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THE DRIFTER

Reader, do you know what a "drifter" is? Would you recognize one? Has it ever occurred to you that we have human drifters?

Have you ever stood on the banks of a stream, large or small, and watched pieces of wood, or even logs of some size, float past? If the stream is rapid in its course these pieces of wood, or logs, move more swiftly. This is what we term floating or drifting. That which floats idly past we call a drifter. The drifter is in no hurry, it has no destination marked out, nor has it any time set for arrival—it lacks interest and animation. A drifter is more or less a dead thing. No matter whether the course of the stream flows slowly or rapidly, whether it is a placid or rough body of water, the drifter just drifts on and on. To go with the tide is easy—to go against it requires energy. It requires purpose. The drifter possesses neither, hence drifts. It never occurs to a drifter that there might be something better up the stream—it is always headed down stream.

We wonder if a few of our readers have not already sensed the comparison that we are attempting to make. Be sure of this—there are human drifters, and a lot of them, too. Those who are prone to take the "line of least resistance" are in a sense drifters. Those of the human family who lack the desire to buck the current if there is something worth while to be had upstream, who prefer to go as the crowd goes, swayed here and there as the pendulum of ordinary thought and common-place action carries them, are drifters. We see them all about us. The greatest and gravest lack is that of interest. Genuine interest in something will develop energy, and strong desire will start energy to work to buck the current—will start one on the upgrade. If the drifter has not already completed his trip down-stream as far as the current will carry him it is only a matter of time when he will be as far down as he can get; when he will be at the bottom.

Consideration of these matters are worthy serious reflection on the part of all, particularly young people. To those who are starting to drift we are crying, "Wake Up!" Keep awake! Drift in the course you yourself select—not always with the current. If there

is something to be gained, buck the current of common thought and dare to be yourself; dare to develop yourself that you may become a man or woman worthy the name. It may take effort, for often it is not easy to go upstream against a stiff current—but ever bear in mind that so few reach the source of the stream that the territory thereabout is never crowded and nobody is jostling your elbows or trying to take "standing room" from you. There is truth indeed in the old saw, "There's lots of room at the top." There is and there always will be. Moreover, the greater the elevation the better will be your view, your outlook, on the world and its affairs. When you raise yourself above the masses, reach a desirable altitude, you will find the air pure.

How is all this to be accomplished? How can the lot of a drifter be escaped? Very simple and easy problems these and a ready solution is possible. The first step is the cultivation of a desire to be somebody, to be of consequence, to develop yourself into a man or woman of value, not alone for yourself but for others as well. When this desire sprouts it is an easy step to begin preparations which will give you capacity along some worthy line of endeavor which you alone may select. In a young person the acquisition of a good education marks the first great success—yea, triumph!

With adequate education you need no longer to drift—you can buck the current—you can travel upstream, instead of down as do all helpless, unprepared, lifeless creatures and things. Education will save you—it is more certain in its action than a life-belt.

There is not a position in life that is not bettered for one by the possession of an education. If any of our readers dare differ with us on this statement let him hold up his hand and announce his premises. Education is a real need, not of more or less isolated individuals, but of all people and all the time. After leaving school continue to be a student—study and try to improve yourself, your capacity and position to the end of your days. Nothing will pay you better. Take our word for it and give our doctrine a good try-out.

A special word to our Chemawa students ere we close: Try and get the real meaning of a drifter; determine not to be one; fix your mind on some worthwhile project and work to it; resolve to get an education, to finish school at Chemawa with credit to yourself; resolve, further, that you will always remain a credit to yourself and your school.