# Family Mircle.

#### **OLARIBEL'S PRAYERS.**

SY LYNDE PALMER.

The day with cold, gray feet clung shivering to the hills. While o'er the valley still night's rain

fringed cartains fell; But waking Blue Eyes smiled. "Tis ever a God wills;

He knoweth best, and be it rain or shine, 'ti

Praise God !" cried always little Claritel.

Then sank she on her knoes, with eager, lifted hands

Her rosy lips made haste some dear reques to tell-"Oh, Father! smile, and save this fairest o

all lands, And make her free, whatever hearts rebel.

Amen! Praise God !" cried little Claribel.

"And, Father," still arose another pleading

prayer, "Oh save my brother, in the rain of shot and shell

Let not the death-bolt, with its horrid, stream ing hair,

drum times these are !"

Agnes.

"You forget, dear, how many brave,

heroic souls have fled on the battle-field

within the last few days," said Miss

"Oh, I don't mean that-I know

these are grand days for men, but what

can a little school-girl do? I can't

even make a sacrifice, for I have no

friends, that is, no very near relatives

in the army. No, I must be content

to plod on, in the same old way, to the

remember the day that we went to look

for those flowers in the Red Woods.

great and glorious to do or achieve, you

often forget the good and sweet duties

"Miss Agnes," called Stella from the

hall, "here's a poor little girl wants to

see you !" As Miss Agnes left the

room, Alice remained a little while in

the same position, thinking of what her

friend had said, but the result of her

thoughts was not very satisfactory.

They resolved themselves into some-

Cameron to talk, and very casy for her

to do good and to be good. But it's

very different with Alice Sprague.

Heigho! I'd like to be a heroine."

took but little notice of them.

her's, and you go to her."

Don't tease me, Linda.'

sently a servant came in, saying :

"'The duty that lies nearest.' Alice,

She knew what Miss Agnes meant,

teacher had seen her impatient conduct

towards Linda. With a quieter step

did you not forget it just now ?"

rather have you.'

miss it."

you !''

room.

thing like this:

that are lying close at your feet."

very end of the chapter."

Dash light from those sweet eyes I love s well

Amen ! Praise God !" wept little Claribel.

"But, Father, grant that when the glorious fight is done,

And up the crimson sky the shouts of free men swell,

Grant that there be no nobler victor 'neath th

Than he whose golden hair I love so well. Amen! Praise God !" cried little Claribel.

When gray and dreary day shook hands with grayer night, The heavy air was thrilled with clangor of s

bell. "Ob, shout!" the berald cried, his worn eyes

brimmed with light; "'Tis victory! Oh, what glor new

" Praise God ! He heard my prayer," cried Claribel.

"But pray you soldier, was my brother in the fight.

Aud in the fiery rain ? Oh ! fought he brav and well? "Dear child," the herald cried, "there wa

no braver sight Then his young form, so grand 'mid show and shell." sides, and little Linda lost her shoes in

" Praise God I" eried trembling little Clari-

"And rides he now with victor's plumes of While trumpets' golden throats his coming

steps forstell ?" The herald dropped a tear. "Dear child," he softly said.

brother ever more with conquerors "Thy shall dwell." " Praise God ! He heard my prayer," cried

Claribel. "With victors wearing crowns, and bearing

palms," he said. A show of sudden fear upon the rose lips

"Oh! sweetest herald, say my brother lives," she plead. " Dear child, he walks with angels, who

strength excel, Praise God, who gave this glory, Claribel.'

The cold, gray day died sobbing on the weary While bitter mourning on the night wind

rose and fell. "Oh, child," the berald wept, "'tis as the doar Lord wills: He knoweth best, and, be it life or death,

tis well. "Amen! Praise God 1" sobbed little Claribel.

THE CHASTENING ROD.

