

## UNCLE TOM'S DEPARTMENT.

## MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES:—

There is a poetic strand braided in with our make-up in most of us, and perhaps there is no time like May to bring the fact to remembrance. The icy chains are breaking, and "the rills and rivers sing with pride the anthem of the free." After being ice-bound so long all nature takes a sudden bound, and lo, everything is changed and changing. Poets of all time have felt the inspiring influences of these balmy spring days, and even as old a writer as Aristotle found out that "one swallow does not make spring, nor yet one fine day."

Longfellow says in *Hiawatha*:—

"Came the spring with all its splendor,  
All its birds and all its blossoms,  
All its flowers and leaves and grasses,"

and Mrs. Hemans has put her thoughts in words as follows:

"I come, I come! ye have called me long,  
I come o'er the mountain with light and song;  
Ye may trace my step o'er the wakening earth,  
By the winds which tell of the violet's birth,  
By the primrose stars in the shadowy grass,  
By the green leaves, opening as I pass."

while many young lovers and more dejected ones know Tennyson's words:

"In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;  
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;  
In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;  
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

We might quote much more, as each poetic nature has given us his or her thoughts, and even you, my young nephews and nieces, are not devoid of it, and I am sure the sparkling, dancing waters in the swollen mill-race, the freshness and beauty of spring at this May time, are calling forth such thoughts as the long winter did not arouse, and so it is that different circumstances of life call out the different parts of our character, and it is well to rub against others in the battle of life. It is begun now, it began even before that first day at school when you met so many boys and girls whose faces were strange to you. It will go on till life is done. A true story may show you what I mean. A young man fond of poetry, beauty and art, and possessing a strong character, chose as his profession that of a physician. He enjoyed his work and excelled in it. An unlooked-for turn of affairs caused him to become a banker, and although he had previously no love of business he found there was lying in him, dormant till then, great business capacity.

Although I started out by quoting poetry, it was fully my intention to give some of my young friends a talk about more practical things. It is very right, and I rejoice to see you take such an interest in your Christian Endeavor Society and your Band of Hope. I am glad to see you fill your place there so creditably, but I wonder sometimes if that coal you put on before leaving home burnt up, or did you dump it in on the ashes in answer to mother's request, deeming it too much trouble for you to see that it burnt well. Was the baby cold and crying from its absence when father came in? You must know Uncle Tom expects an active member in either society to put in his or her work. Is the dusting left undone or carelessly done, causing somebody ruffled feelings? Are the books and toys left lying around for somebody else to pick up? Does thoughtfulness to see what there is to be done around the house or barn, or in the garden, characterize you? "O, Uncle Tom!" I hear you say, "you're too hard on us; we don't think yet about these things." Well, it's time you did; "I forgot" may almost always be rendered "I don't care," and "I didn't think" as a bad form of selfishness, for somebody has to think and do, and too often young folk leave that for others.

Brains have been given you to use, and thinking thus will not wear them out, but will serve to make them of better quality by accustoming them to constant use. A great secret of life success lies in this: the thoughtful person is wanted everywhere, the thoughtless one but seldom. By it you make yourself so useful you cannot be done without, and in that way are soon able and wanted to fill positions of trust and honor.

Arbor Day comes this month, and I hope each of you will use it to plant a tree somewhere, at home, or school, or on the road—ornamental, or fruit, or from the woods. When you are far away, or laid quietly to rest, that tree may prove a cool resting-place for the tired traveller, may help to stay the wind, it may gladden with its verdure weary eyes, be a thing of beauty, a resting-place for singing birds, it may scent the air in spring-time with its blossoms, and call to it the bee in search of sweets, or the delicate, dainty humming-bird. One tree each Arbor Day, and in a long life how many marks that we have lived will remain, tributes of thoughtfulness for others. UNCLE TOM.

## POETS' CORNER.

## Prize for Selected Poetry.

F. COLLIER, ORANGEVILLE, ONT.

Rev. Charles Kingsley was born in 1819, and died in 1875. He was an eminent English clergyman, Rector of Eversley, and Canon of Westminster. For some time he was Professor of Modern History at Cambridge. He has written many essays, novels and poems; all valuable contributions to his country's literature. His novels are very instructive, dealing largely with social problems, and evincing the man's deep sympathy with the laborer. Among his finest novels are *Westward Ho* and *Hypatia*, both excellent books. His poems are beautiful and original, his metaphors especially expressive and fresh; even his subjects are individual, and a clear purity of thought and lofty principle permeates his verses. His lines "Showers soft and steaming," "Crisp the lazy dyke," "Shattering down the snow-flakes off the curdled sky," I think especially striking, and original in thought and expression.

