

# THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

A prize will be given in January for the best short original fairy tale. The writer must not be more than sixteen years of age. Send the stories, with name, age, and address of writer, to Cousin Dorothy, FARMER'S ADVOCATE, London, Ont.

A "Proverb-Hunt" will now begin this column. A prize is offered for correct solutions of the first three pictures. Only children of subscribers may compete, and competitors must be under sixteen years of age. Answers should be sent in for each group, e. g., 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, etc. A prize is offered for each group of three pictures, and a better one at the end of the year for the largest number of correct answers. Letters marked "Proverb-Hunt" will not be opened until ten days after the third picture of each group is issued. The first letter opened, containing correct answers, will be prize winner; all others will receive honorable mention. Address your letters to Cousin Dorothy, as above, and mark them "Proverb-Hunt"—outside the envelope.



HIDDEN PROVERB—NO. 5.

There are now 20 competitors in our "Proverb-Hunt." Six have sent in correct answers to first group: 1—"When the cat's away the mice will play." 2—"Birds of a feather flock together." 3—"United we stand, divided we fall." First letter opened, containing correct answer, is from James Brass, Paris, Ont. He is therefore prize winner. Six others obtained honorable mention, viz.: John F. Sheehan, Pakenham; G. B. Rothwell, Ottawa, Ont.; Attfield Dennin (aged 7), Brooklyn, N. Y.; Annie B. Stuart, Dalmeny, Osgoode, Ont.; Jessie Woodley, Rockland, Ont.; Edna Anger, Maple Creek, Assa., N. W. T. Ten have sent in correct answers to the first two proverbs, and four have answered No. 1 only. All prize stories must be in before the last day of December. Only original ones will be accepted. Do not answer any proverbs until the second group, 4-6, is completed. Some of the incorrect answers to No. 3 are very amusing, e. g., "Every fool will be meddling"; "The course of true love never runs smooth"; "Love is blind"; etc.

## The Santa-Claus Spy.

The Yule-log crackled cheerily as without the night winds blew And broke the midnight silence; and the snow flakes thickly flew, And heaped themselves in downy drifts, piled high along the streets— A mass of chastest beauty rolled up in glistening sheets. The old clock on the mantelpiece kept up its tick-tack song. With a dull and steady monotone as the dead hours wore along. The fitful glare from the open hearth dispelled the sombre gloom And cast unsteady shadows all around the cozy room. The old arm-chair stood near the hearth, unmoving, still as death; But behind it crouched a lad with bated breath. 'Twas empty, but behind it crouched a lad with bated breath. Secure from view was Tommy Tibbs, a hopeful six-year-old; His eager eyes and listening ears an awful secret told. Young Tommy weeks before had planned old Santa Claus to see— A deed so "awful dreadful" none bolder there could be. He'd hide himself near by the hearth and hear old "Santa" come rumbling down the chimney and see him crawl therefrom; The real, live Santa then he'd see, with his woolly suit of clothes, His funny face, so red and fat, and his stubby little nose; With his loads and loads of goodies peeping from a great big sack Strapped across his brawny shoulders, slung upon his broad, stout back. Yes, he'd wait until the lights were out and all had gone to bed, Then steal down stairs and hide himself and wait for Kris, he said. At last eventful Christmas Eve had come with right good cheer To every one but Tommy, whose anxiety and fear Upset him so that early he'd been hurried off to bed, Where a thousand nervous fancies crowded through his dizzy head. He had lain awake and listened till 'twas silent all below, And he thought that all had gone to bed and no one'd ever know; And then he tip-toed softly down the staircase to the room Where stood the faithful arm-chair 'mid its shadow's deepest gloom. He'd huddled down with beating heart, and now midst awful pause He held his breath and listened for the stealthy Santa Claus. "A stormy night," said Santa as he rose up from his couch, "And I must be up and movin'—wonder where I left that pouch! Things are different, quite a bit, now, from some twenty years ago— Feller couldn't take a nap then—had to hustle for, you know. Yes, things are changed a mighty deal—new ways for all that's done; It used to take me all night long to make my yearly run On Christmas Eve, down on the earth, my goods to pass around; 'Cause why? 'Cause then my district covered every inch of ground. "But now the system's different—got a Santy for each town; Done away with usin' reindeers—fact, we do the thing up and down. Ah! here's that plaguesy gift-pouch—guess I'll fill her up and go. Have a lunch awaitin', Betsey; I'll be back in an hour or so." And soon the mammoth present-sack Kris'd filled up to the brim.

