

Hope's Quiet Hour.

Walk on the Sunny Side.

Dear Hope,—I want to ask you why it is that when someone wishes to do us a good turn, when we don't want it or desire it, we always resent it. He comes to us in a spirit of benevolence and good will, and we spurn his kindness. We cannot understand that a man would try to do us good without a selfish motive of his own. We have no faith in man. If we would be perfectly honest with ourselves, the majority of us would have to admit that the above is true, but we nevertheless believe ourselves to be Christians. We think we are getting back at him for his audacity by refusing his kindness, but in reality we are only harming ourselves, and in more ways than one. We are the losers, not he. He gives spiritually because he uses his good-will and love-faculty towards us, while we lose spiritually because we stop our good-will and love faculty towards him. What we use, grows, while what we do not use, slips from us. Consider the parable of the "talents." Now, dear Hope, why do you think we deliberately harm ourselves in this way? A. E. W.

Our correspondent may be right in saying that some people harm themselves by refusing to accept offered kindness in a kindly spirit, but such an experience has very seldom come under my notice. I generally find it the other way, and feel amazed at the gratitude shown for very trifling acts of common friendliness. Of course, it sometimes happens that an offered act of kindness is not prompted by a kindly spirit. Then it ceases to have any sacramental value, and gives pain instead of pleasure. If a man has no affection for his wife but attempts to cover up his feelings by giving her costly presents, she will very probably feel like dinging them away. If a rich man gives presents to the poor, without caring in the least for the poor, it is little wonder if the recipient's self-respect is wounded. If the gifts are the natural expression of genuine friendliness they will usually, I think, be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered. But the one who confers a favor, should always remember that he is the privileged party. "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Gifts from one who loved me,
'Twas high time they came.
When he ceased to love me,
Time they stopped for shame."

When I was looking over Christmas books, I came across one called "Cheerfulness as a Life Power," and to-day you shall have the chance to read some selections from it. It will be a nice change for you, and, if it helps to advertise the book, why, so much the better! Speaking of "the laugh cure," the author says: "The San Francisco Argonaut says that a woman in Milpites, a victim of almost crushing sorrow, despondency, indigestion, insomnia, and kindred ills, determined to throw off the gloom which was making life so heavy a burden to her, and established a rule that she would laugh at least three times a day, whether occasion was presented or not, so she trained herself to laugh heartily at the least provocation, and would retire to her room and make merry by herself. She was soon in excellent health and buoyant spirits; her home became a sunny, cheerful abode." At first her husband and children were amused at her. "But after awhile," said this woman, "the funny part of the idea struck my husband, and he began to laugh every time we spoke of it." My husband spoke of it to our friends, and I rarely met one of them, but he or she would laugh, and ask me how many of my laughs I had had to-day. Naturally, they laughed when they asked, and of course, that set me laughing. When I formed this apparently strange habit I was weighed down with sorrow, and my rule simply lifted me out of it. I had suffered the most acute indigestion for years I have not known what it is. Headaches were daily dread, for ever six years I have not had a single pain in the head. My name seems different to me, and I feel a thousand times more interest in its work. My husband is a changed man."

"Nervous prostration is seldom the re-

sult of present trouble or work, but of work and trouble anticipated. Mental exhaustion comes to those who look ahead, and climb mountains before reaching them. Resolutely build a wall about to-day, and live within the enclosure. The past may have been hard, sad, or wrong,—but it is over. Why not take a turn about? Instead of worrying over unforeseen misfortune, set out with all your soul to rejoice in the unforeseen blessings of all your coming days. I find the gayest castles in the air that were ever piled," says Emerson, "far better for comfort and for use than the dungeons in the air that are daily dug and caverned out by grumbling, discontented people."

"There is no use in talking," said a woman. "Every time I move, I vow I'll never move again. Such neighbors as I get in with! Seems as though they grow worse and worse."

"Indeed?" replied the caller; "perhaps you take the worst neighbor with you when you move."

"There are a vast number of fidgety, nervous, and eccentric people who see only to expect new disappointments, or to recount their old ones."

fornia. The work was done quickly and thoroughly—because it was transformed into play.

"A habit of cheerfulness, enabling one to transmute apparent misfortunes into real blessings, is a fortune to a young man or young woman just crossing the threshold of active life. There is nothing but ill fortune in a habit of grumbling, which requires no talent, no self-denial, no brains, no character. Grumbling only makes an employee more uncomfortable, and may cause his dismissal. No one would or should wish to make him do grudgingly what so many others would be glad to do in a cheerful spirit. If you dislike your position, complain to no one, least of all to your employer. Fill the place as it was never filled before. Crowd it to overflowing. Make yourself more competent for it. Show that you are abundantly worthy of better things. Express yourself in this manner as freely as you please, for it is the only way that will count."

The author of the delightful little book from which I have been quoting is Orison Swett Marden. The book is full of bright anecdotes. In one, he tells of an elderly widow who looked so stern and

every day preach a sermon long as the streets you walk, a sermon with as many heads as the number of people you meet, and differing from other sermons, in the fact that the longer it is the better."

