

THE HOPEWELL HOSPITAL

THERMOPOLIS, WYOMING

A. G. HAMILTON, M. D.
CHIEF SURGEON

August 12, 1921.

My dear Mrs. Rinehart :

It is hard for me to tell you what my feelings were when I had read your letter. I had hoped but hardly dared expect courtesy and understanding of this type. I appreciate it with my whole heart.

I understand your hesitation in expressing an opinion as to the feasibility of publication, especially in view of the character of the subject-matter. It will mean a good deal to me to have you read the manuscript. It will go forward to you tomorrow.

As much as I shall value an opinion of yours on this manuscript, I am even more interested to know whether you will think I have any gift for writing. When I was younger I was interested in literature, and wrote a little while I was in college. Then for ten years the writing instinct was entirely submerged. During the past year it has cropped out again. My time is pretty well taken up, but I have been writing in spare hours a sort of journal of a doctor's life. It seems to me that a physician's life is richer than most men's in the elements of both tragedy and comedy ; but more than that I want to picture his own individuality - the graduation with high ideals of service in his profession and bounding ambition, the struggle to make a living and pay the bills, the fight to keep his idealism in the face of ungrateful patients and fee-splitting, cut-rate competitors, the flickering down of his desire to serve as he sees the quack's commercial success, the waning of youth and its enthusiasms and courage under the burden of the mid-day, the occasional flarings of the old ambitions and hopes and the slowly-dawning realization that the heights are for only the few among whose number he is not, the final determination to play out the game as it has been given him and go out of the world a 'good sport' if nothing else. The whole thing a sort of resume of the flickering and blazing and dying of the torch of life. Is the idea worth anything, or am I wasting my time trying to write it down ?

I shall be obliged to go to Billings in a very short time to attend to some business connected with my property in Montana. If it would not be asking too much, I should like above all things to go down and meet you and Doctor Rinehart, as much as anything else to express my appreciation of your good sportmanship more fittingly.

I am

Very sincerely yours,

A. L. Hart