"Thy way is in the see, and Thy path in the great ators, and Thy foosileps are not known."-Ps. lxxvii.

lear Miss Agnes, don't take it away; | heart as she thought of the many hours her poor mother spent there in that one light the gas," pleaded Alice. Miss Agnes smiled, but nevertheless room, and of how little she did to lighten drew the book quite away and laid it them. Bye and bye perhaps she would on the table Then seating herself by have no mother. It flashed on her as Alice, she tenderly put her arm around | she came in that her mother was paler | her waist and drew her head down so and thinner and weaker lately than she

that it rested on her shoulder. "What used to be. have you been reading about, darling?" "Mother," she said, "Kate said you

"Oh, about Margaret Wilson, the wanted me.' "Yes, daughter, I was looking over fair young girl who was tied to a stake came in, and left there for the waves to of them in your chaage, and some of creep slowly up, with their cruel, cold | them I wish you to burn. This package fingers, to kill her by degrees, and, is for you to read bye and bye. They Miss Agnes, she could have had her life | are journals of a happy girlhood, but, if she would have denied her religion, Alice, I don't wan't you to imitate all but she was 'faithful unto death.' Miss my youthful life, for often I was a Agnes, it was worth while to be a dreamer, not a doer. My child, I want Christian in those days-the days of you to learn to do whatever your hand the brave old martyrs. What hum- finds to do, with your might.

Life is real—life is earnest, And the grave is not its goal, Dust thou art, to dust returnest, Was not spoken of the soul."

"Mother, has Miss Agnes been talk ing to you about me?" said Alice. "No, my love. Why?"

"Because she says that dreaming is my besetting sin, and was talking to me of that very thing."

"Here is a ring, Alice, made of my sister's hair; put it on your finger, dear. You were named for her, Alice Fanning. It is a record to me of my own early the gentlemen at the wedding party of ward. "My dear," said Miss Agnes, "you waywardness, for, my darling, while I which we were speaking whose flushed was looking for some far away great faces and excited manner gave sad evideed to do, poor Alice was slowly dying We hunted far and near for one variety, beside me, and I never knew it, till, tired ourselves with ranging over the when too late, I wakened to find that I men left the house to obtain stimulants? hills and climbing the steep mountain | had no sister."

Alice put the ring of golden hair on the marsh, and when we came back, her finger. A big tcar fell on it, a worn out with our efforts, we found a pledge that she would strive to be more cluster of the very flowers, fair and thoughtful hereafter. When her mo- of, if we would counteract its evil white and fragrant, nestling under a ther had finished and sent her away, she results. The young men to whom you broad leaf, in the very spot we started went down again to the library, and from. So it is with you. Alice, I am though the tempting book was full in afraid that in the effort after something view, she passed it by saying :

your hymn now." M. E. M.

From a Lady visiting Philadelphia, during the Winter of 1863, to her young friend in the Country.

#### NO. VIII.

DEAR EDITH :--- My sincere thanks for that timely letter. I feel that my letters are appreciated, when I receive two or three in exchange for one. I received an invitation to a wedding, a day or two know that I mentioned it. Very soon after Uncle James came to this city to reside, Mrs. D- called on Aunt Helen, and by her kind attention made Aunt feel almost at home in a strange city. Our invitation was to the wedding of her

to the company with flushed faces and their breath giving sad evidence against them. Certainly they did not leave the house to procure strong drink, and then return to the company of ladies. When I receive an explanation of their conduct you shall hear it.

We have had some damp and rainy days lately, which fact accounts for my said more than I intended, as Mr. B-, after greeting us, excused himself for thwarting my plans in such an unceremonious manner. But I was satisfied with the change, as, since I was at Miss thoughts. Mr. B- regretted that he persons and the opinions I formed of the favorable comments that I could, fact. But now the mystery was in a

dence against them. And in my judg-

brought into the light and freely spoken rious expense. refer did not leave the house to obtain

pose. A custom that has been some and silver dust.\* "Come, Linda, 1'll help you with time in maturing, has now reached a present day. When I say this, Miss Evans, I do not mean that such a resort is always found in the arrangements for a large party, as there are a few whose strict principles on the subject of temperance would not permit such an abuse