## Ode to the North-East Wind.

Welcome, wild North-Easter!  
Shame it is to see  
Odes to every zephyr;  
N'er a verse to thee.

Welcome, black North-Easter!  
O'er the German foam;  
O'er the Danish moorlands,  
From thy frozen home.

Tired we are of summer,  
Tired of gaudy glare,  
Showers soft and steaming,  
Hot and breathless air.

Tired of listless dreaming  
Through the lazy day;  
Jovial wind of winter  
Turns us out to play!

Sweep the golden reed-beds;  
Crisp the lazy dyke;  
Hunger into madness  
Every plunging pike.

Fill the lake with wild-fowl;  
Fill the marsh with snipe;  
While on dreary moorlands  
Lonely curlew pipe.

Through the black fir forest  
Thunder harsh and dry,  
Shattering down the snow-flakes  
Off the curdled sky.

Hark! the brave North-Easter!  
Breast-high lies the scent,  
On by holt and headland  
Over heath and pent.

Chime, ye dappled darlings,  
Through the sleet and snow,  
Who can over-ride you?  
Let the horses go!

Chime, ye dappled darlings,  
Down the roaring blast;  
You shall see a fox die  
Ere an hour be past.

Go! and rest to-morrow,  
Hunting in your dreams,  
While our skates are ringing  
O'er the frozen streams.

Let the fuscious South-wind  
Breathe in lover's sighs,  
While the lazy gallants  
Bask in ladies' eyes.

What does he but soften  
Heart alike and pen?  
'Tis the hard grey weather  
Breeds hard Englishmen.

What's the soft South-Wester?  
'Tis the ladies' breeze  
Bringing home their true loves  
Out of all the seas.

But the black North-Easter  
Through the snowstorm hurld  
Drives our English hearts of oak  
Seaward round the world.

Come, as came our fathers,  
Heralded by thee,  
Conquering from the Eastward,  
Lords by land and sea.

Come and strong within us  
Stir the Viking's blood,  
Bracing brain and sinew;  
Blow, thou wind of God!

## Song of the River.

Clear and cool, clear and cool,  
By laughing, shallow and dreaming pool;  
Cool and clear, cool and clear,  
By shining shingle and foaming weir;  
Under the eaves where the osprey sings,  
And the wild wall where the church bell rings,  
Undrilled by me, bathed in me, mother and child,  
Dank and foul, dank and foul,  
By the smoky town in its murky cowl;  
Foul and dank, foul and dank,  
By wharf and sewer, and shiny bank;  
Darker and darker the farther I go,  
Baser and baser the richer I grow,  
Who dare sport with the sin defiled?  
Shrink from me, turn from me, mother and child,  
Strong and free, strong and free,  
The flood gates are open away to the sea;  
Free and strong, free and strong,  
Cleansing my streams as I hurry along  
To the golden sands and the leaping bar,  
And the taintless tide that awaits me afar,  
As I lose myself in the infinite main,  
Like a soul that has sinned and is pardoned again,  
Undrilled by me, bathed in me, mother and child,  
Play by me, bathe in me, mother and child.

## Puzzles.

## 1—CHARADE.

We hail with joy another puzzler,  
A TOTAL helps to form the chain  
That shall weigh the anchor when we reach  
Our destination o'er the main.  
We must not FIRST our important stations  
In the canoe so great and strong,  
But Fair Brother's place must too be there,  
Else we couldn't get along.  
And he must have the power to choose  
What station he'd like best;  
Whatever then his choice may be  
Is free from all contest.  
A SECOND, too, we ought to have  
Lest anything give way,  
A similar fate might perhaps be ours,  
To the THIRD of a ship too gay.  
So while our ocean voyage lasts,  
We must have a pleasant time;  
Friend Devitt must be on our programme too,  
And we'll have lots of rhyme.

LILY DAY.

