Being Ida

Celebrating 150 years of Dr. Ida S. Scudder

16 Days to Go

From a medical student to a fund raiser

Having made up her mind to qualify as a doctor to respond to the needs of the sick and needy in India, Ida enrolled in the Women's Medical College, Philadelphia in 1895. It was not a unanimous decision by the Ida's Church Mission Board. The members were not happy with sending an unmarried young woman as a doctor for the missionary work to India. It was after much deliberation that they agreed to fund her education.

In 1898, the famous Cornell Medical College received a large sum of money with the clause that women be admitted along with men. This was indeed happy news for the young aspiring doctors along with Ida. It was decided that Ida and her friends be transferred to the university for their fourth and final year.

After transferring to the university, Ida was engulfed with a surmounting load of studies. She was steeped with clinical work and various subjects.

But Ida was constantly worried about the common tropical diseases which were prevalent in India. But to her dismay, none of those were covered in the textbooks at Cornell. Her impatience to get back to Vellore and begin helping the sick there was becoming stronger as she was nearing her course.

Towards the completion of her medical education, on a certain day, Ida received a letter from Dr. Louisa Hart.

Dr. Louisa, came to India as a Canadian missionary in the early 1800 and was working with John Scudder in Ranipet. This letter was what urged Ida to build a hospital in Vellore.

To Ida's surprise and shock, she was asked to raise money for a hospital for woman in Vellore. Louisa's suggestion was eight thousand dollars.

With this new and colossal task in hand, Ida went to meet the rich and well to do Miss Taber. Miss Taber's brother in law, who was listening to Ida's description of the condition in Vellore, met her the next day and graciously gave her a cheque for ten thousand dollars.

Soon Ida would build the Mary Taber Schell Hospital In 1902.