> men who, with the previous knowledge of the fact, accept their invitations." But I have written a long letter, and

> > Truly yours, -0.0----

EXTRAVAGANCE OF OUR PEOPLE. The following is from an able exhibit tion of the effect of the war upon the course of business and the scale of living, especially in New York city, in the July number of Harper's Monthly :

The old proverb says : "That which comes easy goes easy." The suddenly enriched contractors, speculators and stock jobbers illustrate its truth. They unusual mode of spending time, namely, are spending money with a profusion reading; that is, unusual since I came to never before witnessed in our country, this city. Aunt Helen and I were in at no time remarkable for its frugality. on the sands, in a place where the sea these letters, and I want to give some the library during one of these evenings, Our great houses are not big enough for both occupied with an interesting book, them; they pull them down and build when, to my surprise, the waiter ushered greater. They, like the proud and wanton Caligula, construct stables of marble at a fabulous cost, in which their ate to your circumstances, and would be horses are stabled (some, doubtless, to uncomfortable by an effort on your part be fed on gilded oats), with a luxury opulent of our fellow-citizons. Even the manure neaps lie upon more re-D-'s wedding, annoying questions have splendent floors than are swept by the been recurring, thereby disturbing my silken trains of our proudest dames. So magnificent are these structures that had not been able to attend, having had | their proprietors have not hesitated to a previous engagement, and then made assemble within them "the best society" some inquiries as to the number of they could command of fine gentlemen and finer ladies, to hold a carnival of weddings in Philadelphia. I made all pleasure. The playing of Comedies, it and lead them to imagine the addition to is said, was a part of the programme, as and then mentioned that one fact threw ing pleasure in a stable, was not in itself magnified. A calm and quiet way of if the presence of the beau monde, seek- is; your own cares, too, will be greatly a shadow around that occasion for me. a sufficiently sorry fazee. What was I had observed more than once while acted we know not; but we can testify and of doing the work of each day, be it attending parties in this city, a marked that "High Life Below Stairs" was the change in the deportment of some of ebief performance. The very horses the young gentlemen as the evening must have neighed in applause of the advanced, and had been surprised at the appropriateness of the piece, and lifelike action of the players. A horsemeasure solved, as there were some of laugh was surely the well-merited re-

> than have been hitherto imported. No ment they were unfitted for the society foreign laxury, even at the present of ladies. Could it be that these young enormous prices, is too dear for their oxorbitant desires and swollen pockets.

> Mr. B- replied promptly: "Miss The importations of the country have Evans, you have touched upon a pain- arisen to the large amount of thirty ful subject; one that is tacitly avoided millions of dollars a month, chiefly to by most persons, yet one that must be satisfy the increased appetite for laxu-

The ordinary sources of expenditure seem to have been exhausted, and these Adverse and inconvenient circumstances ingenious prodigals have invented new will cluster together. At those times the liquors they preferred; they merely with diamonds of the first water, and ment and irritability. If others look on went to the room set apart for this pur- the women powder their hair with gold

