

modations were not first-class. Nobody would build hotels, because they might not pay. Flagler had more money than he knew what to do with. He decided to build a hotel. He thought it might pay, when people learned about St. Augustine. They might take a long time to learn. But what did that matter to a man with his millions?

And so, while it was business—for he felt sure of eventual success—it wasn't Standard Oil business. And it wasn't altogether play. It was the new point of view that made it seem like a whim to so many people at the time and that makes it still arouse suspicion among some. Remember he said: "My hardest problem was the Ponce de Leon: How to build a hotel to meet the requirements of nineteenth-century America and yet be in keeping with the character of the place!" He gave the commission to a firm of then unknown young architects—Carrère & Hastings. He set no limits to cost. It was built by day's labor—as a rich man might build his own house if he really were interested in a home. The best site for such a hotel was a certain swamp. Maria Sanchez Creek ran through what is now the Alcazar. So even the ground was built by him that his scheme might go through in its artistic entirety.

It is perfectly obvious that in building the Ponce de Leon and the Alcazar he began to emancipate his mind from the thralldom of the Oil trust, to awaken the dormant æsthetic sense and develop it by gratification, to shift a little from the center of his point of view. The blue sky began to take on the meaning it has for human beings who have time to look at it.

There still remained for him to get closer to his fellow-men.

Tourists to whom the climate of St. Augustine and the beauty and comfort of the Flagler hotels there would appeal, were the kind that dislike unnecessary discomforts in traveling. Flagler naturally endeavored to induce the ramshackle railroad from Jacksonville to St. Augustine to mend its way. But it was a poor road, poorly managed. Lacking profitable traffic, it would remain ramshackle forever. In the end, Flagler purchased the railroad. In the transformation of "a streak of rust and a right of way" through a wilderness, into an efficient railroad; in the development of sandy wastes, sparsely settled, into a productive country with a self-supporting population, there are all the thrills and all the inspiration that such a mind as Flagler's needs.

And now his Florida work was no longer exclusively the outcome of his sentimental love of beautiful skies and admiration for exotic plants, or reverence for the near-antiquity of St. Augustine. He became interested in agricultural development. He saw great possibilities in orange growing. He decided to extend and improve his railroads—not gradually, as the profits justified, but at once, for he had the money and no need to wait for profits. So he had engineers survey a line for a railroad, and built into an undeveloped wilderness. And people came and planted orange trees.

There was a frost. It killed most of the fruit trees—and also killed the last of the old Flagler. He promptly went to the scene of the disaster, in order to consider intelligently what to do. And there he saw for himself how people whom his railroad had induced to come here and invest money and devote time and labor to develop the country, had lost. It was not his fault. It was the worst frost on record, and the planters were too new at it to know how to protect their trees against the cold. Their investment in dollars was a drop beside his own. But he saw for himself human suffering, he met his fellow-men close enough to look into their eyes. He reverted to his first youth, to the time when he was very poor, before he was even a partner in a country store. It was then that his philosophy of life began to crystallize, slowly at first; more rapidly as he saw more and more of men, as he saw them trying to benefit directly by his own work. Having great wealth, he decided there was but one thing to do: Extend his railroad still farther south, where orange growers would be less at the mercy of Jack Frost.

FLAGLER'S MAGIC FOUNTAIN

He would do this to help others! Logical, clear-sighted, immune from greed, and free from emotionalism, a six-days-a-week worker from his youth, realizing the value of opportunity to men, he now reached the conclusion that the best way to help others was to help them to help themselves. The desire to help he might long have had; it was intensified, made definite, by the sight of the distress caused by the blighting of the oranges.

That is why Flagler decided to push south; and *there* it was that he found the Magic Fountain of his Second Youth!

He built the Palm Beach hotel to get