

The Fortune Hunter

The first of a series of articles on the conservation of health and its relation to human happiness and prosperity.—In two chapters.

CHAPTER I

When the horizon of life is softened and drawn nearer by the deepening sunset of activity, and hours, days and weeks of reflection are forced upon us by an order of things over which human minds have no control, we begin to appreciate vividly that the three words which I have chosen as the subject of my discourse convey mighty truths. "The Fortune Hunter"—these are words which in their personal application call for profound deliberation.

Did you ever think of the old country doctor, grown stooped in serving humanity through the years, and how little real appreciation is shown, notwithstanding his unflinching devotion to the public health? I can see him now tottering toward the end of the journey of life, his long silken locks a sure tribute to his sorrows and cares. His wife, sweet noble character that we knew, slipped into the great Beyond when Hope came. When the great white birds took mother away, she whispered, "Call her Hope—that has been my life." And the doctor, kneeling in anguish, set up the mother's willing sacrifice as the standard of his dealings with the country-side. That was long ago, but no mother or father ever called that the doctor did not give himself fully, silently, nobly.

I remember well the doctor's last call: it was the ending of a sultry day in August. Dawn had come with ominous silence, dark and threatening clouds carrying out terrible mutiny, hung low; rapidly rising temperature, increasing humidity, and oppressive silence brought eyes Heavenward in fear. The day dragged on, but there was ever present a sense of impending danger; groups of men stood here, there, everywhere, voices hushed and minds subdued. Night smothering-like sunk down in darkness black and still; homes were peculiarly silent, and not a man was abroad as the hours silently came and passed to eternity.

It was midnight when the storm broke; its approach was made plain by a terrifying roar, and the clouds took on a greenish hue that sickened and cast upon the little country town a ghastly pallor.

There was naught to pierce the impenetrable gloom save the zig-zag of the lightning as it crouched and sprang from thunderhead to thunderhead; the thunder boomed and roared as if the furies of all time had been unleashed and this was their only night of havoc and terror; the rain fell in torrents; and out in this awful void of darkness, there was but one solitary human being.

The patient had lain for days with death hovering near; and tonight was the crisis. Unmindful of the oncoming storm, the doctor had remained till a late hour, and when the crisis had passed, he took the hands of the anxious wife, and in comforting voice said, "He will live." With this he was gone. The old gray mare stood at the gate expectant, and when the lightning flash revealed the doctor's approach, she whinnied encouragement. Had she not traveled this very road winter and summer, in calm and storm, and did not the doctor know that she would take him home while he slept? Did she not know that his strength had been severely tried in the struggle between life and death?

And at home Hope waited; surely he would get back before the storm. Could she not see him coming; was he not even then at the cross-road where the peaceful undulation of the flats breaks off abruptly, and there begins the ragged line of the valley in which Death Creek, tortuous and serpent-like, winds its way from the hills.

But no! The jagged lightning flash caught Death Valley in its grip, bel it, and like a fiend from Hell, pointed out the writhing sink holes, the maddened stream, whose viperous revelry no man ever withstood. The wind caught the trees, twisted them from their roots, and sent their shivering trunks hurling through the air. The rain-drops bit and stung viciously. Great livid forks of fire coiled languidly, smoldered, and shot the darkness through. Dumbly conscious of a grave responsibility, the old gray mare all the while trudged homeward.

The minutes were as hours, but the storm lost none of its fury. The house was damp and chill as in early Spring, and Hope set about to build a fire in the chimney-place. She was kneeling beside the logs, her hands shielding the tiny sputtering flame from the draught, when it seemed as though a voice called to her, "Hope has been my life." It was then that she heard the buckboard come into the yard; and she ran out to fetch the doctor to the house. But it was too late! His lifeless hand gripped the reins that needed no touch; in the raging storm his soul winged to eternity—the old gray mare had brought him home.

Was not the Doctor a true fortune hunter whose life went out in the love of his chosen work? Are we not all fortune hunters—fortune hunters who have devoted, and are devoting our measure of years to the pursuit of one thing or another, trivial or magnificent in the eyes of men as the case may be, but trivial all to that Supreme Power which controls and directs this great universe which is our playground for a short space of time.

