

# HER SCHOOL REFORMS

## Dr. Maria Montessori Arrives to Lecture on New System.

### HAS WON WORLD FAME

**"Let Schools Replace Hospitals and Penitentiaries," Her First Message to Washington Mothers—Calls Desks and Seats of Present Buildings "Instruments of Torture"—Control of Crime.**

"Let the schools take the place of the hospitals and penitentiaries," is the message which Dr. Maria Montessori, originator of the educational system which bears her name, has brought to the United States from Italy, where her methods of instruction are now being pursued. While disease and crime may not be entirely eradicated, Dr. Montessori, basing her conclusions on her study of children, is convinced that both may be minimized to a point of practical elimination if the proper attention is given children in their early school years.

#### Guest of Dr. and Mrs. Bell.

Dr. Montessori, who is making her first visit to this country and has come for a lecture tour of several of the Eastern cities, arrived in New York Wednesday and came immediately to the home of Dr. and Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell, whose guest she will be during her stay in Washington.

A robust woman, in the early prime of middle life, possessed of the pronounced brunette coloring typical of the south European, Dr. Montessori would scarcely convey through her personal appearance an impression of her wonderful achievements, which have already done much to revolutionize educational methods adapted for children. Not being proficient in English the Italian educator speaks through an interpreter.

#### Graduate of University of Rome.

Dr. Montessori is a graduate of the University of Rome, and holds the degree in medicine as well as that of doctor of philosophy. Having entered the educational field she first applied herself for two years to a study of defective children. She then concluded that she preferred to work with normal children, and returning to the University of Rome spent three years in training for this work. In 1906 she began to perfect the system, or rather series of principles which are now attracting the attention and receiving the commendation of the leading educators of the world. In discussing her system, Dr. Montessori said:

"The system in which I am interested and to which I am devoting myself is based on a series of principles, the two fundamental ones of which are:

"Children shall be met with no artificial interference in the schoolroom—they are disciplined by the work they do.

"Secondly, in all the work that the child does there shall be a separation of the mental and physical acts involved."

"The desks and seats used in the average public schools are barbarous affairs," she remarked. Future generations will place them in museums as examples of torturing instrumentalities used in this enlightened age."

#### No Place for Punishment.

"We do not use the term teacher, but director. The director is present to repress antisocial acts. Otherwise, the child is left free to do his work in its own way. There is no place for punishment in this system. The normal child, placed in natural surroundings, is always good. Consequently, if one finds that a child in such surroundings persists in being bad it is patent that it is abnormal, being either physically or mentally weak. I immediately take that child to a specialist, determine what is wrong with it, and then begin to give the attention necessary to correct its failing.

Dr. Montessori will visit the Montessori School, at 1840 Kalorama road, which was established at the instance of Dr. and Mrs. Bell, and the institution established on similar lines at the Neighborhood House. Tomorrow night she will make her first public appearance, lecturing at the New Masonic Temple. S. S. McClure, who, with his wife, accompanied Dr. Montessori from Italy, will introduce her and explain the work that she has accomplished. Dr. Montessori will speak in Italian, and Miss Anne E. George, director of the local Montessori School, will interpret the address. Moving pictures, portraying the Montessori method, will be exhibited.

#### Reception in Her Honor.

At 10 o'clock tomorrow evening Dr. and Mrs. Bell will hold a reception for Dr. Montessori, at which they will be assisted by Miss Margaret Wilson, daughter of the President and Mrs. Wilson, who has been deeply interested in Montessori work for several years.