

THE FIRST WOMAN DOCTOR.

Elizabeth Blackwell was one of those women who made a name for themselves by doing something of an abiding character. As Halleck, the poet says:

One of the few immortal names
That were not born to die.

She was born in Bristol in 1821. When she thought of entering upon the study of medicine there were so many difficulties in the way that she was advised to dress as a man and in this way gain entrance to college and work her way through.

When young she had a distinct aversion to medicine and things pertaining to the human body. Later on this feeling began to disappear, and she became dominated with an antipathy to marriage. She then took up the study of medicine to fill up her time and occupy her active mind. She then began to think that the larger life of being useful to her sex was the highest calling to which she could devote her energies.

She came into contact with Dr. Samuel H. Dickson, of Charleston, S.C., who loaned her books on medical subjects, and otherwise assisted her to enter college. In 1847 she made her first real attempt to become a student of medicine in the medical colleges of Philadelphia. In that city Dr. Elder and his wife gave her every assistance they could. She called on Dr. Jackson, Dr. Darrach, Dr. Warrington and others of the teachers in the medical colleges of Philadelphia of that period, but to no purpose.

She was advised to go to Paris, don men's attire, and work her way through college. Dr. Warrington, or Philadelphia, at last succeeded in having her admitted to the college in Geneva. In due course of time she received her degree. When it was conferred upon her she said: "Sir, I thank you; it shall be the effort of my life, with the help of the Most High, to shed honor on my diploma." Immediately she was given a most unique greeting by all the students, and they were all males.

But Miss Blackwell was a woman with an ideal. She made up her mind to be a doctor. When she found the greatest difficulty in securing admission to a college, one of the professors to whom she applied said that she had better go to Paris; but it was such a horrible place he feared the consequences. Her reply was a most remarkable one: "If the path of duty led me to hell, I would go there; and I did not think that by being with devils I should become a devil myself." It was this sort of idealism that made her the power she was, and gave her the great influence she came to possess. To her the higher education of women is deeply indebted.