking forms by the great Teaching Congregations; while towards the end of this period elementary education was transfigured by the labours of S. Jean-Baptiste de la Salle. As regards the education of girls, again, which hitherto had been largely neglected, great improvements were made. In every department of the subject, therefore, there is progress to record and the object of this introduction is to sketch in outline the various types of education—elementary, preparatory, and secondary, as we