As excess, overflowing the natural point that domands prompt action. The channels of enjoyment, is always sure whole system of our large social gather- to take an irregular and perverted ings is wrong, unmistakably so. This course for the indulgence of its unchockone is the most repulsive, and yet is ed vagaries, it is not surprising to find one of the established usages of the the boundless extravagance of the times assuming forms at variance with propriety and taste. Paris, provoked to excessive folly and wild extravagance oy an imperial court willing to enervaid the people by debauchery that they may become too languid for resistance to tyranny, has, among other forms of dis. | companies of their own and the other sex of hospitality. And these families are sipation, invented a grotesque kind of to pass away their evenings. What a consequently stigmatized as mean and fancy ball. In this the guests represent store of unhappiness for themselves and "It's all very well for Miss Agnes before I sent my last letter, and do not narrow in their views, by the young things instead of persons. For example, others are they laying up for the coming one presents herself as a kitchen, with time, when real duties and high responher person hung all over with pots and sibilities shall be thoughtlessly assumed ! kettles, wearing a saucepan for a hel- They are skilled in no domestic duty-But I have written a long letter, and must close with my thanks for your last innumber of home incidents. of a kitchen wench with probably a dish What will they be as wives and mothers of a kitchen wench with probably a other of a what will they be as introd children, and clout hanging to her tail. Another of a Alas, for the husbands and children, and more sentimental turn is a flower garden, festooned with roses and bearing a alas for themselves! Who can wonder if spade and rake. A third is a pack of domestic unhappiness or domestic ruin playing-cards, bedizened all over with follow? clubs, diamonds, and hearts, and so on It is one of the world's oldest maxims, with every possible transformation of that idleness is the nursing mother of the human spiritual being (supposed to) all evil and wretchedness. How sadly be rational) into the senseless; material strange is it that so many parents— This absurdity has been imported by bring up their children in dainty idleness. our wealthy New Yorkers, together They are but sowing the wind to reap winter, during which high carnival was held by our nouveaux riches, a dame who has traveled, and had the honor of faint- | ELEVATION OF THE WORKING GLASSES ing in the arms, it is said, of Imperial tion of imperial folly, got up one of these grotesque fancy balls. She herself appeared on the occasion as music, and bore upon her head an illuminated them to realize; for, next to the salvalyre supplied with genuine gas, from a tion of their souls; I certainly say that reservoir and fixtures concealed some the object of my fondest aspirations is where under her clothes. "We don't the moral and intellectual, and, as a sure feel this war," they say. We believe them. Nothing, we fear, while they are stupefying themselves in this whirl of absurd folly would bring them to their senses short of a shower of Greek fire. If this extravagance and wantonness were confined to the fools of fortune we might leave them to the exhaustion that must come from this waste of means and perversion of the faculties of mind and vance you the money for the whole of body. Their ruin would be hardly felt or regretted. But, unfortunately, our people are so imitative that when one simpleton, provided he be rich, leads the way, all follow. Every man and woman thinks he must do as his wealthy neighbor does. The consequence is already shown in the general prevalence ciple carried out in business. The world of extravagance and dissipation. The the dealer in carpets and cabinet-ware and the gilded establishments of the restaurateur were never so crowded. The tradesman hardly shows any but bis most expensive wares, which his greedy customer snatches up without solicitation. Thus camel's-hair shawls, at fitteen bundred dollars or more, go off briskly at that price; rivers of dia monds (riviere de diamants) flow uncheck ed by any regard for cost. Aubusson and tape-try carpets of fabulous expense are bought unhesitatingly and reckless ly trod upon, and dinners are eaten and wine drunk at Delmonico's and the Maison Doree at a price per head, in a single sitting, which would support a soldier and his family for a good portion of the year. Who knows but that our wives and daughters may all take to

ver dust at fifteen dollars per head, or transforming themselves into gas fixuzes? What is to hinder our young dandies of the counting-house and shop -for haven't they an old fool of the Stock Exchange to show them the example-from buttoning their waistcoats with diamonds?

## ADVICE TO HOUSEKEEPERS.

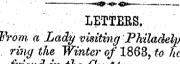
If you are subject to uninvited company, and your means do not allow you to set before your guests as good a table as they keep at home, do not distress yourself or them with apologies. If they are real friends, they will cheerfully sit down with you to such a table as is approprito provide a better one than you can never hitherto indulged in by the most afford. If your resources are ample, live in such a way that an unexposted visitor shall eccasion no difference. The less alteration made in family arrangements on account of visitors, the happier for them as well as you.

