

For the Sunday School Advocate.

ASKING A BLESSING.

In the village of Ellison, in the western part of Illinois, lived a Methodist minister who was often seen with a little flaxen-haired boy of four summers hanging to his finger or climbing about his knee. Benny was a quiet boy, and seldom spoke unless spoken to. He was a good-humored, good-natured little fellow, and loved by all who knew him.

One afternoon, his parents leaving home, Benny was left with one of the neighbors. Tea-time came, and he was placed at the table. The lady of the house poured out the tea, and was just in the act of passing it, when Benny said, very peremptorily:

"Wait! you never said it!"

"Said what?" asked the lady, much surprised.

"You never said it," replied he, "and I'll not eat a mouthful till you do say it."

"I am not well and I can't," said the lady.

Looking very earnestly at another lady who was present, Benny said, "Can't you say it?"

The lady shook her head. He then turned to the daughter of the lady of the house and said, "Mary, can't you say it?"

Mary shook her head also, and said, "Benny, can't you?"

"I can't think of it all, but I will say what I can," replied he.

The little fellow, with much more dignity than most divines of the present day assume, with hands clasped and eyes raised heavenward, commenced:

"Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep; if I should—" he forgot the remainder, and turning his plate over said, "I can't think of the rest."

This was enough. The little prayer that little Benny sent up to the dispenser of all good was echoed through heaven.

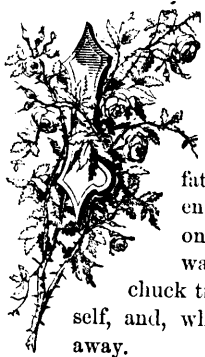
I think the brightest angels that stand around the courts of glory smiled approval of that simple and childlike though not quite appropriate prayer.

When Brother McCormick preaches, if Benny is in the house he sits quietly in the pulpit during the sermon.

B. A. Cox.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

A WOODCHUCK THAT WEIGHED EIGHTY POUNDS.



"DO not believe it," I think I hear the corporal say.

Well, wait, Mr. Corporal, and hear my story. Edwin and Whittie are two of my good Sabbath-school scholars. Their father is my assistant superintendent. He sent them the other day on the hill to plow. On their way Edwin went to see the woodchuck trap, and got caught in it himself, and, what was worse, could not get away.

Meanwhile, his younger brother, Whittie, had gone on with the oxen; but finding that Edwin did not come, went back, and found him calling for help.

"Why were you so long in getting over to the field?" asked their father at noon.

"Why," answered Whittie, "we caught a woodchuck that weighed eighty pounds!"

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT.

THE WORD "MAIDEN."

HERE is a long sentence of thirty-two words which some ingenious child has got up with just the letters found in the word *maiden*: Ida, a maiden, a mean man named Ned Dean, and Media, a mad dame, made me mend a die and a dime, and mind a mine in a dim den in Maine.



CHRIST AND THE LITTLE ONES.

BY JULIA GILL.

"THE Master has come over Jordan;"

Said Hannah, the mother, one day;

"He is healing the people who throng him

With a touch of his finger, they say;

"And now I shall carry the children,

Little Rachel, and Samuel, and John,

And the youngest—the baby Esther,

For the Lord to look upon."

The father looked at her kindly,

But he shook his head and smiled,

"Now who but a doating mother

Would think of a thing so wild?

"If the children were tortured by demons,

Or dying of fever, 'twere well;

Or had they the taint of the leper,

Like many in Israel."

"Now, do not hinder me, Nathan,

I feel such a burden of care;

If I carry it to the Master,

Perhaps I shall leave it there.

"If he lay his hand on the children,

My heart will be lighter, I know,

For a blessing for ever and ever

Will follow them as they go."

So, over the hills of Jordan,

Along by the vine-rows green,

With Esther asleep on her bosom,

And Rachel her brothers between,

'Mong the people who hung on his teaching,

Or waited his touch and his word,

Through the rout of proud Pharisees, listening,

She pressed to the feet of the Lord.

"Now, why should'st thou hinder the Master,"

Said Peter, "with children like these?

See'st not how, from morning till evening,

He teacheth, and healeth disease?"

Then Christ said, "Forbid not the children;

Permit them to come unto me!"

And he took in his arms little Esther,

And Rachel he set on his knee.

And the heavy heart of the mother

Was lifted all earth care above,

As he laid his hand on the brothers,

And blessed them with tenderest love.

THE RHINOCEROS'S FRIEND.

THE rhinoceros's best friend and the rhinoceros hunter's most tiresome enemy is a little bird, the *Buphaga Africana*, vulgarly known as the rhinoceros bird. It constantly attends on the huge beast, feeding on the ticks that infest its hide, the bird's long claws and elastic tail enabling it to hold fast to whatever portion of the animal it fancies. If it rendered the rhinoceros no further service than ridding him of these biting pests it would deserve his gratitude. But, in addition, it does him the favor of warning him of the approach of the hunter. With its ears as busy as its beak, the little sentinel detects danger afar off, and at once shoots up into the air, uttering a sharp and peculiar note, which the rhinoceros is not slow to understand and take advantage of. He doesn't wait to make inquiry, but

makes off at once. Cumming asserts that when the rhinoceros is asleep and the *Buphaga* fails to wake him with its voice, it will peck the inside of his ears, and otherwise exert itself to rouse its thick-headed friend.

For the Sunday-School Advocate.

THE WONDERFUL WHITE MAN.

WHAT do you suppose we should think if we were to go among a people who are as far in advance of us as we are in advance of the poor untaught African?

Not long since one of the Quamen came for the first time to visit the Wesleyan mission-house in Old Calabar, South Africa. While standing on the verandah looking at the ships going up and down

the river, and other mission-houses in the distance, he said, "You white man live in the light; we black man live away in the bush, all in the dark."

They told him to look through the telescope, when, to his surprise, the distant houses seemed to be so near that he thought he could speak to them. When he took his eye from the glass he exclaimed, "Bakara! bakara!" (white man! white man!) and sat down full of amazement. Another said, "Your God make you to know plenty things. Surely you be come from God."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AND HIS MOTHER.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN used to refer to his mother in the tender tone of filial love. He showed his regard for her in various ways—by frequent presents to soothe her later years and add to her comforts. Thus, in one of his letters he sends her a moi-dore—a gold piece worth six dollars—"toward chaise-hire," that she might drive warm to church in winter. In another he tells her of the improvement and growth of his son and daughter, which, he well knew, would be a subject of dear interest to their grandmother as well as their mother.

NOTHING can be more attractive than to see a dutiful daughter repaying the care and affection of her parents by her good conduct.

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