

Uncle Tom's Department.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES,—“Time rolls his ceaseless course,” and again we are permitted to enter upon another year. As I sit by the cosy fire watching the shadows flitting to and fro, my heart grows tender with the recollections of by-gone years.

“When life was young, and hope was strong,
And minutes sang a siren's song.”
You are now young, full of buoyant spirits, bright hopes, and laudable ambitions, and it could not be expected that you would sit and dream with Uncle Tom over the memories of early days, but would it interest you if he were to draw aside the curtain of his studio and show you one or two of the pictures he looks tenderly upon in the weird light and shadow of the Old Year embers. He will turn his thoughts from his own early days to those bright happy ones of the present which his nieces and nephews so heartily enjoy. The pictures I am about to show you have been suggested by one I saw recently in a Canadian art exhibit. Some of you have seen the picture, and wherein I do not describe accurately I trust you will pardon me, as I write only from memory. With hundreds of others I was moving slowly on, taking a passing glance at each display of artistic power, when I came to one picture which made me stand and gaze. I walked away from it, then back again, to make a more careful study of it. Would you like to know what interested me so much? Well, listen. A happy-looking, rosy-faced boy was lying in a most natural position—face downward—his feet represented as playing in the air. Where he lay seemed to be a beach, and with his wee fat forefinger the little man had drawn on the sand the outline of a ship. The artist with beautiful appropriateness had named it “The Dawn of Genius.” Now come with me and you will find out why I told you about that picture before you entered my “holy place.” See before you a picture. What! You say you see nothing but an indistinct outline—a shadowy something—you can not tell what. Look closely and tell me if you do not see a face appearing before you—earnest, thoughtful, yet merry withal—a book—another hand—a softer face—a laughing countenance—blue eyes—golden curls—closely cropped little heads—why there are two or three faces—many faces—the whole picture is full of faces! How strange! The picture seems as if not on canvas—away back as far as you can see, face appears behind face—hand clasps hand—open pages are being scanned—little lips move as if asking strange questions—those active brains are busy in thought. You want to know the name of the picture—the artist—and whose are the interesting faces. Oh, little self-flatterers, do ye not know yourselves? Don't you see its a magic scene, for Uncle Tom always likes fun at the gleeful New Year's time? You are represented in the mirror of his studio, and below it we shall write in letters of gold “The Dawn of Thought—1887.” My dear boys and girls, don't you know

“Those who toil bravely are strongest
The humble and poor become great,
And from these brown-handed children
Shall grow mighty rulers of State.
The pen of the author and statesman,
The sword, the chisel, the palette,
Shall be held by the little brown hand.”

And how are you to be prepared to act your part well, whether on the farm or in the workshop—at the anvil or in the pulpit—at the bench or in

the laboratory—behind the counter or in the school-room, if you don't think—think of what you ought to do—and what you might do, ay, and of much you might leave undone—think of the mis-spent moments of 1886 and resolve to think and PRAY and ACT in the Happy New Year just ushered in.

Do your eyes turn wonderingly to that white-draped picture beside you—I shall draw the curtain some time, but not now. There are the bells ringing—ringing out the old—ringing in the new, and I must go. That the bells may ring in for my dear boys and girls, and of peace and joy and gladness is the sincere wish of
UNCLE TOM.

DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES,—The prizes for the last six months of 1886 are awarded in the following manner for best puzzles: First, Edward A. Fairbrother, Copenhagen, Ont.; 2nd, Ada Armand, Fakenham, Ont.; 3rd, Louisa F. Redmond (who will please send her address); and 4th, E. Manning, Bond Head, Ont. For best and most answers to puzzles: First, Drucilla A. Fairbrother, Copenhagen, Ont.; 2nd, Emma Dennee, Bath, Ont.; 3rd, Robt. J. Risk, Chesterfield, Ont.; and 4th, Mary Morrison, Mt. Elgin, Ont. The competition has been quite close between some of you, but I am not at all satisfied with the number. Now, I want all the children who read this to try and win a prize in 1887; I will offer \$15 in money, to be divided as follows: For the best original puzzles I will offer five prizes of \$3, \$2, \$2.50, \$1 and 50 cents, and for the most correct answers to puzzles I will offer six prizes of \$2, \$1.50, \$1, 75 cents, 50 cents and 25 cents. This, you must remember, is for the whole year, and now I hope such attractive prizes will induce each one of you to start in real earnest, both in making up puzzles as well as solving them. 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; address in full with each communication. All letters must be sent 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 must be written neatly and legibly.
UNCLE TOM.

