

Uncle Tom's Department.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES.—It is really wonderful to me how many of you seem to have your interest aroused at the beginning and close of the year. It reminds me of the big Sunday Schools all over the land just before the Xmas tree entertainment. But only those who persevere constantly the year round can certainly be the most expectant of prizes. I have summed you all up and this is exactly how you stand:—For best original puzzles in 1885, 1st, \$3, Ada Armand; 2nd, \$2, Will Thirlwall; 3rd, \$1, Henry Reeve, and 4th, 50c., Annie M. Scott; and for the most correct answers, 1st, \$3, Robt. Kerr; 2nd, \$2.50, Alice Mackie; 3rd, \$2, Emma Dennee; 4th, \$1.50, Lottie A. Boss; 5th, \$1, Willie B. Bell, and 6th, 50c., Frank Milner.

It has been no little work to keep a strict and conscientious account of every puzzle and answer, and I hope that all will be perfectly satisfied. To the others who have worked faithfully all through the year and secured no prize I would say, "Never despair, but try, try again. For 1886 I propose giving prizes at midsummer as well as at the end of the year, thus giving a better chance for more to secure prizes. The following will be the amounts for best original puzzles awarded by the 1st July:—1st, \$1.50; 2nd, \$1; 3rd, 75c.; 4th, 50c., and for the most correct answers to puzzles, 1st, \$1; 2nd, 75c.; 3rd, 50c., and 4th, 25c. Now, I hope you will all go to work in right good earnest, and either send some capital puzzles or the answers. If each one would try and do something, what an enormous family Uncle Tom would have.

We will keep to the old rules, but for the benefit of new members I shall reprint them: The puzzles must be wholly original, answer to accompany each puzzle. All competitors must be under seventeen years of age. Your name and address in full with each communication. All letters must be in by the 25th of each month to insure publication, but credit will be given to those who live at too great a distance for their letters to reach us by that date. Letters and puzzles are to be written neatly and legibly. Now go to work and send some really good puzzles for February. Wishing you, one

and all, a Happy New Year, I remain your
UNCLE TOM.

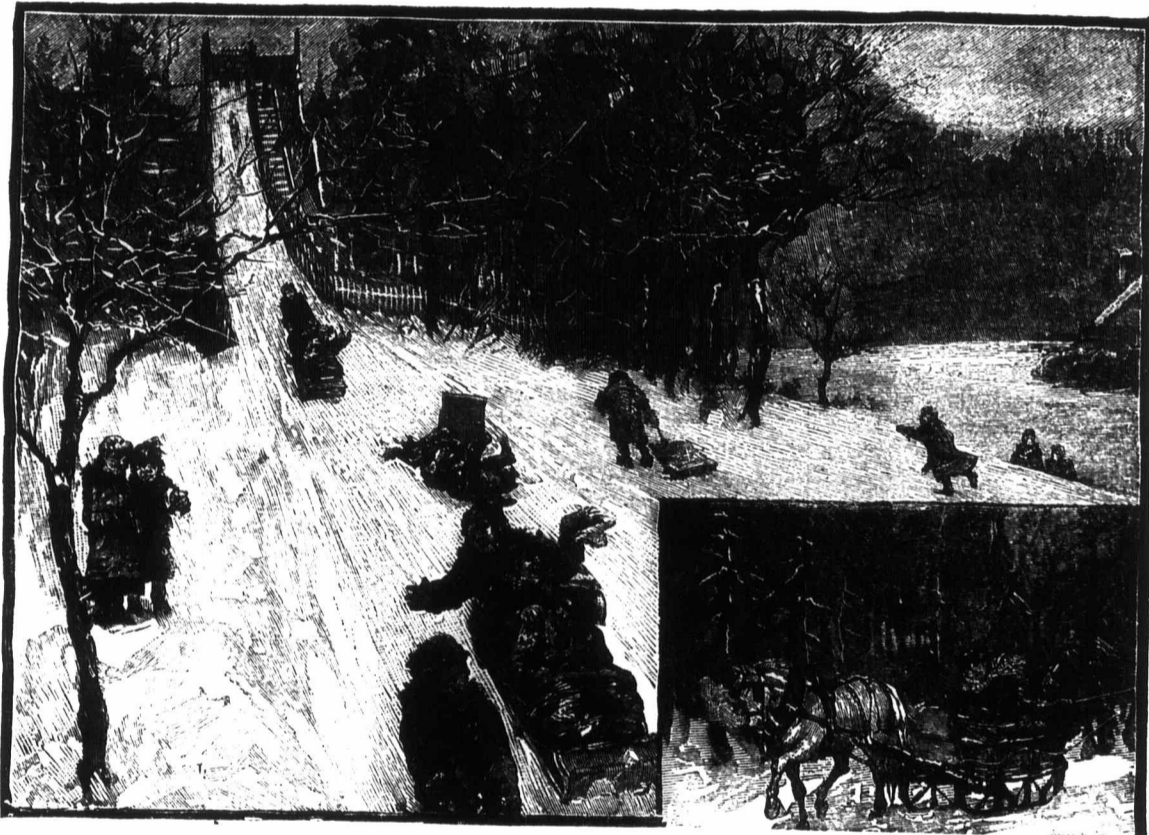
Winter Sport.

