

**MISTAKEN VIEWS  
ON THE EDUCATION  
OF GIRLS**

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Mistaken Views on the Education of Girls by Johanne Lohse

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**JOHANNE LOHSE**

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OF GIRLS**



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ON THE  
Education of Girls

BY  
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“ Go, soul, the body’s guest,  
Upon a thankless errand !  
Fear not to touch the best ;  
The truth shall be thy warrant.  
Go, since I needs must die,  
And give the world the lie.

“ Tell Arts—they have no soundness,  
But vary by esteeming ;  
Tell Schools— they want profoundness  
And stand too much on seeming.  
If Arts and Schools reply,  
Give Arts and Schools the lie.”

*Sir Walter Raleigh.*

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## P R E F A C E.

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AFTER more than twenty years' experience in teaching gained on the Continent, in England, and in the Colonies, and after constant study of the art to which I have devoted my life, I venture to offer this little work to the public. It has been written in the hope that some good may be done by pointing out to parents the grave mistakes they often make unconsciously in the education of their daughters.

The life of many a nice girl belonging to the middle and upper classes of society, is marred by the sad consequences of mistakes made in home training, in the choice of a governess or a school, and in the pursuit of studies injudiciously undertaken, in the belief that by gaining distinction at examinations, they also gain true culture. Those who study under this illusion, call to one's mind the old, old saying in the Talmud "They dived into an ocean and brought up a potsherd." The elaborate educational systems of modern times are often inadequate to the task of developing aright all the powers of the young, and many a certificate and diploma covers a world of ignorance.

In writing these pages it has been my aim to show what hinders and what promotes harmonious culture.

JOHANNE LOHSE.

*Oldenburg House,  
Armagh Street West,  
Christchurch, New Zealand.  
November 27, 1884.*

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# MISTAKEN VIEWS

ON THE

## EDUCATION OF GIRLS.



### I.

“Education consists in teaching people to bear responsibilities, and laying the responsibilities on them as they are able to bear them.”—*Bishop Patteson.*

IF a census taken in Great Britain and her Colonies could show us how many of the daughters of the middle and higher classes receive from their childhood a liberal education, and if we could compare the statistics thus gained with those referring to the education of boys, we should be startled by the disproportion and by the evident wrong done to girls.

Perhaps I am underrating this disproportion by saying that most likely we should find it to be as three to ten or thirty to a hundred,—yes, amongst ten children belonging to the wealthier classes who receive a good education, there would perhaps be seven boys and three girls,—amongst one hundred there would be seventy boys and thirty girls. Careful observation,

an accurate insight into the school and home-training of the young, gained during many years of active work, and a perusal of educational books and papers of unquestionable value, force this appalling reflection upon me. How is this disproportion to be accounted for? The boys are looked upon as the future bread-winners, and consequently every effort is made to fit them for an honourable career in life. They are destined for work anyhow, and if they have not to earn their bread, they are at least expected to gain distinction in some good and useful career, to acquire the skill of managing property, and of taking an interest in public affairs, of qualifying themselves for a profession or of forming refined artistic and literary tastes which may sooner or later ennoble and gladden their lives. For them the blessing of work is clearly recognised, and boys and young men who, in this nineteenth century, do not attain some proficiency enabling them to earn a secure living, have in most cases to blame themselves. They reap what they have sown by idleness and neglect, by want of energy and disregard of the opportunities offered to them.

How many a father bending over the cradle in which his infant boy is sleeping, indulges in day-dreams of what his boy is going to be and to do. He is building proud castles in the air and tacitly promises that his boy shall have greater advantages than he enjoyed perhaps himself, and that he will strain every nerve to give him a good education. His castle in the air may crumble into ruins, it may be his own fault that it

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does so, he may place his boy under the best masters, but spoil his career by unwise home-training and too much indulgence ; nevertheless that boy, if he be not utterly depraved, will always have to thank his father for his good intentions, though he may blame him for having spared the rod.

And what happens when a little girl is laid in her cradle ? If she be the first or second or third girl in a family, she may be looked upon with tender love. \* The cruel word "only a girl" may not be uttered when the news that a child has been born into the world is announced to friends and relations ; her parents need not belong to those who, instead of thanking God for the gift of a healthy child, grumble because they have not exactly got what they wanted, either a boy or a girl. But are there many parents who, watching the helpless life of the infant entrusted to their care, indulge in such day-dreams over the cradle of their daughter as they do over that of their son ? I do not believe it. The thought that the gift of a little girl implies just as heavy a responsibility as that of a boy does not seem to lie on the surface, our educational records prove that it does not, what we hear, and read, and see of the "girl of the period" proves that it does not, the misery of helpless uneducated women which we encounter at every step, cries aloud that it does not. No, no ; the blessing of work for this life and for the life to come is not clearly and sufficiently recognised with respect to our girls. Our much vaunted systems of education do not provide