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minded with complete certainty that there is something rotten in the state of our schools."102

More unsettling to many defenders of the old order than this interference of laymen in educational affairs, however, was the work of Friedrich Paulsen, who came from the humanistic side of the university and had expressed his views with such great moderation and massive documentation in his History of Scholarly Instruction. A long review of this book in the Preussische Jahrbücher warned against allowing Paulsen's objectivity in the main body of the work to trap the reader into accepting his conclusions about the future role of the ancient languages; the Grenzbücher even argued that the final chapter containing Paulsen's views on contemporary school reform should have been published separately.103 Paulsen became something of a pariah at his own university; as he reported in his memoirs, "Most of my colleagues were unanimous in their opinion that this book was a disgrace to a university professor, especially to a Berlin professor."104

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN?

If calls for the elimination of Greek from the Gymnasium appeared to threaten humanistic Bildung and the status of the Gebildeten, the emergence in the 1880s of demands for greater educational opportunities for young women posed an even more shocking challenge to traditional values. Although such demands did not have a great impact on the discussion of the proper secondary education for boys in these years, they formed an integral part of the growing discontent with the traditional educational system. Whereas the absence of the ancient lan-

102 Adolf Matthias, Aus Schule, Unterricht und Erziehung (Munich, 1907), p. 17; Gustav Wende, Die Gymnasien und die öffentliche Meinung (Karlsruhe, 1883), p. 4.
103 Pf 61 (1888), 470; Die Grenzbücher 44, no. 4 (1885): 280; BfH 2, (1885): 77.

guages in the higher girls' schools had always been a mark of their inferiority to the Gymnasium, now the calls for improved educational opportunities could become calls for a greater valuation of modern Bildung, because almost no one wanted to impose Latin and Greek on young girls as the price of opening the universities to women.

The first major appeal for improvements in the higher girls' schools came in 1872, when a group of teachers meeting in Weimar protested the fact that in Germany the higher girls' schools were administered with the elementary schools rather than the secondary schools for boys. This meant that the teachers held a lower rank in the civil service. Yet the male teachers who formed the majority at this meeting also declared that the education of young girls should not be placed predominantly in the hands of women.105 In 1873, Adalbert Falk held a conference to discuss girls' education just as he did for the boys' schools; a result of the conference was to confirm the monopoly of university-trained men over teaching in the upper grades. This conference also recommended adopting a ten-year course for the higher girls' schools, from age six to sixteen, distinguished from the lesser intermediate schools by the teaching of two modern foreign languages.106 Despite this increased official attention to girls' education, however, the higher girls' schools remained overwhelmingly under local control: even in the 1890s, when 272 of 568 secondary schools for boys were wholly or partly supported by the Prussian state, only 4 of 128 girls' schools were. In another contrast to the boys' schools, the Prussian authorities tolerated a significant number of private secondary schools for girls, run as private enterprises virtually free of state regulation.107

106 Beckmann, Mädchenbildung, p. 16; Bolton, Secondary School System, p. 279. Only five of the twenty delegates at this conference were women.
107 Russell, German Higher Schools, p. 129; Beckmann, Mädchenbildung.
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The fact that these private schools were staffed and directed almost entirely by women was a continuing sore point with the women teachers at the public schools; throughout the late 1870s and the 1880s, these teachers lobbied for the right to teach in the upper grades of the public schools and for opportunities to obtain the necessary training to do so. The men who ran the German Association for Higher Girls’ Schools, however, put up an inflexible resistance.\footnote{Dauwenoth, Mädchenbildung, p. 154; Helene Lange, Lebenserinnerungen (Berlin, 1930), p. 128.} Hopes for reform increasingly centered on the approaching reign of Crown Prince Friedrich because his wife Victoria was known to have a strong interest in women’s education; the news of his fatal illness in 1887 caused deep disappointment. This disappointment spurred six women in Victoria’s circle to petition both Gossler and the House of Deputies to allow women a greater role in the upper grades of the girls’ schools, especially in teaching German and religion, and to provide facilities for training women to teach at this level.\footnote{Lange, Lebenserinnerungen, pp. 140–143.}

