

Uncle Tom's Department.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS,—

This year Xmas comes on Sunday, and, strange to say, Easter was on the same day of the week; one represents, 1381 years ago, the birth of our Saviour; the 2nd His rising again after having been sacrificed by the Jews. On both occasions we feel as happy as the day is long, but particularly on Xmas, for it comes at the time of the year when the weather is beautiful, and such merry sounds come with it, not only the ringing of church bells, but also the jingle of sleigh bells, as well as the merry voices of you, my children, on your first waking up and finding what good things Santa Claus has put in your stockings while asleep. Many years ago, when I was a little fellow like yourself, I made up my mind to stay awake in bed and see for myself what Santa Claus looked like, and how he could have big enough pockets to carry all the presents for all the children for five miles around, for, at that time, I did not know that the world was any larger; but, in the midst of thinking and trying to keep awake, I fell asleep and woke up again by the sun shining through the blind, or my mother calling out breakfast, I cannot remember just which; at any rate it was Xmas, and the way I ate the roast goose and plump-pudding makes me almost sick to think of it now, for the day after Xmas I had to take castor oil and a lot of other nasty stuff; if you will only take example by the way too much eating affected me, and don't eat any candies before breakfast, you will enjoy by far a much happier Xmas, this year. In the middle of the ocean every sailor celebrates Xmas day; they generally have service on deck and shake hands. Even those who at other times during the year will hardly speak, on this day they wish each other the greatest joy; the day before everything is washed as clean as a new copper, the sails seem much whiter, and the foam and spray dashing up against the ship's side would say, if they could only speak, "On this day was born, in the City of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord."

The poor sick children in the hospitals look forward for weeks, and sit up in bed making wreaths for the coming Xmas, which, to some of them, may be their last, but does that make them the less happy, to go to God who set this day apart for Himself, for this one day in the year is an example of every day we shall spend with Him. You must all go for a walk in the afternoon, and please your mamma by coming home in good time for tea, with bright, shining, rosy cheeks, and, best of all, a splendid appetite well earned by a pleasant day's enjoyment; then, after one more play with your presents, your poor tired eyelids won't keep open, and your nice round mouths, for some reason or other, will get into the way of opening, because you are tired out; so with a kiss all around—off to bed. Good night!

In looking over my list of those who have sent the most correct answers to the puzzles since last May, when I promised the ADVOCATE free for 1882, I find that none have answered all; but Wm. Howell, of Carlow P. O., Ont., and Minnie G. Gibson, of Kars P. O., Ont., have answered nearly all the puzzles, therefore I will give them each the prize. And credit is due to Chas. M. French and Chas. S. Husband for good answers. But no one has written letters worthy of a prize. For 1882 we will offer our prizes for Minnie May's and Uncle Tom's departments next month.

UNCLE TOM.

Paper pulp made from sawdust is to be sent to England from Welland, Ont. It will be tried at an English factory, and the paper sold as an experiment. If successful, several capitalists will start a factory at that place.

PUZZLES.

159—CHARADE.

My first was growing in the field;
It promised for a famous yield;
My second was all around it.
Search the map of England through,
My whole to you 'twill bring to view,
You then may boast you've found it.

160—DECAPITATIONS.

1—Whole, I am a fop; behead me and I am a spring; behead me again, and I am a measure.
2—Whole, I am dexterity; behead me, and I am to slay; behead me again, and I am unwell.
3—Whole, I am a small thing; behead me, and I am a weapon.

161—ENIGMA.

I'm on the land, and I'm on the sea,
Wherever you turn you'll sure see me;
I'm in your rooms, and I'm in your stores,
And I used to guard Old England's shores;
I'm hard, I'm soft, I'm both heavy and light,
And I'm scarcely ever out of your sight;
I'm thickly spread in the far-off west,
And deep in the earth I lie at rest;
In the shape of a substance you've often seen,
When old Father Winter hides the green
Of summer, with thick coat of snow,
And fun goes on 'neath the mistletoe;
I have a sweet scent, and yet none at all;
I'm brown and white, and I'm large and small;
I'm used by the savage to slay his foe;
And I'm often placed the way to show
To the traveller bearing me in his hand,
To aid his path through a hilly land.

162—SQUARE WORD.

A man's name, advantage, a river and lake in Brazil, a river in Denmark, also a waterfowl, signs used in music. The right and left diagonals, read to the centre letter, show the cause of all human misery.

163—DROP-LETTER PUZZLE.

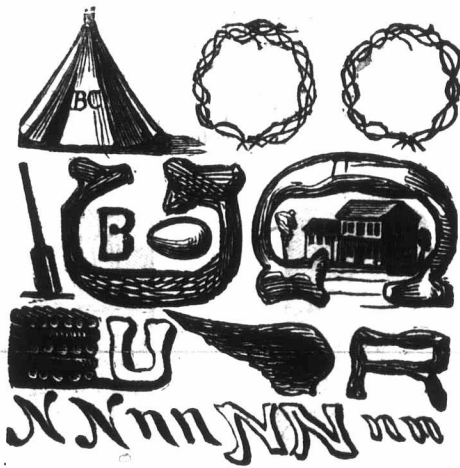
T b o n t t b t a i t l q l t o
W e h r t s n b e i t e m t s f e
T e s i g a d d r w o o t a e f w r w e
O t t k a m a a n t a s a o t o b e
A d b o p s n e d t e

164.

