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All of us, being sentimental by nature, like to cling to keepsakes. More often than not, the things we save have no material value, and in the eyes of others it may seem rather foolish to preserve them.

In your case, you probably have one or several letters that you wouldn't think of parting with, plus several greeting cards, extra special clippings and treasured photographs.

Instinctively, we hold onto tangible reminders of the past, wishing wistfully for small portions of our life that we would like to live over but never can.

Sometimes it is pride alone that makes us harbor a memento through the years. It bolsters us for the belittling realities of today to have a reminder at hand that once we won a debating contest, scored an important touchdown, led the grand march at the Junior-Senior prom, or were elected president of a club.

Preserving newspaper clippings is a universal habit. Next to hearing one's own voice, few things intrigue a completely normal mortal more than seeing his or her name in print.

We are reminded of what the late O. O. McIntyre—best of the New York columnists—once said. "Anyone," wrote McIntyre, "who doesn't appreciate a favorable mention in a reputable newspaper is either a fool or a liar."

There must, we'll admit, be exceptions, but they are probably quite rare. Of course, no one admires the publicity seeker who goes overboard about breaking into print, but there's nothing woefully wrong about a reasonable appreciation of public notice.

Today we want to share with you a keepsake that was passed along to us years ago by Mrs. J. R. Alexander.

Entitled A Prayer of The Aged, it was found among the belongings of her mother, Mrs. Richhilda Hardison, when she died. Mrs. Hardison, who lived at Arapahoe, may not have composed the prayer—that we don't know—but it was penned in her handwriting as advancing years descended upon her.

No matter who wrote it, the prayer is beautiful and will find a responsive chord in the hearts of those who dwell in the sunset years. Read it, and you'll understand why:

"Oh most merciful God, cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not if my strength faileth. May my hoary head be found in righteousness.

Preserve my mind from dotage and imbecility, and my body from protracted disease and excruciating pain. Deliver me from despondency in my declining years, and enable me to bear with patience whatever may be Thy holy will.

I humbly ask that my reason may be continued to the last, and that I may be so comforted and supported that I may leave my testimony in favor of the reality of religion and of Thy faithfulness in fulfilling Thy

New Bern-Craven County Public Library



Nature's world is a child's world,
And they hold it in their hands;
A wondrous realm beyond compare,
That no grown up understands.
So much to touch, so much to see,
From dawn until early dark;
Fragile as a butterfly's wing,
And gay as the song of a lark.
—Photo by Theodore Baxter.