## 2—ANAGRAM.

Among the merry "puzzlers"  
Who are in your happy band,  
I have made bold to enter,  
And to all extend my hand.  
Among the pleasures near us  
Which often we have sought,  
There lies a seeming paradox  
Beneath "Robt. I came out."  
As "Longfellow's" and "Tennyson's"  
Among us are but few,  
Don't wonder at my verses  
From one evidently "new."

ADA SMITHSON.

## 3—CHARADE.

Lieutenant Charles Edwards is back again,  
May he never leave the "Don" any more;  
But ever be SECOND and willing to help  
By sending FIRST puzzles more and more.  
Amos Hawkins is in the race,  
I'm sure TOTAL he'll not be;  
And Miss Edith F. is a good puzzler,  
May we hear name often, quite often see.  
Tis thus our ship goes sailing along,  
Increasing its crew day by day;  
And when once you get to know our crew,  
You'll find it impossible to keep away.

H. REEVE.

## 4—CHARADE.

Dear old home, 'mid all its pleasure,  
In Ontario I left behind;  
For to seek a western treasure,  
'Twas "the ideal of my mind."  
Yes, I left my native village,  
Oh, the day, 'twas sad to part;  
Father, mother, sisters, brother,  
Sweetest memories of my heart.  
Amongst the rocks, the hills and valleys,  
In a first-class railway car;  
For three days and nights they took me  
O'er the world-famed C. P. R.  
Oh, the scenery was delightful,  
All along Superior's shore;  
Yes, the views were most transcendent  
In their beauty, o'er and o'er.  
When at last my journey ended,  
The prairies met my gaze;  
Ah, the sight was most enchanting,  
And it did my spirits raise.  
'Twas the "Land of milk and honey,"  
Ah, alas! I wish 'twere so;  
But I found I was deluded,  
And destined to meet with woe.  
For I'm seeking, seeking, seeking,  
Not "the ideal of my mind";  
For I've found that priceless treasure,  
'Tis a spirit true and kind.  
But I'm seeking for a mansion,  
Where in future I must come;  
I may take my bride, this spirit,  
And with God may dwell as one.  
Still I think of home and mother,  
Father, sisters, brother, too;  
And PRIME day I hope to meet them,  
If not in this world, in the new.  
Now, kind friends, you've heard my story  
Just a word and then I'm done;  
EXTRE you may be transported,  
To this land of the setting sun.

FAIR BROTHER.

## 5—ENIGMA.

My first is admired and aimed at  
By old, young, rich and poor;  
My second a word of two letters,  
If you're smart you'll see it here sure;  
My third always comes with winter,  
Much fun it affords us too;  
Total is skill which puzzlers need  
If good work they mean to do.

ADA ARMAND.

## 6—RIDDLE.

My first is to provide food for a party large or small;  
My second oft adorns a church and sometimes, too, a hall;  
The two combined may oft be seen crawling on a wall.

ADA ARMAND.

## 7—METAGRAM.

I am the fruit of the "great palm tree,"  
Change my head and I am "destiny,"  
Now change again "a kind of door" you see,  
Again "to dislike greatly" this will be,  
Change once more and I am "lardy slow";  
Again, and I "a companion" show,  
Once more and "the top of the head" I ween,  
Again, and "a settled allowance" is seen.

EDITH FAIR BROTHER.

## 8—STAR.

1—A consonant. 2—A crown. 3—A beginner. 4—A Jewish month. 5—A genus of leguminous trees and shrubs, usually with thorns and pinnate leaves, and of an airy, elegant appearance. 6—An emollient. 7—An article. 8—A consonant. 9—A consonant.

FAIR BROTHER.

## Answers to 1st April Puzzles.

O	1 Easter Sunday.
A	2 Innocent.
C	3 Nothing, sea.
T	4 There, here, ere.
A	5 Upon.
T	6 Felony.
I	7 Lily Day.

## Names of Those Who Have Sent Correct Answers to April 1st Puzzles.

Henry Reeve, L. Irvine Devitt, Oliver Smiley, Addison Snider, Fred Hall, Henry Bobier, Lizzo Miller, Ed. A. Fair Brother, "Gipsy Queen," A. R. Borrowman, Josie Sheehan, Lily Day, Edith Fair Brother, Agatha Prudhomme, Geo. W. Byth, Ada Smithson, Mary Morrison.