

Nucle Tom's Department.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES,—I am sure that most of you will agree with me that there is nothing in the whole year quite so delightful as taking down the Christmas stocking. Of course it is charming to hang it up, but one never feels the least bit sleepy on Christmas Eve, and it seems so long to wait until morning shall come. The air is astir with excitement and mystery, and Santa Claus is known to be hovering about waiting for eyes to be closed, and children to go comfortably away to dreamland. By and by everybody does manage to fall asleep, and then by some strange magic, the long, limp stockings are crammed with toys, books, tools, dolls and skates, or ribbons, laces and candies. How beautifully they bulge out, every inch of room packed. Now look at these dear little children in the picture, who hung up their stockings on Christmas Eve. How delighted they each appear, as they come down in their night-dresses, to find their stockings full of beautiful gifts from loving hands. Even the little baby turns out so early in the morning at the sound of its elder brothers' and sisters' merry voices, and joins with them in crowing over the pretty presents. And then the rattle and din commence. Uncle Tom remembers well when he was a little boy what a great racket he used to make with all sorts of whistles, mouth organs, tin horses, etc., most of which would be broken before bedtime. But you must remember, my dears, that a large part of your Christmas happiness comes from the gifts you bestow as well as from those you receive. It is not a selfish festival in homes where brothers and sisters exchange love-tokens, and the weeks you spend in making presents with your own hands, in saving your pocket-money, and planning to surprise your dear relations or friends are very happy weeks indeed. You will all be on the look-out in January number to see who were the successful prize-winners for the best new puzzles and the most correct answers to puzzles for the year 1882. I have kept an accurate account of the names and numbers of correct answers sent in by all. So it will be easy to ascertain the names of the winners, a complete list of which will be published in our next. I have no doubt but some will be disappointed out of the great number I hear from month after month. To those I would say "try again." And I hope my large circle of nephews and nieces will increase after Xmas. There is room for hundreds to join, and Uncle Tom is always glad to receive new members. I would call your attention to the many valuable and beautiful presents Mr. Weld has offered to any one sending in one or more new subscribers. I hope my nephews and nieces will try and win some of them. They are all very nice prizes and just as represented. Now let me have your answers as soon as possible, so that I can award the prizes and finish our work for 1882. Wishing each one of you a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year,

UNCLE TOM.

An Austin teacher was calling the roll. Just as he called out "Bob Smith," Bob pushed open the door, out of breath, and answered: "Here, sir." "Robert, next time you must not answer to your name unless you are here." "Yes, sir; I'll try not to."—[Texas Sitings.]

PUZZLES.

1.—CHARADE.

If you met a person who was my first you would be glad to get my second of him, and you might even wish he were in my whole. ELIZ. E. RYAN.

2.—ANAGRAM.

Mssihact semoc ubt ceon a ryae,
Dna nhew ti eocsm ti gsinrb odog erche.
—ELLA McNAUGHTON.

3.—Whole, I mean to clip;
Behead, I mean to listen to;
Behead again and I am part of the body;
Transpose, and I am a verb.

4.—First in scarlet, not in black;
Second in drake, not in quack;
Third in grey, not in white;
Fourth in quarrel, not in fight;
Fifth in Turkey, not in hen;
Sixth in woman, not in men;
Seventh in Punch, not in Judy;
Eighth in stone, not in ruby;
Ninth in verb, not in noun;
Whole a poet of great renown.
—A. J. TAYLOR.

5.—HIDDEN AUTHORS.

I.—When Phillip opened the door Roger came in quickly.



II.—That man, son-in-law of mine, joined his cot to mine last week.

III.—He stood beholding rays from the noonday sun.

CALVIN W. FINCH.

6.—Why is Athens like the wick of a candle?
On which side of the pitcher is the handle?

ELLA McNAUGHTON.

7.—I. A consonant; II. a Spanish title; III. A girl's name; IV. A precious stone; V. To submerge; VI. A girl's name; VII. A river of England.

H. W. MCKENZIE.

Answers to November Puzzles.

1.—Post.

2.—Drink, rink, ink, kin.

3.— C H A R L E S
D O N E G A L
J A M A I C A
W I N D S O R
M I N E R V A

CHARLES READE.

4.—Tel-el-Kebir.

5. REBUS.—A clear conscience fears no accusation.

6.—(2) Admiral Seymour.

2, 14, 6, 3, 1—drama

10, 12, 13, 5—your

8, 7, 4, 11—slim

2, 14, 9, 6, 11—dream.

7.—(3) Fright, right, rig.

8.—Cur-rent.

Names of those who sent Correct Answers to November Puzzles.

Addie V. Morse, A. J. Taylor, Willie Bowman, Gib Arnold, C. Gertie Heck, Minnie G. Gibson, Charles J. French, Charlie S. Husband, Richard Kingston, Esther Louise Ryan, Eveline Smith, Jas. Lindsay Wright, Elizabeth E. Ryan, Clara Cowan, George Cousins, Harold Ellis, Frank Lester, Annie Smith, Jessie Millman, Willie Montgomery, Charlie Mitchell, Maud Harkness, J. A. Key, W. H. Bateman, Fred Mills, C. G. Keyes, A. Phillips, Arthur H. Mabey.

The Little Ones' Column.

Who Will Wink First?

Upon the wide arms of grandpapa's chair
Little Sir Trotty and Polly the fair,
Like two little rabbits, sit perched on each side,
And stare at each other with eyes open wide.
Don't whisper, don't laugh, don't disturb them, I pray,
For "Who will wink first?" is the game that they play.

Little pug noses, tip near touching tip;
A frown on the brow, no smile on the lip.
They're as sober as owls, which they surely should be;

For this is a trial of great skill—
don't you see.
And grandpa is judge, and he will tell true

Which one will wink first—the
brown eyes or the blue.

The Wise Old Mouse.

A wise old mouse went on tip-toe into the kitchen to see if Jane had swept up all the crumbs. There to his surprise he met Buzz, the cat. "Oh," cried the cat, "this is lucky! Now I shall have a fine dinner." The mouse saw that he was caught. So he said, "Thank you, Mr. Buzz; but if I am to dine with you, I should like first to put on my red Sunday coat; my old gray jacket is not nice enough." This amused the cat. He had never seen the mouse with his red Sunday coat. "Perhaps he will taste better," thought he. "Very well, Mr. Mouse," he said; "do not be long, for I am hungry. I will wait for you here." The mouse lost no time, but at once popped into his hole. The cat waited all day, softly singing to himself; but the wise old mouse did not come back. Since then there is a new proverb in cat-land. It is this: "A mouse in a gray jacket is sweeter than a mouse in a red Sunday coat."

"I Beg Your Pardon."

A civil word is the cheapest thing in the world, and yet it 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 very 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 the smile, and answered: "You can 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."

LOCUM TENENS.—Choleric Old Gent: Christmas box? Why, you aren't the regular sweeper! Arab: No, sir; but I mind the getleman's broom, sir, while he's gone for his 'alf-pint! [Exit Old Gent, storming, with symptoms of apoplexy!]

[Punch.]