

**DR. MONTESSORI'S
OWN HANDBOOK.
[NEW YORK]**

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Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook. [New York] by Maria Montessori

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MARIA MONTESSORI

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BY

MARIA MONTESSORI

AUTHOR OF "THE MONTESSORI METHOD" AND
"PEDAGOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY"

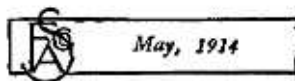
WITH FORTY-THREE ILLUSTRATIONS



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into foreign languages*



TO MY DEAR FRIEND
DONNA MARIA MARAINI
MARCHIONESS GUERRIERI-GONZAGA
WHO
DEVOTEDLY AND WITH SACRIFICE
HAS GENEROUSLY UPHOLD
THIS WORK OF EDUCATION BROUGHT TO BIRTH IN
OUR BELOVED COUNTRY
BUT OFFERED
TO THE CHILDREN OF HUMANITY

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR

As a result of the widespread interest that has been taken in my method of child education, certain books have been issued, which may appear to the general reader to be authoritative expositions of the Montessori system. I wish to state definitely that the present work, the English translation of which has been authorised and approved by me, is the only authentic manual of the Montessori method, and that the only other authentic or authorised works of mine in the English language are "The Montessori Method," and "Pedagogical Anthropology."

Maria Montessori

PREFACE

If a preface is a light which should serve to illumine the contents of a volume, I choose, not words, but human figures to illustrate this little book intended to enter families where children are growing up. I therefore recall here, as an eloquent symbol, Helen Keller and Mrs. Anne Sullivan Macy, who are, by their example, both teachers to myself—and, before the world, living documents of the miracle in education.

In fact, Helen Keller is a marvellous example of the phenomenon common to all human beings: the possibility of the liberation of the imprisoned spirit of man by the education of the senses. Here lies the basis of the method of education of which the book gives a succinct idea.

If one only of the senses sufficed to make of Helen Keller a woman of exceptional culture and a writer, who better than she proves the potency of that method of education which builds on the senses? If Helen Keller attained through exquisite natural gifts to an elevated conception

of the world, who better than she proves that in the inmost self of man lies the spirit ready to reveal itself?

Helen, clasp to your heart these little children, since they, above all others, will understand you. They are your younger brothers: when, with bandaged eyes and in silence, they touch with their little hands, profound impressions rise in their consciousness, and they exclaim with a new form of happiness: "I see with my hands." They alone, then, can fully understand the drama of the mysterious privilege your soul has known. When, in darkness and in silence, their spirit left free to expand, their intellectual energy redoubled, they become able to read and write without having learnt, almost as it were by intuition, they, only they, can understand in part the ecstasy which God granted you on the luminous path of learning.

MARIA MONTESSORI.