

**HELEN BRENT, M.
D.: A
SOCIAL STUDY**

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Helen Brent, M. D.: A Social Study by Annie Nathan Meyer

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ANNIE NATHAN MEYER

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*H. S. Linscomb -
from
M. C. Allen.*

HELEN BRENT, M. D.

A SOCIAL STUDY

by Mrs. C. M. Linscomb

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HELEN BRENT, M. D.

I.

NE bright, warm spring afternoon, there was a large and enthusiastic crowd assembled in West—th Street. The occasion was the laying of the corner stone of the Root Memorial Hospital and College for Women. The crowd was enormous. All the seats were filled, many people were standing far out into the roadway, and at all the available windows were eager faces; even upon some of the neighbor.

ing roofs there were spectators looking down upon the sight. It was a fashionable crowd, for the Root Memorial had been the topic of the town for the past two years. This is its peculiar history:

For some time it had been rumored about that the wealthy Mrs. Root had determined to give a large sum to some worthy object in memory of her greatly lamented spouse, Phineas Root. Poor Mrs. Root (and I say that advisedly, although her personal fortune was estimated at something between twenty-five and thirty millions) had no sooner allowed this whisper to get abroad than she was subjected to the most fearful martyrdom. There was not a college professor throughout the country that did not see himself the honored head of a department that "never before had been able to offer such unique opportunities for research—through the munificent gift of

Mrs. Root;" there was not a babies' hospital, not a society for the distribution of tracts among the heathen, not an association for the suppression of vice, not a sewing circle that did not bring forward its just and peculiar claims in the most eloquent terms. The world soon found out which church could boast the honor of being guardian to the soul and thirty millions of the renowned Mrs. Root, and there was not a church of that denomination (I am not going to commit myself) from Texas to Maine that did not assume the right to "Propagate the divine gospel as it never could have been done before," "To sweep sin from the face of the earth," and all by means of Mrs. Root's millions.

A sharp struggle waged at home between the minister and the physician, that together bore the responsibility of caring for Mrs. Root's physical and spiritual welfare. The Reverend Dr. Hark-