The accompanying illustration represents a peculiarly characteristic Canadian winter sport. Canada has been the parent of many a winter sport, but of none, I think, which is conducive to more enjoyment and benefit than that shown in the illustration, viz., tobogganing. A decade ago a toboggan was only known as an arrangement on which the prairie dogs brought to the trading posts the summer's collection of the hunter's furs. Now there is scarcely a city or town of importance in Canada which does not boast of its toboggan slide as one of the means of amusements, and not only do we find these public slides, but even from private grounds in our cities can we hear the wild screams of joyous and exhilarating pleasure that can only be heard on the toboggan slide or coasting hill. A

of rushing down the hill on the thin strips of basswood is one never to be forgotten, at any rate by the following American girl: "How do you like it?" asked a Canadian girl of her American visitor, whom she had steered down the steepest slide. "Oh, I wouldn't have missed it for a hundred dollars." "Then you will try it again, won't you?" "Not for a thousand dollars."

To many others, I am sure, whose breath seems to be almost taken from their bodies, this has been the first reflection, but the fondness grows by practice, and of all the sports at the usual Montreal carnivals this is the most generally enjoyed by the visitors. In our country places these convenient artificial slides are not usually practicable, nor are they even desirable, for in every village and on every farm the boys and girls have found hills that afford them fun without limit. I do not see

why the custom in vogue in some parts of the country of having regular tobogganing and sleighing parties should not be more generally practiced. It would serve, to some extent, to make what is too often a dreary season one of enjoyment and improvement, and also to restore the redness to the blanched cheek, for the atmosphere and nature of the enjoyment would compel exertion, and exertion brings health.



TOBOGGANING.

southerner so full of sympathy for those poor ice-bound creatures of the north, can scarcely have any conception of the charm and cheer to be got out of the dry snow, the bracing air and the clear skies of the Canadian winter. Go to any of our city toboggan slides in cold weather and what a picture opens upon our view. Here we see hundreds of men, women and children in their warm and gayly colored blankets, with their cheeks rivalling in color the redness of their blankets, flying down the inclines at a blinding pace that thrills the onlooker as well as the tobogganist. The natural hills were formerly the only ones used, but the idea of erecting high wooden structures, on one side of which skiffs are arranged, came rapidly into favor. These are much easier of ascent, and have also the advantage of being perfectly smooth.

Some of the slides, as used in Montreal, are steep and dangerous-looking, and the sensation

Puzzles.

1—TRANSPPOSITION AND DECAPITATION.

Whole I am a small animal; behead, and I am used by a painter; curtail and transpose, and I am a fur-bearing animal; again transpose and I am a vendition; behead and I am a liquor.

ADA ARMAND.

2.—DROP-VOWEL PUZZLE.

Th - h - - nd w - ll f - wn - n - ny - n -
Th - t gr - - ts h - m w - th - k - nd c - r - ss
Th - fl - w - r w - ll t - rn t - w - rds th - s - n
Th - t n - rt - r - s - t - n l - v - l n - ss.

EDMUND PEPPER.

3.—HIDDEN RIVERS.

- 1—The man will start weeding to-morrow.
- 2—The barn out at the other farm was burnt.
- 3—He played our organ at the fair.
- 4—He made a raid on the town.
- 5—Parse, "In entering the door we saw the man."
- 6—She ran a rusty needle into her foot.

H. REEVE.

4—WORD SQUARE.

- 1—Comes but once a year. 2—A market.
- 3—Extent. 4—a kind of deer.

HENRY REEVE.