

# **WHAT OUR GIRLS OUGHT TO KNOW**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649003389

What our girls ought to know by Mary J. Studley

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**MARY J. STUDLEY**

**WHAT OUR GIRLS  
OUGHT TO KNOW**



## AN INTRODUCTORY MEMOIR

— OF —

# Dr. Mary J. Studley.

---

There is no study so interesting to man, as man; hence it is that the biographies of eminent men and women are more sought after than any other kind of literature. An interest is taken in them in proportion to what they have done or written, which have added to the world's store of learning, civilization and entertainment. Biography introduces us to all great men as friends, enhances our estimation of character, and transfuses the life of the departed into us. Great characters, like great mountains, are best seen at a distance; we do not, therefore, as a general thing, form a true estimate of them until we lose them. It is so with many other things. We have to be deprived of them before we learn their value. We see most of the bird's beauty when it stretches its wings for flight.

In this brief sketch of the life of Dr. Mary

J. Studley we can only speak of her public character. Like most struggling women, she had a side that was hidden from the world; and there was, at times, a pressure upon her mind which none would have suspected, who only saw the exterior of the calm, sweet, gentle woman that she was.

Dr. Studley was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, about the year 1835. She was the daughter of parents who were able to give her more advantages in early life than commonly fall to the lot of young women. She was educated at Newton, in her native State, and early developed a thirst for those branches of education which most girls pass over. She acquired a thorough knowledge of Latin, mathematics, natural history and physiology, to which, later on, she added the German and French languages—in the first of which she could speak and write with great fluency. No State has furnished so many female teachers as Massachusetts; and, being full of ambition and independence, she enlisted in that high and honorable calling, locating herself at Sandusky, Ohio, where she proved her stability, worthiness and fidelity, by remaining there twelve years—all the time engaged in the education of youth. At the end of this time family inducements brought her to New York, where she lived four and a half years in the

family of her brother. It was about this time that she resolved to study medicine and become a physician. With her to resolve was to do; and at once she entered the Woman's Medical College of the New York Infirmary, and took a full course, graduating with honor. The first experience of Dr. Studley as a physician was at Elizabeth, New Jersey. She went there, if not absolutely a stranger, still without the assistance so essential to new beginners in the profession. It was with her an experiment, and her hopes came from confidence in herself—her splendid health and buoyant spirits. She had to contend with ignorance, apathy, and settled physicians of experience and skill, who, like most practitioners in medicine, were jealous of and unfriendly to new comers—especially towards a woman, unknown, unheralded and but newly graduated.

A young lawyer advertises himself, and waits long for a first client, but what is that to a woman with the popular prejudice against her sex, and with questions of life and death to be submitted to her skill? Dr. Studley, with womanly trust, put a modest card in the papers, placed her sign upon the house, and waited for her first patient. It may be readily believed that she had abundant leisure; but, she did not waste her time. As we have seen she had obtained much and varied learning, and she had withal a vigorous and

versatile pen. Her strength was in her clear-headed, common-sense, and the gift of expressing her thoughts in good English, never saying too much or too little. With a wise calculation of the charms of attracting popular attention she resolved to lecture on the subject of physiology, first delivering a few lectures to a promiscuous audience, and then a course exclusively to ladies. Her first lecture was delivered to between fifty and a hundred curious listeners; with whatever feelings they came, they went away satisfied that she knew how to treat her subject with masterly skill. Her experiment as a lecturer was successful and satisfactory. If patients came in slowly, they did come; so that by the end of the first year Dr. Studley was a self-supporting woman, with the prospect of a fair share of the practice of the city.

More than fifteen years of teaching, however, had formed habits which could not be wholly overcome; and although she labored zealously in her own profession, there was always an under-current of longing for the teachers desk and inquiring students. A quiet city like Elizabeth did not satisfy her ambition; and after a residence of about two years she left it and located in New York city, where every thing had to be begun anew. She met difficulties and obstacles with womanly determination, lecturing as before and



using all legitimate means to achieve success; but Providence had decreed that she should occupy a wider and more congenial field of usefulness. Taking better counsel than that which carried her to New York, she returned to Massachusetts, and for a while practised medicine in her native city, Worcester, where she had many friends who gladly welcomed her home. She next was offered and accepted a position in the State Normal School, at Framingham, as Professor of the Natural Sciences, and as Resident physician. Here, she was indeed at home. Her studies in medicine had not been lost; they had rounded out her talents as a teacher, they had widened her knowledge of human nature, and all her faculties were fully developed. This was, undoubtedly, the Summer period of her life. She was to her scholars, what Mentor was to Telemachus—a guide, a counsellor and a friend—and they loved her as such.

Twice she visited Europe, each time in company of a party of young and eager travelers and students, and furnished some interesting letters to the *Newark Advertiser*, giving graphic accounts of their travels. From her last trip she returned with somewhat impaired health, the result of over-fatigue and anxiety, from which she never fully recovered. She became nervous and restless; and some action on the part of the man-

agers of the Normal School, of which she did not approve, led to her resignation, and temporary loss of employment. Unwilling to return to the practice of medicine she finally opened a private school in Framingham, which opened with every promise of success and abundant returns in reputation and money. But, alas! a cloud may suddenly obscure the brightest sky; so it sometimes happens, that what seems to be the hour of triumph becomes the hour of affliction.

“ Death comes to all, his cold and sepless hand  
Waves o'er the world, and beckons us away,  
Who shall resist the summons?”

The strain upon the great heart of the strong woman had been too long endured; the fatigue of body and mind had been excessive; and even as a host of loving friends and relatives were rejoicing over the new departure, and eager scholars were waiting her words of wisdom and sympathy, the Angel of Death claimed her as his own. There was but a momentary struggle, the light fled from the eyes, the firm lips closed, and the spirit of Mary J. Studley was before the throne of the Creator.

In character, Dr. Studley mingled strength and tenderness. She was fearless in the discharge of her duty, and her life was full of heroic self-sacrifice, and rich in noble deeds. In her off-hand talks to her scholars or assemblies, she

would draw upon her exhaustless fund of humor, creating ripples of laughter; and with the door thus opened, and the attention gained, she would crowd into their minds a wonderful amount of information. She had a large head, a round face, with honesty written in every line of it, and bright sparkling eyes, with a sweet clear voice. She was warm in her friendships, and loved the society of intelligent people. If she had her failings, which is not improbable, she had a wonderful way of hiding them from all but herself and her God.

As a writer, this little volume is a fair example of her style and versatile powers. Her love for the young was great, and she had a strong desire to contribute all in her power to the mental and physical developement of her own sex. This volume will be found to contain a large store of illustration and information, showing the extensive and varied character of her own studies. Dr. Studley has left other manuscripts behind her which deserve to, and which we trust may, some day, be permitted to reach the public.

J. K. HOYT.

JUNE 1, 1882, NEWARK, N. J.