And that reminds me that I must not make this sermon—a borrowed one—too long.

I wish you all a very Happy Year.
DORA FARNCOMB.

The Beaver Circle.

Bunnie's Christmas.

(By Justus Miller.)

Faster and faster fell the snowflakes in the gray dawn of the December morning. Whirling and twisting they came, mantling the bare earth in a Christmas garment of white. From his cozy box the tame rabbit hopped into his outer pen of wire screen. It was long before breakfast time, but perhaps some instinct of freer things—the call of wild gambols over moonlit gleaming snow—inherited from old-time ancestors, stirred within his furry breast as he stood upright peering through the softly falling crystals, his long ears moving comically, and his silly, blunt nose twitching and snuffing.

Suddenly he shrank back. In the dim light a shadowy form came stealthily toward his pen. Almost indistinguishable was the white rabbit now, amidst the finely sifting snow, but two fierce eyes searched him out easily, holding him trembling and terrified. Just what the nature of the creature was that came prowling and smelling around him thus each morning, he perhaps didn't know, but that the beast had no business there, and that the visits boded him no good, he very well understood, and in abject fear he had received its unwelcome attentions.

Leaping upon the flat screen roof, his persecutor stretched itself at full length and lay silently, keenly watching. Many times before it had done this, and each time its weight resting on the top had chafed the twine binding the bottom screens, until this morning it parted, and an opening appeared just in front of the frightened rabbit. For one moment he hesitated, and then, as his eyes met the green glare of those above, he shot forward, and, with pounding heart, went leaping away through the drifting snow, while behind, a disappointed cat picked himself up and slunk through the back door of the woodshed.

With ears laid low, he ran on and on in a panic, down the lane, across the railroad track, and into the underbrush, until at last he stopped, exhausted by the unaccustomed exertion. His great longing was realized at last—he was free! But born and reared a captive, he knew naught of the lore in which his wild kindred were versed—and he scarcely knew what to do with his newly-acquired liberty.

Rising upon his hind legs he stared stupidly at the unfamiliar objects surrounding him. As daylight increased, however, he was forced to seek concealment, and with uncertain hops proceeded toward a hollow log near by. As it chanced, a young cotton-tail had already chosen this as his place of rest for this particular day, nor did he propose to yield his rights one inch. Now, our little friend was no coward, so far as those of his own kind were concerned, and for a few minutes a fierce fight ensued. Each thumped his foe right merrily with his strong hind legs until the cotton-tail, being the smaller and weaker, was driven forth, and the white rabbit remained the undisputed lord of his small domain.

During the following hours he slumbered comfortably, but as twilight fell, hunger aroused him. Finally he ventured forth in fear and trembling, to find the new life beckoning him with open arms. Behind him lay a great pine forest, ruddy-black against the western sky. The moon just risen in front of him sparkled upon the fleecy snow. Leaping high in the air, the better to view his surroundings, he went racing away towards the distant farm buildings where he knew food abounded.

As he scampered along, a cotton-tail, fresh from feeding, crossed his trail, and, entering a hole in a small tree-trunk near by, settled himself for a quiet nap. By what little things the lives of the furtive kindred of the wild are saved—



Chums.

"Let's see," said a neighbor to a farmer, whose wagon was loaded down with potatoes, "weren't we talking together last August? 'I believe so.' 'At that time you said corn was all burnt up.' 'Yes.' 'And potatoes were baking in the ground.' 'Yes.' 'And that your district could not possibly expect more than half a crop.' 'I remember.' 'Well, here you are with your wagon loaded down. Things didn't turn out so badly after all,—eh?' 'Well, no-o,' said the farmer, as he raked his fingers through his hair, 'but I tell you my geese suffered awfully for want of a mud-hole to paddle in.'"

A farmer was asked by his own son the meaning of the word "optimist." He said he couldn't give the dictionary meaning of it, but that his brother Henry certainly was one. When they were boys and had to hoe corn in the hot sun, instead of grumbling, Henry would say: "Good, Jim! When we get these two rows hoed, and eighteen more, the pore'll be half done." When they were sent to pick stones, one day, Henry said: "Come on, Jim. I know where there's lots of nuggets." And all day the two boys pretended they were gold-seekers in Cali-

forbidding that the children of the neighborhood were terrified when they saw her. One day she went to have her picture taken, and was commanded by the photographer to "look pleasant!" When she succeeded at last, he said: "You look twenty years younger!" When she saw her picture, she found it was possible to look bright and sweet and charming, so she began to cultivate a pleasant expression as a daily habit. When her neighbors asked how she managed to grow so young-looking, she said: "It is almost all done from the inside. You just brighten up inside and feel pleasant."

"There is nothing more catching than a face with a lantern behind it, shining clear through. We have no admiration for a face with a dry smile, meaning no more than the grin of a false face. But a smile written by the hand to God, as an index finger or table of contents to whole volumes of good feeling within, is a benediction. Freshness and geniality of the soul are so subtle and pervading that they will, at some eye or mouth corner, leak out. Set behind your face a feeling of gratitude to God and kindness toward man and you will