These petitions alone would have caused little controversy had they not been accompanied by a pamphlet written by one of the women, Helene Lange, a teacher at a private school in Berlin. In this work, known to history as the “Yellow Brochure,” Lange asserted bluntly, “Our schools neither provide Bildung nor educate temperate women of refined morals, they only teach.” Lange claimed that male teachers trained in the universities, most of whom she believed taught at girls’ schools only because they could not find jobs teaching boys, were overburdening their pupils with factual knowledge while failing to attend to moral education. In arguing for educational opportunities beyond the ten-year course, she even cited a comment by Gossler in which he admitted that it was impossible for a sixteen-year-old girl to have received a “truly completed Bildung.” Lange was willing to leave instruction in science and grammar to men because of their “greater capacity for abstraction,” but insisted women should teach the more ethically oriented subjects to girls. Yet at this time she did not want women to attend the universities where they would become scholars rather than teachers, but to go to separate institutions that would be essentially the existing teachers’ seminaries raised to a higher level.\footnote{Helene Lange, Kampfzeiten (2 vols.; Berlin, 1928), 1:14, 25–26, 30, 18, 27, 45, 51. The actual title of the “Yellow Brochure” was Die höhere Mädchenschule und ihre Bestimmung.}

The reaction of the men teachers to the petition and pamphlet was predictably negative, for in this period of an overcrowded teaching profession the fulfillment of Lange’s demands would pose a grave threat to their livelihood. Relations between male and female teachers at the girls’ schools became so strained that the women formed their own organization in 1890.\footnote{Lange, Lebenserinnerungen, pp. 181–196; idem, Kampfzeiten, 1:3–4.} The Ministry of Education also responded negatively: Karl Schneider told Lange that he would not be able to sleep at night if he had written a pamphlet such as the Yellow Brochure. The ministry reportedly worked behind the scenes to prevent the petition from ever coming to the floor of the House of Deputies; the official response to it came only after a year’s delay and rejected most of the points raised in Lange’s pamphlet. But it did admit the desirability of giving some form of higher training to women teachers.\footnote{Ibid., 1:5–6, 58.}

Before this reply arrived late in 1888, Helene Lange had traveled to England and returned even more convinced of the backwardness of female education in Germany. In a report on her trip published in 1889, she brought the recent developments in the secondary and higher education of English women to the attention of the German public, stating flatly, “The English public girls’ schools are preferable to the Ger
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man.” She repeated her belief that “those who intellectually hunger should be offered the best intellectual food available in Germany,” but now also defended increased educational opportunities by pointing to the problem of what the English called “redundant women,” those who had no husbands and needed to support themselves. Lange argued that women should have access to the medical profession as well as teaching, noting, “it is generally acknowledged that female physicians have become a necessity, owing to the phenomenal increase of female maladies.”

While in England, Lange visited Girton College, and contact with the ideas of Emily Davies apparently convinced her of the dangers of second-class citizenship inherent in separate educational institutions for women. “Though I personally believe that one might hesitatingly use other roads than the customary ones without falling into the error of aiding Halbbildung,” she wrote in 1889, “the men would not recognize any other Bildung as profound and sufficient enough, except one like their own and acquired like their own. This is a truth we must recognize in Germany.” This new position created a dilemma for Lange because she shared many of the criticisms of the classical Gymnasium that the reformers were raising. “Certainly the formative value of the study of the classical languages is great,” she explained, “but modern life demands too much to spend the best years in training our mental faculties with means which, in themselves, have nothing to do with the actualities of life, and, besides, cause an overburdening which plays havoc with youth.” She was thus “opposed to the ancient languages in girls’ schools,” preferring more science and mathematics to make them closer to the higher Bürgerschulen for boys; yet she also supported “establishing at least a certain number of classical schools for girls, so as to give those who intend to enter the university an opportunity to fit themselves for it.” These schools would begin only at age fourteen, and thus rest on the higher girls’ school as a common foundation extending through the equivalent of Obertertia in a boys’ school.