With boxes, bundles, parcels, toys—a load by no means slim. And then a little whistle shrill he gave, and promptly there appeared.

A throng of little Santas in costumes strange and weird. A motion from the elder Kris; they closed in on the sack And bore it all together toward a glistening icy track.

There stood in readiness to go a toboggan long and wide. The pack was fastened firm thereon; and then off down the slide. Went Santy as the others gave the big machine a start; With frightful speed it dashed along, unswerving as a dart. Down, down it sped as o'er the verge of Kringle-land it flew, Straight toward the Earth, far, far below, beyond the reach of view. And as it sped it left behind a cable of stoutest brand, From a spindle spun, its free end fast to a stake in Kringle-land. As the spindle reeled with a constant buzz, while the sled dashed o'er the ice, Kris smiled and again began to muse on the old way's sacrifice.

"From the eighteen hundreds back," he said, "to the time my work began, I used the sleigh and the reindeers when down to the earth I ran. The deer cost more to keep 'em shod than I ever thought 'em worth. And they'd stumble on the smallest clouds when I drove 'em toward the earth. But now, in 1920, we don't use nary a deer— Just go kitin' in toboggans down to the terrestrial sphere Like a streak of greasy lightning, sliding down a slippery slide. Get your Christmas job done early; have a cheerful, bracin' ride. But, here we are in Christendom—" the spindle's humming ceased As slowly the toboggan its terrific speed decreased.

The reminiscent Santa quickly from his seat climbed down, And prepared for distribution of his gifts in Welcometown. He took from 'neath the high-built seat a few odd-looking things And fastened them together till they formed a pair of wings, Which mounted the toboggan's sides with Santa in between— Then up along the housetops rose a graceful air machine. It swiftly flew from roof to roof, alighting soft and still. As Santa down each chimney slid, each stocking full to fill. "The next house is the Tibbs's if I recollect aright," He muttered, as a cottage, quaint, old-fashioned, came in sight.

A moment later on its roof he landed with his sack And forthwith down the chimney crawled, a big load on his back. "Ah, yes; this is the place," he said, as he reached the floor below. And peered out through the fire-place, shedding forth its cheerful glow; A moment's pause, then out he crawled and glanced around the room. His kindly eyes a-straining as they pierced the corner's gloom. Then noiselessly he started to unload his big "valise." And all one pair of stockings dangling from the mantelpiece. Guess I'll sit down in this rocker till I get them stockin's stuffed—

This he muttered softly to himself as o'er his work he puffed. He suited action to his words, with a soft relieving sigh, Then suddenly from behind him there arose a frightened cry. He gasped and started nervously, then looked behind the chair. Where crouched our friend Tommy, peering out with bristling hair. "Hal hal my lad," cried Santa, as he quickly seized the spy; "I've caught you. Come along with me. I'll take you where No more such tricks as these, my boy—to Kringle-land you'll go." And off, up through the chimney out into the flying snow He marched poor frightened Tommy, placed him in the "boggan's art. Set the flying wings in motion—off then flew the novel craft. O'er the housetops swiftly speeding, soon upon the inclined sheet, Whence it started on and upward—how poor Tommy's heart did beat! Santa kept the spindle going, winding in each yard a slack; Up, still upward the toboggan slid along the icy track. Now, at last, they've reached the summit of the long extended slide. And as Tommy looked back downward, to grave Santa Claus he cried: "Oh, take me back, please, Santy; I won't do it any more!" But Kris sternly shook his knowing head. "I've heard that tale before. Then poor Tommy sobbed aloud in bitter grief. "Won't I ever get back, Santy, to my home!" A silence brief Followed close upon this question. Then with quickly-filling eyes Santa turned his head and answered 'mid a many heavy sighs: "You'll have to stay here now, my boy. According to the law Of Kringle-land, all captured spies, with hammer, bit, and saw, Must enter in our service, making toys and other things. And never leave our workshop till the bell of Doomsday rings." Then he led the moaning Tommy toward a building near his home— A vast, artistic structure, surmounted by a massive dome. A sound of noisy buzz-saws, humming shafts, and whirring wheels Came from within, commingling with the clash of various steels.

Soon the much bewildered Tommy, led by Santa, stood within The great Kris Kringle factory 'mid its constant deafening din. A sight so strange and wonderful here met his wond'ring eyes; It nearly took his breath away so great was his surprise; A throng of little workmen odd, no bigger than himself, Were busy making knick-knacks, piling high each spacious shelf. With unnumbered hosts of playthings fit for children great and small— Such an endless store of treasures figures'd fail to count them all. Dressed like the elder Santa were these busy little men, Who plied their tools so deftly, 'though their years ranged under ten.

