

**A BLUESTOCKING IN
INDIA, HER
MEDICAL WARDS
AND MESSAGES HOME**

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A bluestocking in India, her medical wards and messages home by Winifred Heston

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WINIFRED HESTON

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A BLUESTOCKING IN INDIA

Her Medical Wards
and Messages Home

By
WINIFRED HESTON, M. D.



UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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CARPENTIER

TO THE
ANSONIA

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 80 Wabash Avenue
Toronto: 25 Richmond Street, W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

To
MY MOTHER

M183693

THESE letters afford so personal a glimpse into a certain phase of life and work in a particular mission field that, in presenting them to the public, it has been deemed wise by the writer to change the names of the persons and places most concerned. She would also take this opportunity of expressing her gratitude to "Eleanor" for a kindly assistance in preparing the book for the press.

W. H.

A Bluestocking in India

On the Atlantic, Oct. 20, 19—.

My dear Eleanor :

At last the bluestocking is launched upon her career, even as she is upon the briny deep, and with big and curious eyes is looking eagerly into the future for fame and name—not wealth, the Fates forbid!—but seriously, for usefulness and service to woman-kind.

I am all agog for experiences in any guise whatsoever, and as you have insisted upon my complete confidence as well as upon a record of my least impressions, I will try to keep you generally informed as to my progress towards the beatific state of the approved and perfect missionary.

Your letter to the steamer was a godsend. I received such a stack of farewell mail that I decided to read it in relays, and to-day, by good fortune, I turned up yours.

It was too bad we could not meet before I sailed, for I had so many things to say to

you ; but what with the rush of your literary career and the strenuousness of my student life, it seemed to be absolutely impossible. Nevertheless, I want to tell you right now, that I can never forget nor cease to be grateful for the days of "auld lang syne," when you alone of all my friends refused to laugh at my aspirations. You took me seriously—more so, perhaps, than I did myself—and by doing so you encouraged me to believe in myself and in my possibilities.

All through the last four years I have had the same battle to fight among college mates, medics, doctors—in fact, every one, everywhere. My special friend among the medics used to say that I was a pretty specimen for a missionary, with my fondness for dainty dresses and things of the world generally, and was eternally asking, "Why don't you put on black and sober down a bit?" But I only laughed and tossed my head—until she began to speak slightly of the work, and then I whispered into her ear some of the agonies of a woman's life in the thick dark-nesses of heathendom, till she became very quiet, maintaining thereafter a strictly reverential attitude towards my future career.

In time I became quite inured to the jokes of the girls, and to such songs as :

“Would I were a cassowary
On the plains of Timbuctoo,
I'd eat a medical missionary,
Bible, bones, and hymn-book too.”

Tell me, do you always think of the “female doctor” as wearing short skirts, short hair, a budding moustache and talking in a deep *basso profundo* voice? Among all our students there was but one such. Please, dear, remember me just as I was when last we met, excepting the slightly more severe and tailor-made aspect which professional duties have compelled me to affect, but with home and evening gowns just as frivolous as in the days of yore, and with just as much love and fun in my heart as when we were youngsters together.

What a time I had leaving the hospital, where my internship had won for me such splendid friends! The great surgeon, Dr. Stanley, actually swore, and called me a fool for going to India, saying I might have had a career in America. Dr. Foraker asked me if I were going for the trip—but he is an agnostic. In fact it has been difficult for me to make my motives understood—the more so since it is impossible for me to act piously or to give any impression whatever of religious tendencies. But there are noble men