Several other new women’s organizations petitioned for the opening of university studies to women in 1888–1889; there was also talk of founding a girls’ Gymnasium. Yet what was founded, with Helene Lange’s active participation, was not a classical course, but a so-called Realkurse for women, which opened in Berlin in October 1889 and attracted 214 pupils in the first year. The Realkurse offered to graduates of a higher girls’ school two years of mathematics, science, Latin, history, economics, and modern languages, aiming at preparing them for commercial careers or for taking the examination for the Swiss equivalent of the Abitter, which would allow them to study at Swiss universities. Given Lange’s views on classical education, one presumes that she and her colleagues in this venture hoped that soon an opening of the German universities to Realgymnasium graduates would make it easier for women who had been through this new course to enter German universities as well.

In summary, what contemporaries called the demands of the present on the secondary schools had two general aspects: the desire for some form of secondary education by an increasing percentage of the population, including women, and the need to include more modern subject matter for both the “ballast” who did not graduate from Gymnasien and Real-

\[\text{116} \quad \text{Lange, Higher Education of Women, pp. 13–14, 100–104.}\]
\[\text{118} \quad \text{Vereinigung, Geschichte der Gymnasialkurse, pp. 7–20; Dauenroth, Mädchenbildung, pp. 138–159; Lange, Lebenserinnerungen, pp. 175–180.}\]
gymnasien and for at least some of those youths who went on to the universities. The many proposals for reform at times overlapped or conflicted; satisfying the needs of both the "ballast" and future students of science and medicine within the Gymnasium appeared likely to dilute the ancient languages so seriously that they would not survive. Luring the "ballast" to higher Bürgerschulen or allowing the Realgymnasien to prepare pupils for medical studies involved the extension of privileges to young men whose social and educational backgrounds current professionals and civil servants did not believe qualified them for inclusion in the ranks of the Gebildeten; the same type of argument was used against allowing women to become physicians or upper-level teachers. Under Falk, Purtkamer, and Gossler, the Prussian Ministry of Education rejected a common foundation for all secondary schools as an improper way to deal with the "ballast"; it also refused to open the universities any further to Realgymnasium graduates, at first because of doubts about the value of a semiclassical education and concern for the status of physicians, later more because of the overcrowding of the professions. As long as these considerations continued to govern official policy, the tendency would be to make small adjustments in the Gymnasium curriculum rather than open the universities to Realgymnasium graduates, even if Gossler's rejection of a comprehensive school meant he would make no effort to abolish the semiclassical schools. This dilution and diversification of the classical curriculum produced not only criticism from conservatives such as Lagarde and Treitschke, but also conflict with another vocal group of school reformers, those whom Helene Lange was echoing in her assertion that Gymnasium pupils were already dangerously overburdened with school work.

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THE OVERBURDENING OF GERMAN YOUTH

What are the results of the present-day school? Exhausted brain power, weak nerves, limited originality, paralysed initiative, dulled power of observing surrounding facts, idealism blunted under the feverish zeal of getting a position in the class.

Ellen Key

Nervousness is the characteristic feature of our time.

Dr. Paul Hasse

EUROPEAN culture in the fin-de-siècle was obsessed by fears of decadence, degeneration, and nervousness. In the post-Darwinian world, where the notion of the survival of the fittest was applied indiscriminately to all areas of human interaction, many people worried that the haste, crowding, and unsanitary conditions of life in modern cities would produce future generations less able to compete in the struggle for existence. Englishmen and Frenchmen worried about declining birthrates that would lead to German domination of Europe, while the German Kaiser popularized the notion of the "Yellow Peril" about to swamp Europe from the East. Fictional works such as Henrik Ibsen's Ghosts and Émile Zola's saga of the Rougon-Macquart explored themes of hereditary disease and decline; Herbert Spencer inveighed against social welfare policies designed to aid the weaker mem-