Silently was Tommy wond'ring who they were and whence they came, When the voice of Santa roused him, gently calling him by name. "Tommy, now I'm going to leave you— Here forever you must stay With these busy little workmen, toiling on from day to day. Once they, too, lived where you came from—down on earth in native state Till they spied an old Kris Kringle, and were caught and met this fate." Saying this, old Kris departed—left behind the hopeless lad, Nevermore to welcome Christmas with a heart so light and glad— Nevermore to greet his parents like all other earthly boys; Eternally in Kringle-land to whittle out new Christmas toys.

# UNCLE TOM'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES,—

For the last time in 1895 have I the pleasure of addressing you. My letter will be but brief, as it is principally intended to inform you that I have secured an assistant in the person of Ada Armand, an old and well-known contributor to the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, who will in future take full charge of the Puzzle Department. Miss Armand has not competed for prizes for some time, but has shown her continued interest by an occasional contribution. I feel sure that she will do all in her power to make our Puzzle Column a success. All puzzlers will please send their letters direct to Miss Ada Armand, Pakenham, Ont., and they will be promptly attended to. Puzzles and answers should reach that office not later than the 15th of the month when meant for insertion in the first issue, and not later than the 3rd when for the second issue.

I am delighted to greet again our old friends, Lily Day and Irene M. Craig, and I trust they have come to stay.

Letters acknowledging receipt of prizes have been received from almost all the winners, who profess themselves much pleased with them.

Hoping that the New Year may be a pleasant and profitable one to all the members of our circle, which I trust will be a large one, and wishing all our readers the season's choicest blessings,

Your loving— UNCLE TOM.

## Puzzles.

### 1-PHONETIC CHARADE.

There are some PRIME FINAL women, And some women who FINAL PRIME; And some PRIME who FINAL evil And make this world sublime.

Such PRIME who FINAL evil Will make this old world good; And many could I now COMPLETE, If only I would. A. P. HAMPTON.

### 2-CHARADE.

All around us PRIMAL where, Christmas signs are springing: Floating on the frozen air, Merry bells are ringing.

Boys and girls, with ruddy cheeks, Sliding on the ice, Tell us in about two weeks— Well—something pretty nice.

TOTAL now anticipates Coming Christmas cheer, While Uncle Tom in patience waits From his friends to hear.

But deserted is the Dom, Cousins gone to Texas; I at last wish Uncle Tom A Merry, Merry Xmas. C. S. EDWARDS.

### 3-NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

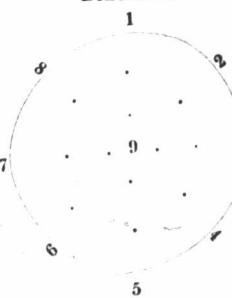
My 3, 3, 7 is sharp; My 4, 3, 3, 7 is part of the body; My 1, 2, 6, 9 is a tour; My 9, 8, 7, 12 is a small horse; My 5, 10, 12 is a small coasting vessel; My 11, 8, 4, 5 is a lake; My whole is a place in India. S. McRAE.

### 4-TRANSPPOSITION.

I've been saying all this '95 that to pass again I'd try, And the spring and summer have flown—would I still the summer let go by? No; therefore this venture'll be something, if intended no more than to say That I've not forgotten you, cousins, though I've been so long away. But I've come back first and hope to see many others, too, return, The old race LAST, oh! let us see if we can't, like her, be firm. LILY DAY.

### 5-WHEEL PUZZLE.

DIAGRAM.



Rim:—Thin skin. Spokes (words of four letter):— 1 to 9—base; 2 " 9—like ebony; 3 " 9—principal; 4 " 9—the name of many kinds of pulse; 5 " 9—moisture falling in drops; 6 " 9—soon; 7 " 9—mid-day; 8 " 9—to gain by labor. IRENE M. CRAIG.

## Answers to Puzzles in November 15th Issue.

1-P I T H 2-Heron, hero, her, he. 3-Cur-few. I D E A T E A R P

4—Concett is to beauty what paint is to nature; it is not only needless, but it impairs what it would improve. —Pope.

### SOLVERS.

Chris. McKenzie, Jos. Umbach, Bertha Jackson, Mary C. Clazie. Some of these were omitted last issue.

SOLVERS OF NOV. 15TH PUZZLES. Clara Robinson; Mary C. Clazie.