Never treat the subject of having company as if it were a great affair. Your deing this will excite your domestics, their usual work much greater than it more or less, equalizes the pressure of care and prevents it becoming oppressive. Be composed when accidents happen to your furniture. The most careful hand is sometimes unsteady. Angry words will not mend broken glass, or These Sybarites of "shoddy" buy finer china, but they will teach your domestics furniture than was ever bought before, to conceal such occurrences from you, and and dress in costlier cloths and silks the only explanation given you will be that they came apart. Encourage every one whom you employ to come immediately and tell you, when they have been so unfortunate as to break or injure anything belonging to you. The cases are very rare, in which it is best to deduct the value from their wages.

In the best regulated families there will be some laborious, perplexing days. the dark side, find something cheering to say; if they fret, sympathize in their share of the trial, while you set them the example of bearing your part in it well.

### IDLE GIRLS.

The number of idle, useless girls in all of our large cities seems to be steadily increasing. They lounge or sleep through their mornings, parade the streets during the afternoons, and assemble in frivolous the whirlwind.



I asked for grace to lift me high Above the world's depressing cares; God sent me scrrows; --- with a sigh I said, He has not heard my prayers.

I ask'd for light, that I might see My path along life's thorny road : But clouds and darkness shadow'd me, When I expected light from God.

I ask'd for peace, that I might rest. To think my sacred duties o'er; When lo! such horrors fill'd my breast As I had never felt before.

And oh, I cried, can this be prayer, Whose plaints the steadfast mountains move Can this be heaven's prevailing care,-And, O my God, is this thy love?

But soon I found that sorrow, worn As Duty's garment, strength supplies; And out of darkness, meekly borne, Unto the righteous light doth rise.

And soon I found that fears, which stirred My startled soul God's will to do, On me more real peace conferr'd Than in life's calm I ever knew.

Then, Lord, in Thy mysterious ways, Lead my dependent spirit on ; And whensee'er it kneels and prays, Let it but say,..." Thy will be done."

Let its one thought, one hope, one prayer, Thine image seek Thy glory see; Let every other grief and care, Be left confidingly to Thee ! J. S. B. MONSELL.

#### THE DUTY THAT LIES NEAREST.

Alice Sprague sat in the shadow of the crimson curtains, that swept from ceiling to floor in her father's library. The light was gradually fading, and she had left her seat by the table to gather herself up into the great bay window, so that she might not relinquish her book until it was absolutely impossible to see. Her face was flushed with its she passed Miss Agnes, a slip of paper eager interest, her lips were slightly parted, and her bosom heaved with emotion, for she was reading of the her teacher: Covenanters of Scotland, of their struggles and sufferings, and the martyr page had awakened the enthusiastic girl to a life-like realization of the old heroic and blushed as she thought that her days. Straining hereyes over the page, she did not hear a light foot on the carpet, and was not evon roused when than usual, she entered her mother's a sweet voice called her name.

"Alice! Alice!" At last the new book away from the reader's reluctant | pale face was almost as white as the hands.

please let me keep it. It isn't dark yet; very plainly. Alice felt a sadness at when these young gentlemen returned delighted.

Alice, Stella and Linda Sprague were eldest daughter. I felt some interest in almost constantly under the care of the fact as it was my first invitation to Miss Cameron, their governess. Their a wedding in this city. mother was a confirmed invalid, and

You will not expect details regarding spent her days in alternating from her the supper, wines, &c. ; let me include all sofa to her easy chair, and from thence by saying that ample means and good taste did all that could be done to make to bed. She was seldom able to leave the event one to be remembered. In her chamber, and could not devote to passing down from the ladies' rooms, I her little girls that maternal care and observed two large rooms that were culture that they needed. Mr. Sprague thrown open for gentlemen, judging was a merchant in large and prosperous from the hats and coats that partly filled business; he went early to his countingone. The other room was brilliantly lighted, and well furnished with arm room, and came from thence with a chairs, just the place to have a pleasant preoccupied face and a mind full of care. So that his children were neatly dressed door just as I was taking a survey; but for part of the cans was received, the and lady-like in their manners, and did not before I had noticed a variety of not worry him with too much noise, he drinking glasses arranged on the tables. The wedding party was a large one and