Robert Fulton, the inventor of the steamship; George Stephenson, the genius of the steam locomotive; Thomas A. Edison, who began his career as a newsboy on the Grand Trunk Railway but who is now the recognized peer of the electrical world, were and are all fortune hunters.

There are two classes of fortune hunters to which I desire to direct your attention; those who strive for attainment because of an inherent desire to further civilization and advance humanity, and those who exercise their wits for financial gain purely. Fulton, Stephenson, Edison, and many others whose names go flitting through your minds, belong to the first division, and will occupy an enviable and honored place in history. We meet men of the other class so often that it seems unneces-

sary for me to suggest any particularly striking examples.

In every avenue of life, however, will be found men who stand out as the fathers of high ideals, improved conditions, and humanitarian principles—they are the fortune hunters to whom the world owes a great debt, and it is they who have brought out for our enjoyment the high standard of civilization under which we live. The Stars and Stripes would not float today over this noble Republic of ours had it not been for those great men who sacrificed life to purify citizenship and preserve right and justice. Surely, the historical accounts of the bloody struggles of the Revolution and Civil War will suffice to arouse in your bosom, as they do in mine, a love and gratitude which creates an aspiration for accomplishment that will be a fitting tribute to their sacrifice.

In the evolution of things, the constant trend is advancement. Compare the present day facilities of transportation with the pack-mule of a hundred years ago, or the manufactory of today with the loom of our fathers. True, in the game of life as we find it, all cannot be what the world calls great or successful, but the spirit of the fortune hunter covers the chasm and success seems veritably within our hand-grasp. It needs but a little energy and pluck to pull ourselves up from the darkness of complete failure and inertia to the bright light of accomplishment. The proverbial land of promise holds out always a beckoning hand, and the attainments of hole-souled and assiduous application are but a stone's throw in the distance.

This situation is known to every avocation, and as leaders in the profession of edutistry we must look well to our spurs or some one will conceive such an improvement over the present method of bridging the gaps, that we will be forced out of the spotlight of achievement and drop back so far in the path which progressive humanity requires us to tread that the term "has-been" will be ours. You have doubtless often heard or made the expression that humanity is never satisfied, and no matter how great have been its achievements in both material and sociological ways, it is always demanding something better. This is simply ambition, or if you please, evolution put into human form. Without ambition, humankind would soon go tobogganing down the path to the dead past, and drivel away its hours in ignorance; ust in every conceivable form would abound, and the sole object of life would be the satisfaction of natural animal desires.

An all-wise Creator perceived in a flash the necessity for ambition, and to augment and develop the best in man, provided a daily succession of opportunities. Fortunately, we are only able to catch a glimpse occasionally of the future, an dcannot fathom the secrets which lie in wait among the fields that will some day open to

us, so that if we would succeed, our faculties must ever be sharp and probing diligently and inquiringly into everything about us. Social and business activities demand an incessant interchange of ideas, and out of the jumbled mass, the successful man must gather here, there and yonder the information that will assist him in the uphill climb. The variation of opinion among men in the natural intercourse of life serves to broaden our mentality, and plant our reason

Continued on page 20.)

Hotel Rome

"The House of Courtesy"

O m a h a

Room without bath

\$1.00 up.

Room with bath

\$1.50 up.

Modern Lunch Room

ROME MILLER

Owner

Hotel Victoria

9th & McGee Sts. Kansas City, Mo.



EUROPEAN

In the Heart of the shopping district
Telephone and running water in all rooms. Popular priced cafe in connection.

RATES—One Person

Rooms with Bath Privilege \$1.00-\$1.25
Rooms with Private Bath \$1.25-\$1.50

Two Persons

Rooms with Bath Privilege \$1.50-\$2.00
Rooms with Private Bath \$2.00-\$2.50

L. V. E. MOORE, Proprietor

HOT SPRINGS HOTEL

and Minnekahta Bath House

The original Indian Medical Springs. Good for Rheumatism, Stomach Trouble, Gout, Blood Poisoning, Etc.

Apartment House in Connection

WRITE FOR INFORMATION

MRS. M. S. NICHOLSON, Prop.

Hot Springs

--

--

--

South Dakota