

Children's Department.

No one so well as ourselves, who have read the many letters from the children with which we have this month been favored, can understand the pleasure they experience on account of our introduction of this department once more in the COMPANION AND TEACHER. As for ourselves, we are more than pleased with the manner in which our young friends have taken hold of the work given them to do. The results are favorable, as all will admit, when we say that we have received no less than 43 lists, containing in the aggregate 53,774 words, or an average of over 1,250 words from each contributor. The largest list contained 3,775 words, and the smallest 184. In justice to many of the contributors, we should say that the COMPANION AND TEACHER was in their hands only a few days before they were required to send in their lists, so that they were necessarily incomplete. Altogether, we are pleased that such was the case, as our labors in examining the lists have been quite as arduous as we could wish. Some, however, have given us unnecessary trouble by sending in their lists unnumbered. Others have sent lists that are very carefully prepared and written, and reflect much credit not only upon themselves, but on their teachers. Some have not heeded our advice to send lists in an *unsealed envelope*, marked "*For the Press*," and, as a result, they have had to pay three times as much for postage as they required to have done. Remember that when the above directions are adhered to, the necessary postage is only *one cent per doz.*, instead of *three cents*. Some of the lists are written upon no less than six sheets of foolscap paper, and the amount of labor required to produce them can only be imagined by those who did not actually perform the work. We do not wonder, therefore, that some say "I never was so tired in my life," "I have used up all my paper," "I thought it would be easy, but found it hard work," &c. Others say "Our teacher gave us the words," "I am very glad you have commenced the Children's Department again," "Nothing will attract a child's attention quicker than a puzzle. *A puzzle is a thing which will make a dunce study, and if you want to make good men and women out of children, give them things that will make them work, and a prize, too, if they succeed.*" These words should be engraved in letters of gold on the walls of every home, and should guide parents in their treatment of their children, who may be made to work hard, and willingly, too, and acquire far more knowledge and real benefit than if everything were driven into them, as in many cases. Another contributor says "I hope you will not laugh at my *afid* writing: I will bet it is the worst you have ever seen." Now, we want our young friends to understand at once that we do not intend to hurt their feelings when we print anything we receive from them that is not commendable or correct. When we reproduce anything of this kind, it is because we wish to show the writer and others how it looks in *print*, so that they will guard against making the same mistakes again. There is nothing *very* wrong in the above, as the writer is a mere child and can be excused for the incorrectness in spelling, and though our young friends should not adopt the manner of speech used only by gamblers and low-bred people, we know that in this case no harm was intended. We trust

that when we have occasion to copy other and perhaps greater mistakes, our young contributors will not feel cross and say "He's real mean, and I never write to him again." That we should regret, especially as such an action would deprive the writer from deriving any future benefit from the Department.

In last number we announced that we should require our friends to write us a letter this month and we hope hundreds will do so. We have only to say, however, that we expect all to do as well as they can. If any letter shows that the writer did not use every endeavor to make it a good one, we will not read it or place it in competition. Write on any subject you choose this time—no long letter, but a short one. Say what you have to say, and then stop. Make your statements complete and do not run them into each other. Let each idea stand in a sentence by itself, in the simplest form. You will soon enough learn to form compound sentences. Begin each sentence with capital letter, but do not fall into the absurd habit of commencing every line in the same way. Please observe these directions carefully, and we will have many bad letters to look over. A few of the best letters we will publish in our next number, and we will also publish the *worst one*, without the name of the writer.

We are sorry that only three will be able to secure prizes, as many more already deserve it. Remember that though we shall be glad to receive letters from those who have not sent us lists of words, only those will be allowed to compete for the prizes offered. We will, however, give the COMPANION AND TEACHER free for one year, without premium, to the boy or girl who has not written to us, who will this month send us the best letter. This will give all a chance to secure one of the four prizes now offered.

In conclusion, we must remind all to forward contributions *before* the 15th, as we go to press the 20th. Competitors must state age, and if of school age, they must be in actual attendance at the time of writing at some school or college. If your teacher is good natured, as he should be, show him your letter before sending it to us, and if he says it will do, send it along.

We promise something more attractive after New Years in the way of puzzles, &c., and if the interest is continued in this department, will sometimes print new Dialogues, Readings, &c., suitable for school entertainments, &c.

We hope to see you again before New Years, meantime we wish you all *A Merry Christmas*.

A Big Prize.

A copy of Webster's *New Unabridged Dictionary* should be placed in every school library. If a school has no library, the dictionary is a complete one in itself. It is bound in leather, and contains 1,840 pages, 3,000 illustrations, and over 114,000 words. The publisher's price for it is \$12, but we will send it to any boy or girl who sends us only for the COMPANION AND TEACHER to the value of \$40. Every subscriber will receive a premium, and the one who gets up the club will get a dictionary which he may keep himself, or present to the school, and thus *memorialize* himself. A club can easily be raised in any School Section in Canada. We will send us the first club?