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## Sunshine Guild

Conducted by "MARIE"

HEADQUARTERS, 201 BON ACCORD BLOCK, WINNIPEG.

### SPREADING THE GOSPEL OF KINDNESS

"What is the Sunshine Society?" is often asked. "Is it organized to scatter Sunshine everywhere? Is it new in its workings and ideas? Is it an expensive society? Are there any paid officials?"

Some of the ideas of the Sunshine Society are as old as the sun; the plans for carrying on the work alone, are new. The society requires no fees or dues except kind acts and voluntary offerings. There are no paid officials, from the president general to the smallest soldier; all give their strength, thought and prayers to the cause without remuneration.

The object of Sunshine is to give the greatest amount of happiness to the greatest number of people at the smallest possible expense, and as a result of a happy thought, over 300,000 Sunshine members are holding up their hands to the world, saying "Share our surplus joys and sorrows." Because Mrs. Westover Alden, our beloved president-general, had more Christmas gifts than she needed, and realized that there were others who had none, she started the movement to encourage others to pass on from their abundance to the less fortunate.

### GOOD CHEER

Have you had a kindness shown?

Pass it on.

'Twas not given for you alone,

Pass it on.

Let it travel down the years,

Let it wipe another's tears,

Till in Heaven the deed appears,

Pass it on.

This verse is the key-note of the Sunshine Guild work and with thousands chanting it a wave of kindness shall pass around the world. The growth of Sunshine work has been phenomenal. Starting with a single thought it has grown until the members now number many thousands. From the Parent Society branches have sprung up until now they are to be found all over the world; in England, in Alaska, in Australia, in South Africa, in Central America, Canada and the United States.

Sunshine work is no new effort, it is simply Christian living. It is so simple that even little children follow it gladly. One can do little or much; the rich as well as the poor welcome it, and occasionally one needs it as badly as the other. The rich weighed down by cares of property, often shut in by sickness or domestic sorrow, their lives become darker than those who have not all the necessities of life.

One can carry brightness along one's daily path or go into the hospital and to the dark and gloomy places, then by the power of Sunshine conquer the shadow of sorrow and disease. Because you can give little, is really the greatest reason why you should join our ranks. A solitary dime cannot do much but fifty of these silver pieces can do wonders. There are many who can give thoughts and prayers; these are the best gifts of all if they are earnest and self-sacrificing.

The platform of Sunshine work is:—Work for those around you; begin at home, and if each Sunshiner the world over smiles on and serves his neighbor it will be well nigh a state of universal Sunshine. Though Sunshine work is international, the effort is strictly local. Sunshine work is not necessarily active or aggressive; it is not a fight for prominence, but simply like the rays of the sun, reaching everywhere that it is allowed to penetrate. If it finds snow it melts it; if it reaches the home, it brightens it, and its beams can reach the darkest corner and fill it with light.

I have often been asked if Sunshine is a religion. I never answer save in the language of that little verse that expresses our general feelings.

"Have you had a kindness shown?"

Then people press me further; they say, "What denomination do you represent?" I have to plead absolute ignorance. We have whole Sunshine societies in Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, Congregational and Dutch Reform churches. Some Jewish periodicals have a Sunshine Department in every number; the Christian Herald has the same, so how can I say what denomination we represent. And yet it may be said, that, free as it is, from the mechanism of organization, broad as is its range of influence, Sunshine has a creed. If I were to follow the ordinary lines of demarcation, I might say we have a hundred creeds, and they are all really one. Yes, we are Confucians, for we depend on the little courtesies and kindnesses of life to make up the great whole by which one must either stand or fall. We are tender to the aged and gentle to the children. To the sage maxims of the venerable Celestials we only beg leave to add as a suggestion for the removal of most human discomforts, our little watchword "Do something for somebody quickly."

### Happiness in Forgetting Self

We are Hindoos, for our charity takes within its range every living thing and a good Sunshiner would not be cross even to a dumb animal. We are Epicureans as well, for we believe in enjoying life, and we would say the surest way to be happy is to forget yourself. This receipt is an unailing one. But most of all we are Christians, for it was Christ who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

The Sunshine Society does away with all limitations to helpfulness. Its mission of gladness and mercy is as broad and pliable as the needs of humanity are great and diverse. There is no form of discomfort or suffering of mind and body that it has not relieved.

Wealth and poverty have nothing to do with Sunshine, neither have creeds.

The Sunshine Society starts out with the proposition that the poor people are not mostly objects of charity, and that the rich are not always without feeling or sympathy. Also that people who regard themselves as neither rich nor poor, are in an overwhelming majority everywhere. Kindness extends its mystic Free Masonry over all classes.

The sturdy, barefoot boy who helps an aged man to cross a street, has much in common with the wealthy maiden who gathers together the foundlings of the alms-house and serves them with her own hands. He does not know it, nor does she, but both will be stronger for finding it out. The woman on a western farm a dozen miles from a rail road station, rebelling in her scant hours of rest against her isolation, and yearning for a glimpse of the greater world, has much in common with the wealthy woman who languishes in an elaborate city apartment, wondering what she will do next. Each could help the other if only by an exchange of friendly letters.

So far as material Sunshine goes, there are not many lives so devoid of accessories that some are not superfluous. The most unlucky child has some toy that is not used. The most closely scrimped student, has some text book that could be passed on to a boy who has none of that kind, and a farmers' wife may send a jar of jelly that will gladden the heart of some sick one. That the sympathetic soul may be brought into contact with some needy one, is the aim of the society. The old quotation says "Now we see through a glass darkly." It is the theory of Sunshine work that

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some of the smoke can be rubbed off the glass right here, and that heaven may thus be brought a little nearer to many thousand hearts.—MARIE.