

## Family Reading.

### The Sky for You.

O the future sky is the bluest sky,  
With never a cloud in view;  
But the sky to-day is the truest sky,  
And that is the sky for you!

For the work you have to do;  
For the lives that lean on you;  
Or gold, or gray,  
'Tis the sky to-day,  
And that is the sky for you!

There's a bird that sings to the future sky,  
Where the blossoms drip with dew;  
But the bird to-day makes the song of May,  
And that is the song for you!

For the work you have to do,  
For the hearts that cling to you,  
'Tis the sweetest song  
As it thrills along,  
And that is the song for you.

### An Inner Sanctuary.

There is a sanctuary within each one of us into which no minister and no brother can enter without presumption and without profanation. It is the conscience of the man in the sight of God—it is that spirit of the man which no one knoweth but the man—it is the secret shrine of motive and will, of memory and responsibility, and of the life's life. It may be instructed, it may be informed, it may be influenced, it may be moved; but in every aspect save one it is free—no dictation and no direction can intrude within its precincts, for One is its Master, even Christ, and all else, even the ministers of Jesus Christ, are here not lords, but brethren. To establish over the individual conscience a right of inspection, or a right of discipline—to lay down rules for its habitual or periodical self-disclosure—to say without this there is no safeguard for the life, and no security for the death, this is to deny or to obscure the great characteristic of the Gospel; this is to speak a word against the all-sufficiency of the Holy Ghost as the Light and the Guide, the Remembrancer and the Comforter, of Christ's people.

—C. J. Vaughan.

### The Mind a Witness for God.

The more accurately we search into the human mind, the stronger traces we everywhere find of His wisdom who made it. If a discourse on the use of the parts of the body may be considered as a hymn to the Creator, the use of the passions, which are the organs of the mind, cannot be barren of praise to Him, nor unproductive to ourselves of that noble and uncommon union of science and admiration, which a contemplation of the works of infinite wisdom alone can afford to a rational mind. Whilst referring to Him whatever we find of right, or good, or fair, in ourselves, discovering His strength and wisdom even in our own weakness and imperfection; honouring them where we discover them clearly, and adoring their profundity where we are lost in our search, we may be inquisitive without impertinence, and elevated without pride; we may be admitted, if I dare to say so, into the counsels of the Almighty, by a consideration of His works. The elevation of the mind ought to be the principal end of all our studies, which, if they do not in some measure effect, they are of very little service to us.—Burke.

### The Discernment of God's Will.

The great thing after which an intelligent Christian should strive as his daily guide in life, is not a diplomatic reference to the literal text of Scripture, still less to this or that tenet or watchword of a party or system, but a large measure of the spirit which was in Christ—the spirit of love, and of power, and of a sound mind, that he should walk and live not a fettered man, subject to a few forms of words never perhaps examined as to their true sense, but a free man, consulting and judging and determining for him-

self, by the help of God's word,—ready, in case of emergency or difficulty, to act on his own behalf for the good of others, and for God's glory in all, without that hesitation which sacrifices opportunity, without that scrupulousness which is the death of energy and the worst omen for success; that he should be able to fulfil at all the turns and occasions of life that Scripture command, the very secret of all real action and abiding good, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."—H. Alford.

### Private Prayer.

At the base and foundation of all true public worship lies private prayer, secret communion with God. If we know nothing of private prayer, our public devotions are hollow and unreal. We cannot expect to find Christ in them. There are just three stages in this matter of worship. The school of private prayer prepares us for worship at the family altar; and I cannot, can you? conceive of a Christian family without family prayer. And family prayer in its turn prepares us for the worship of the sanctuary. We cannot rise to the last without passing through the two preparatory stages; and the worship of the sanctuary, with its feelings of fellowship and its many noble spiritual impulses, prepares us for the services of the future kingdom, fits us for joining, when our time comes in the rapturous adoration of the multitude before the Throne, who ascribe glory and honour, and blessing and power, to Him that sitteth upon it, for ever and ever.—Rev. Gordon Calthrop.

### The Perception of God.

There is no monotony in living to him who walks even the quietest and tamest paths with open and perceptive eyes. It may be that you think all days alike and grow weary with their sameness, and get none of the stimulus and solemnity which comes from constantly reaching unexpected places and experiences. You cannot think what a different place this world is to a man who goes out every morning into a new world, who is Adam over again every day, who starts each day with the certainty "that he has not passed that way before." The fundamental difference between these two lives lies in the difference of their perception of God. It is God and the discovery of Him in life, and the certainty that He has places for our lives and is doing something with them, that gives us a true deep sense of movement, and lets us feel the power and delight of unknown coming things. Without Him a life must sink into weary monotony, or escape it only by artificial and superficial changes.—Phillips Brooks.

### True Life.

To know that there are some souls, hearts, and minds here and there who trust us, and whom we trust; some who know us, and whom we know; some on whom we can always rely, and who will always rely on us—makes a paradise of this great world. The only solid thing in this universe is love. This makes our life really life. This makes us immortal while we are here. This makes us sure that death is no end, but only a beginning, to us and to all we love. It is only love and insight which show us all we have ever done. Cold sagacity misjudges us; mere sympathy, feeble good nature, soothes, but does not essentially help us. But love illuminated by truth, truth warmed through and through by love,—these perform for us the most blessed thing that one human being can do for another. They show us to ourselves; they show us what we really are, what we have been, may be, can be, shall be.

### Tempers.

In fact, "tempers" are a great trouble in this life. They can give so much and useless pain. The touchy temper, that flies off at a look, making its possessor look silly to every one else, and very uncomfortable to himself, or herself, for even

the gentler sex are sometimes "touchy." Then we sometimes run against an irritable temper, rubbing the wrong way, when we think of good for its possessor. Now and then a violent temper, bursting its tethers, rushes over everything, only to find that it is "much ado about nothing," a cyclone to sweep a door-step. The sullen temper, like a snarling dog; the discontented temper, uncomfortable because it cannot find a reason for its discontent; the gloomy temper, hunting ever for "the dark side;" the wilful temper, like an angry bull loose in the street—what an "uncanny lot!" They paralyze our better ambitions and take the heart out of our prayers. They take all the glow and brightness off our duties, and make hard and repulsive what otherwise might have been a pleasant duty. The worst of it is, we are also guilty, and forget it. All our tempers need to be humbled and washed in deep penitence, and held in steady discipline by a renewed and determined will.

### Our Thought-Greetings.

Our word-greetings are one thing, our thought-greetings are so often quite another thing.

Two men have just met in the street before my window, exchanged a common-place salutation, and passed on. Their greeting was with few words, but apparently cordial. Now I sit here wondering what those men thought, each about the other, as they passed each on his own way. Were the thoughts as cordial as the words they spoke? Sometimes we say, "Good-morning" pleasantly to one whom we meet, and then pass on with an unpleasant thought concerning him. We think of the faults of others so much easier than of their good traits. And would not the world soon be a better world if each Christian would cultivate the habit of thinking, when he comes face to face with one who has never given himself to Christ, "Oh, how I wish you loved God who so loves you, and were trying to live in obedience to His commands?" Can we not train ourselves to easily long for others' improvement as we now so easily sit in judgment against them? "The world would be the better for it."

### Cheerful in Time of Loss.

It is wise, when the trial times are come, to make sure that the soil of our hearts is preoccupied with wholesome growths. It is easier to keep out the winter-growing weeds of envy, discontent and unbelief than it is to kill them after they are rooted. Let the virtues grow and fill the soil! The ministry of love will leave no room for envy. Close fellowship with Christ—the fellowship of His sufferings, as well as of His joy and work—will keep out discontent and doubt. If trouble could strip us of the essential good—the life with God, the partnership with Christ in the upbuilding of His kingdom, the fellowship of saints, the assurance of faith—then there might be room for envy, discontent and unbelief. But trouble commonly turns the attention of the child of God from smaller hopes that he may know how small they really are, and see that his best treasure lies in God. And who shall doubt that this is an exceeding gain, well won at the cost of wintry days! "Why do you say that you have seen me grow in grace?" asked a self-distrustful Christian. And the answer was, "Because I have seen you growing cheerful in the time of loss."

### Exposure to Disease

Does not necessarily mean the contraction of disease, provided the system is in a vigorous condition, with the blood pure and all the organs in healthy action. When in such a condition contagion is readily resisted and the disease germs can find no lodgment. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the best medicine to build up the system because it makes pure, rich blood, and pure blood is the basis of good health. In cold weather it is especially necessary to keep up the health tone because the body is subject to greater exposure and more liable to disease. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the safeguard of health.