

# MME. MONTESSORI PLANS 'LABORATORY'

The Famous Italian Teacher  
Would Study Children Ten  
Years or More.

HERE TO SEE OUR SCHOOLS

Her Method Would Leave No Place  
for Colleges as We Know  
Them, She Says.

Mme. Maria Montessori of Rome, founder of the Montessori system of education, arrived in New York yesterday on the steamship *Cincinnati* and received a warm welcome from her compatriots in this country and many educators. Later in the day she talked to a score or more of reporters.

The Italian educator is here to study our systems of education, to see the work done by her own students, who have now more than seventy classes in different parts of the country, and especially to give the people here who have expressed an interest in her system a broader view of the work.

One of the things of which she will speak while she is here is of a school which she hopes to start in Rome in which she may take young children and carry them through a term of ten years or more. It will be a laboratory school where the children may be studied carefully and where they will live constantly under the supervision of the instructor. In this school Mme. Montessori hopes to have children of different nationalities. Her method of instruction is so fundamental, she said, that it applies to the children of any nationality.

The children under her supervision now are from 2½ to 5 years old. "Auto-education" is the basis of her system. She places a child in an environment of which it is the master. The furniture of the room is small. The child is not confined to a desk, and follows its own inclination as to position. To insure its physical well-being and for plenty of fresh air there are gardens connected with the school.

"Even babies are perfectly good if they are treated properly," said Mme. Montessori. "In a hospital in Rome there are in one ward sixty babies, and there is not a sound. If they desire anything they ask for it. They are separated from their mothers, who are poor and ignorant women and would not understand that they must be left tranquil. They are fed every two hours, and when that time comes they make a slight noise with their lips, but they do not cry."

A child, she said, will recognize a ray of light when it is seven days old, and then its psychological life begins.

Asked if the children in her school did not lose the self-control and development of the individuality they had acquired with her in returning to their homes, Mme. Montessori replied that the work had a broad reach, and that the mothers and the families were educated through their children. The mothers and teachers should co-operate, she said. Asked if mothers should take up professional work of any kind, Mme. Montessori replied:

"In the continual social progress of the world women are more and more taking up different lines of work, and anything that tends to broaden the mother is of advantage to the child."

She did not think that the child at any age should be left without instructors, though she said that the system of education in which she believed tended to give independence to the child.

"But as the child advances in age," she said, "life naturally becomes more complex, and there is even more need of supervision."

Mme. Montessori could not speak of the preparation of young people for college.

"That is a difficult question for me," she replied, "because with the education carried on as I believe it should be, there would be no colleges as they are now understood."

The Roman educator's answer as to whether she was a suffragist or not was a familiar one.

"I am not a militant," she said, and then went on to say she believed that women should do everything that broadened them in any way.

Mme. Montessori is a woman of attractive personality. She is dark, with a clear complexion and bright color. She has wavy dark hair and a pleasing voice. She speaks French besides her native tongue. She is a woman of early middle age, inclined to plumpness, and has a general air of healthfulness and normality. The money she receives for her lectures in this country will be used for the fund to start the "human laboratory" in Rome.

Rhode Island is the only State in this country which has taken up officially the Montessori system of education, and there it is to be introduced into the State Normal School. Miss Clara Craig, Supervisor of Observation and Training Schools in Rhode Island, who was with Mme. Montessori yesterday, was sent by her State to take a four months' course at the Montessori school, and upon her return, she said yesterday, the State had officially accepted her report advising the adoption of the method of instruction. The only other countries represented at the school with her, she said, were India and England.