My first the last destructive foe
Of nature's fairest form below;
My second is brave Albion's boast,
My whole such change from union flows,
The bitterest boon the earth bestows.

—JOHN FLEMING.

165—ILLUSTRATED REBUS.



Answers to November Puzzles.

- 152—War and love are strange compeers,
War sheds blood and love sheds tears,
War has swords, and love has darts;
War breaks heads, and love breaks hearts.
153—W, one, uncle, elk, e.
154—Carrie.
155—I saw Easau kissing Kate. The fact is all three saw I saw Easau. He saw me. She saw I saw Easau.
156—Chair, hair, air.
157—Envy is a self-execution.
158—Wrist, rover, ivory, serfs, tryst.

This world belongs to the energetic.

He who is perfectly vanquished by riches can never be just.

Names of Those who have Sent Correct Answers to Nov. Puzzles.

W. J. Workman, Wm. E. Serson, Selina J. Snyder, Amy A. Lancaster, Minnie G. Gibson, W. Howell, Enos Marr, Addie Richards, John Dearing, John E. Fleming, Katie Ellis, A. G. Gurney, Jessie Munro, P. T. Ketchum, Tom Wilkin, Robt. Wilson, Ada Graham, Bert L. Switzer, Harry Johnston, Gussie Gordon, Helen McMann, Flora H. Hunter, B. S. Moore, Janie Gouinlock, Dora Evans, George Smith, F. Lancaster.

Mistletoe at Christmas Tide.

The hanging of the Mistletoe is the cause of much frolic and laughter in the house. It is a rule that whoever is passing under the mistletoe-bough must submit to being kissed then and there by whosoever chooses to take that liberty. As a bough usually hangs from the centre of the ceiling, spreading over a large space, it follows that there must be much dodging or much kissing. I am inclined to think that there are both.

The origin of this use of the mistletoe is not known; but we know that more than eighteen hundred years ago, when the glad stars sang together over a manger at Bethlehem, and wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to a young child in the peasant mother's arms, England was a chill, mist-covered island, inhabited only by savages who wore garments of skins, and lived in huts of mud and stone. Among these savage Britons there were pagan priests called Druids. These priests were a mysterious folk, who lived in dense woods far away from other men, and who, in the gloomy solitudes of the forest, performed strange, secret ceremonies. The "sacred groves," as they are called, were of oak; for the oak was a divine tree, according to Druidical religion. Within these sacred groves, the priests, it is recorded in history, offered their sacrifices, and in some manner not now known, they employed the mistletoe. But all mistletoe was not sacred to the Druids. They would have none but that which clung to the trunk and was nourished by the sap of the divine oak. To them the apple-tree mistletoe which modern England uses so freely in her holiday festivities, would be a worthless and common thing.

When, in later centuries, England was taught the Christian religion by priests who went thither from Rome, the people, though professing a belief in Christ, retained many of their heathen rites and customs changed from their original meaning and purpose. At any rate, from the Druids has come the modern usage of the mistletoe-bough, strangely preserved in festivities which commemorate the birth of Him whose pure worship destroys all heathen superstitions.

"I Beg Your Pardon."

A civil word is the cheapest thing in the word, and yet is a thing which the young and happy rarely give to their inferiors. See the effect of civility on a rough little street boy. The other evening a young lady abruptly turned the corner, and very rudely ran against a boy, who was small and ragged and freckled. Stopping as soon as she could, she turned to him and said: "I beg your pardon; indeed, I am sorry." The small, ragged and freckled boy looked up in blank amazement for an instant; then, taking off about three-fourths of a cap, he bowed very low, smiled until his face became lost in a smile, and then answered: "You kin hev my parding, and welcome, miss; and yer may run agin me and knock me clean down, an' I won't say a word." After the young lady passed on, he turned to a comrade and said, half apologetically: "I never had any one ask my parding, and it kind o' took me off my feet."

A Western judge was approached by a verdant couple who wanted to be married. The would-be groom asked the price of tying the knot, and was told it was \$1. "Can't you take beeswax?" inquired the rustic. "Yes," said the squire. The beeswax was brought in, and upon being weighed was found to be worth just 60 cents. "Waal," said the anxious groom, "tie the knot, and I'll fetch more wax next week." "No, sir; I don't trust; that is against the rules of the office." Slowly the disappointed youth turned to go out, saying: "Come, Sal, let's go." "I say, mister," answered Sal, with a woman's wit, "can't you marry us as far as the wax will go?" "Yes, I can, and I will," responded the squire laughing, and he did.