Uncle James introduced one or two gen-"Alice," said little Linda, when tea tlemen to me, whom he knew well. Mrs. was over, "I wish you'd help me learn D- also brought one up and presented him as if he was really valuable. I re-gret to say that I could not respond to my hymn. It's so hard, and my Sabbath school teacher don't like me to the imperial style in which he addressed your friend. I tried after a while to "Oh, run away, Linda; I'm busy. rouse him by a touch of sarcasm, but the Miss Agues is with Stella, teaching her arrows fell harmlessly; self conceit rendered him invulnerable. Finally, I re-"But, Alice," pleaded Linda, "I'd sorted to stratagem to free myself from such tiresome company. Seeing Aunt Helen at the other end of the room, I "I tell you I'm engaged just now. asked Mr. T- to cross the room with the contract, which no doubt you can me, and on my way contrived to lose him for a minute, when, much to my relief A bell rang from up stairs, and prehe met with a young lady who seemed pleased to see him. In a few minutes "Miss Alice, your mamma wants he came to excuse himself, when I was puzzled how to use words that would not betray my gratitude for the burden my needs just such examples to convince it shops of the dry goods man, the jeweler, Rather slowly Alice put down her work, and rose to leave the parlor. As of the truth of religion. gratified to meet a gentleman of a different class with whom I was much pleased. was put into her hand. On it she read Mr. K- conversed well, and we had these words, pencilled there in haste by

a literary talk that I really enjoyed. I found that Mr. K- knew Mr. Bwell, and by one or two judicious queries I elicited information that confirmed me in my high estimation of Mr. B-'s character.

I will mention a fact here that surprised me, and proves that I am not of the gentlemen disappeared for a short lief to a person engaged in writing or time. I do not know that I should have even reading, on looking up, not to have Mrs. Sprague was lying on the sofa noticed their absence, if my suspicions his line of vision cut off by an odious comer came gently up and drew the looking over some old letters. Her had not been aroused. Most of them white wall, but to find his soul escaping.

sok away from the readers reluctant part and is showed the wandering blue veins that I remembered them. It was late delighted.

### A NOBLE BUSINESS MAN.

A friend relates for the boys and girls of the American Agriculturist, the following incident of a gentleman well known in the United States, for his useful talents and his large business operations. but whose name we are not permitted to | thing. give. During the present war he made a contract with a mechanic to supply him with a large quantity of tin cans. Not long after this tin rose so much that the contractor must lose money by completing the work at the price agreed upon. However, he said nothing, but went on employer called upon him, and said, "I understand you are losing money on this job." "Yes," replied the contractor, "but I can stand it; a contract is a contract you know." "How much will you lose ?" asked the gentleman. "Oh, no matter," was the reply, "I don't complain, and you ought not to." "But I insist upon knowing." "Well, since you desire it, I shall lose so much per hun-dred," naming the amount. "Well, sir," said the noble-hearted man, "you must not lose this, it would not be right, Ishall add the amount to your bill, and as the price of material may still rise, I will adnow use to advantage." The difference thus paid, to which the contractor laid no claim, amounted to five hundred dollars. That was something more than business honesty, it was Christian prin-

THE ADVANTAGES OF PICTURES.

A, room with pictures, and a room without pictures, differ about as much as a room with windows and a room without windows. Nothing is more melancholy, particularly to a person who has to pass much time in his room, than bleak walls and nothing on them, for pictures are loop-holes of escape for perfectly conversant in the customs of the soul, leading to other scenes and large cities. During the evening some spheres. It is such an inexpressible re-

"I have no sympathy whatever with those who would grudge our workmen and our common people, the very highest acquisition which their taste, or their time, or their inclinations, would lead the object of my fondest aspirations is consequence of this the economical, advancement of the working classes-the one object which, of others in the wide range of political speculation, is the one which should be the dearest to the heart of every philanthropist and every true patriot."-Chalmers.

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were personally strangers to me, and it as it were, through the frame of an ex-