



## UNCLE TOM'S COLUMN.

The long winter evenings, the happy hours of the farmer's family, are now approaching. Let us be preparing for them. The first thing necessary before we can enjoy our leisure hours is to feel that we have our work completed. Are your lessons ready for to-morrow's school? Are all the chores done up? Then if they are, we can have plenty of fun, and not worry about trouble, to pay for it in the morning.

When you get at it, enjoying yourselves, don't forget Uncle Tom. He would like well to be along with you, and would try to lead in the sport, but as he cannot be everywhere at once, write and tell him what you did.

I was very agreeably surprised the other day upon opening a package sent to me by express, to find a splendid piece of wedding cake sent to me by one of my Quebec nieces. She did not say, though, whose wedding it was; whether her own or some one else's.

It makes me feel dreadfully old to think of my nieces getting married, but I suppose it can't be prevented.

I paid a visit last month to some of my nieces and nephews in this vicinity, and had a very pleasant time. You ought to have seen what a quantity of melons I eat. They were splendid and I could not help it, and I believe the young folks were just as bad. Melon time is over now, so when I go to see you I will have apples and cider, and perhaps you have gathered some nuts; we will tell stories until the lamps are lit, and then have games and a regular romp at the end. Oh, it will be jolly—but "How, when and where?"

Hattie Haviland thinks it would be delightful to have a picnic of all my family, Aunt Tom and boy included. Oh dear, no! Too cold altogether. Next year, maybe, but when I get down to Ingersoll, if ever I do, I am going to picnic at that house.

Maggie Manning says she has found out by the family picture that I am married, and wants to know by what name to call this newly discovered aunt of hers. Well, it's hard to say; my little girl calls her "mamma." If that is any information, Maggie is welcome to it; and I call her—oh, never mind, she generally comes without calling, especially if there is anything good going on. Please to write again, