

## Family Reading.

### SINGING IN GOD'S ACRE.

(Eugene Field.)

Out yonder in the moonlight, wherein God's Acre lies,  
Go angels walking to and fro, singing the lullabies.  
Their radiant wings are folded, and their eyes are bended low,  
And they sing among the beds whereon the flowers delight to grow.—

'Sleep, oh, sleep!  
The Shepherd guardeth his sheep.  
Fast speedeth the night away,  
Soon cometh the glorious day!  
Sleep, weary ones, while ye may—  
Sleep, oh, sleep!

The flowers within God's Acre see that fair and wondrous sight,  
And hear the angels singing to the sleepers through the night;  
And, lo! throughout the hours of day those gentle flowers prolong  
The music of the angels in that tender slumber-song.—

'Sleep, oh, sleep!  
The Shepherd loveth his sheep.  
He that guardeth his flock the best  
Hath folded them to his loving breast;  
So sleep ye now, and take your rest—  
Sleep, oh, sleep!

From angel and from flower the years have learned that soothing song,  
And with its heavenly music speed the days and nights along;  
So through all time, whose flights the Shepherd's vigils glorify,  
God's Acre slumbereth in the grace of that sweet lullaby.—

'Sleep, oh, sleep!  
The Shepherd loveth his sheep.  
Fast speedeth the night away,  
Soon cometh the glorious day;  
Sleep, weary ones, while ye may—  
Sleep, oh, sleep!

### IRRADIATION OF LIGHT.

I have read lately that it is a curious fact that if the same letters of the same size precisely are painted on two boards, the one white on a black ground, and the other black on a white ground, that the white letters will appear larger and be read at a greater distance than the black. This is owing to what is called the irradiation of light. It depends on this, that the impression made on the bottom of the eye by bright objects extends a little wider than the actual portion of the organ struck by the light, and invading the space occupied by the darker objects, makes the brighter appear larger than they really are. I have heard that in Germany people are thinking of printing white letters on black paper, both in books and newspapers, for general reading, with a view to saving the eyes of the public.

#### More

Curative power is contained in Hood's Sarsaparilla than in any other similar preparation. It costs the proprietor and manufacturer more. It costs the jobber more and it is worth more to the consumer. More skill is required in its preparation and it combines more remedial qualities than any other medicine. Consequently it has a record of more cures and its sales are more than those of any other preparation. Hood's Sarsaparilla is the best medicine to buy because it is an honest medicine and thousands of testimonials prove that it does actually and permanently cure disease.

### ALWAYS CHEERFUL.

It was said of a woman in an Eastern village, who lived to the great age of one hundred and four years, that she was "always cheerful." If this was true, she will live for years to come in the regard of those who knew her on earth. There is no estimating the value of a cheerful spirit. The bright, smiling, cheery boy, with a ringing laugh and voice, is nothing more nor less than a public benefactor. These "sunshiny" boys and girls! How blessed it is to know them! They are real joy-makers. I fully agree with the wise man, who, when asked how to overcome temptation, replied: "Cheerfulness is the first thing, cheerfulness is the second, and cheerfulness is the third." It is the moody and dejected man who falls an easy victim to temptation of every kind. Constant brooding and fretfulness will produce a disease of mind far worse than any disease of the body can be. Cultivate the habit of cheerfulness if you want to give to your own life and to the world your full proportion of joyousness.

### RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GIFTED.

By Mary F. Butts.

Every unusual gift entails an unusual responsibility. "What hast thou done with the talents that I gave thee?" Who of us will be able to meet this startling question? Not the laggard who wastes his time; not the doubter who undervalues his gift; not he who is vain of the power God gave, and looks to others to serve him because he is better than they; not the lover of ease, nor he who cares not for the needs of his fellow-men. "I would like to be a great writer, a great speaker, a greater singer," is the thought of the young man and woman. They dream of the supposed privileges of the successful individual; of the homage, the love, the admiration that he receives; they think of his freedom from the toil, the monotony, the service of humbler lives, and long discontentedly to be in the place of him who is singled out for honour and preferment. But he who walks in a high place needs more than any other to have great faith, great steadfastness, great sense of responsibility to God. The possessor of a great gift is like one who is sent to carry messages and supplies across dangerous passes to a helpless multitude. How careful must every step be lest he jeopardize that which means life to his fellow-men! No idle days, no feasting and jollity for him. As soon as the needful rest is taken he must be up and away. Not too much taken up may he be with the beauty of the country through which he journeys, lest he loiter by the way while his brethren faint for that with which he has been intrusted. If he would hear the "well done" from the Master he must match his efforts to the greatness of his delegated power. Therefore do not long for great gifts, you who are starting in life. Desire rather industry and faithfulness, belief in God's help, and the ability to keep firm hold of Him. So shall the little gift grow, and character shall be so strengthened that if great things are required of you, you may not fail in their fulfilment.

### LONELINESS.

We are social beings. Much of the happiness that we enjoy in this world comes from our mutual sympathy as relatives and friends. And yet we are all conscious of experiences so deep, so intensely personal that we can not share them with any, even our nearest and dearest. This feeling of solitude in the midst of society is stated by Solomon, in his terse and graphic style, in Prov. xiv. 10:—"The heart knoweth his own bitterness, and a stranger doth not intermed-

dle with his joy." In studying this passage lately I found an exposition so rich in practical suggestiveness that I am impelled to copy it for the benefit of my readers:

Thomas Chalmers says: "Every man we meet carries in the unperceived solitude of his bosom a little world of his own, and we are just as blind and insensible about his engrossing objects as he is about ours. Did we suffer this fact to have its full weight upon us it might make us more candid and more considerate of others; abate the monopolizing selfishness of our nature; soften the malignity that comes out of those envious contemplations that we are apt to cast on the fancied ease and prosperity that are around us. It should reconcile every man to his own lot, and dispose him to bear with thankfulness his own burden. And we should safely conclude that throughout all conceivable varieties of human condition there are trials which can neither be adequately told on the one side, nor fully understood on the other; that the ways of God to man are as equal in this as in every department of His administration, and that, go to whatever quarter of human experience we may, we shall find that He has provided enough to exercise the patience, and to accomplish the purposes of a wise and salutary discipline upon all His children."

### QUOTING SCRIPTURE.

Some Christians have an idea that they are on very safe ground if they can only quote plenty of Scripture in support of some favourite doctrine or theory. But they seem to be ignorant of the fact that simply quoting passages of Scripture, having some sort of reference to their subject, is by no means a Divine defence of it. Some very absurd uses of Scripture have been made by those who have set out to prove a practice or demonstrate a theory. But, much worse, the true meanings of God's words have often been abused and dissipated by such a course. One can as truly make God a liar by wrongly quoting His word as he can by flatly misrepresenting His promises.

### A SWEET CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Unless our religion has sweetened us to a very considerable extent—checked us in the moments of our irritation and weakness, enabled us to meet misfortune and in a measure overcome it, developed within us the virtues of patience and long-suffering, making us tender and charitable in our judgments of others, and generally diffusing about us an atmosphere which is genial and winsome—whatever else we may have gained, one thing is sure: religion is not having its perfect work in us; and, even though our Christian life is clear and positive, it is only as a gnarled and twisted apple-tree which bears no fruit, only as a prickly bush which bears no roses, and the very thing which of all others we should have is the very thing in which we are most deficient. A Christian life without sweetness is a lamp without light, salt without savour.

—Life is not the mere living. It is worship—it is the surrender of the soul to God, and the power to see the face of God; and it is service—it is to feel that when we die, whether praised or blamed, whether honoured or ignored, whether wealthy or destitute—we have done something to make the world we came to better and happier—we have tried to cast upon the waters some seed which, long after we are dead, may still bring forth its flowers of Paradise. The seed dies, but the harvest lives. Sacrifice is always fruitful, and there is nothing fruitful else. \* \* Out of the suffering comes the serious mind; out of the salvation, the grateful heart; out of the endurance, the fortitude; out of the love, joy.