

Cutting from the
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The Visit of Dr. Montessori to St. Otteran's Schools (Mercy Convent)

Monday of last week was an epoch-making day in the educational history of Waterford in general and of St. Otteran's Schools in particular. During the week-end Dr. Montessori, whose fame is world-wide in connection with the education of the young, paid a visit to Waterford and spent Monday at St. Otteran's, the pioneer school in connection with the movement in Waterford, for here since March, 1920, Dr. Montessori's ideals and principles have been in operation.

Though the notice of her arrival was short, everything was done to make Dr. Montessori's first visit to Ireland memorable. An address suitably worded to the great occasion was read by Miss Winnie Cummins, one of the senior pupils, while Miss Joan Stafford presented a beautiful bouquet.

After the presentation Dr. Montessori, who was accompanied by Major Dease, late Commissioner of the National School Board, Miss Cornish, her interpreter, and Mrs. Gibbon (Montessori representative for Ireland) visited her own department of the school, at the door of which she was met by a group of children, each of whom held a letter forming in pink roses the words "Benuto, Signorina," which translate the Italian form of "Welcome."

Dr. Montessori spent some time observing the children at their work and was delighted to see how truly her spirit had been interpreted by the Sisters of Mercy. The true Montessori atmosphere of happiness, of interest and of perfect quiet was maintained. On leaving that department Dr. Montessori wrote her impressions of her visit in the visitors' book and expressed how charmed she was to find her ideals embodied in such perfect form by the children. She further expressed the wish that she might have again the happiness of paying another visit to the schools.

Dr. Montessori then visited the senior department of the school and followed with delight the progress of the pupils, a great many of whom had spent their earlier years under her system.

She was there entertained by the pupils to a feast of Irish dancing and song—a treat with which she expressed herself delighted as it was her first opportunity of witnessing such an exhibition. The concert closed with a delightful "Salve" to the Dotteressa, specially composed and arranged for the occasion.

The visit was in every sense a happy one, as anyone who met the Dotteressa should be delighted with her charming personality.

Before leaving, Dr. Montessori signed the visitors' book and wrote her impressions of the visit as follows:—

Ho provato qui una commozione vivificante a indimenti cabile. Perfessione nelle vostre opere e vita nelle vostre anime; cio ho ammirato in questa casa dave sento il desiderio s'ritornare.

Maria Montessori.

27 Guigno, 1927.

I have been very favourably impressed by what I have experienced here, and I shall never forget it. Perfection in your work and vitality in your aspirations: this is, in brief, what I have admired in your establishment, where already I have a desire to return.

Maria Montessori.

27th June, 1927.