Puzzles.

1—ILLUSTRATED REBUS.



2—DROP-VOWEL PUZZLE.

Th. s-m- l-ttl-n-ss -f s-l wh-ch m-k-s - m-n
d-sp-s-h-s -n-r-r-rs -nd tr-mpl- -nth-m m-k-s-h-m
-bs-q- -s t- s-p-r-rs.

HENRY REEVE.

3—NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

My 9, 10, 11, 12 means to repose.
My 1, 2, 8, 13 is a prophet.
My 4, 3, 16, 20, 7 is fast.
My 19, 5, 23, 20 means reward.
My 21, 22, 14, 6, 25 is an injury.
My 18, 10, 15, 24 means to relate.

A. T. REEVE.

4—TRANSPOSITION.

Het rutifs fo ertu disnow rac omsety dan
millhutyi a ainy ro roudp nam si ni a ospivite
sseen na gioranta mna.

A. T. REEVE.

5—TRANSPOSITION.

Het smto citnenon sepluase rea het etteesws
eht smto bisnele hte tosm featgini nad smto
taguils.

HENRY REEVE.

6—ANAGRAM.

Come, friends, and fellow puzzlers,
And join our happy throng;
We want bright, active workers
To help “Uncle Tom” along.

Please to work out some solutions;
Write them with ink and pen;
Send some witty contributions,
That could puzzle most men.

“FAIR BROTHER.”

7—CHARADE.

TOTAL sisters, brothers, TOTAL,
Puzzlers all are welcome here;
With charades, crosswords numerical,
FINAL and move in puzzle-sphere.

Each month appear, the time not rueing,
Nor satisfied with but PRIME doing;
We right good will extend to all,
TOTAL, sisters, brothers, TOTAL.

FAIR BROTHER.

8—ANAGRAM.

“De chillen of dese times,” says Auntie Poll,
“Oh courage hab not a sup,
If dey doan' get tings right de very first go,
Why den dey gibb it up.”

And Uncle Tom's letters she then does read,
And her glasses carefully wipes,
Saying, “do as yo' uncle tells you, now,
And chillen, allus ‘stripes.’”

ADA ARMAND.

9—CHARADE.

The good old folks of long ago had many a say-
ing true,
The ignorant placed considerable faith in super-
stitions, too,
Who wished for my all, who'er he might be,
Or no matter how heavy his load,
If a red-haired person he chanced to see
He must turn right back on his road.
Another symbol that meant the same
Of iron was made I ween,
Nor is there a little farmer maid
Who has not some of them seen.
To any longer you detain,
I really have no call,
The answer's what I heartily wish
My cousins one and all.

ADA ARMAND.

DIAGRAM.

10—CROSS.

*** 1—A life-time.
*** 2—To wander.
*** 3—A fowl.
***** 4—To generate.
***** 5—Fragrance.
***** 6—Melted.
*** 7—An animal.
*** 8—To inhabit.
*** 9—The goddess of mischief.
*** 10—A number.
*** 11—A spherical body.
*** 12—The close.

My centrals is the name of a very large ship
that we have often heard of. FAIR BROTHER.

Answers to December Puzzles.

- 1—Keep virtue's simple path before your eyes,
Nor think from evil good can ever rise.
- 2—Mite, emit, item, time.
- 3—Prelate, relate, elate, late, ate.
- 4—Heap on more wood, the wind is chill,
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new-born year
The fittest time for staple cheer.
And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course has rolled,
And brought blythe Christmas back again,
With all the hospitable train.
—[WALTER SCOTT.]
- 5—Nightingale.
- 6—March, arch, arc, charm, harm, mar.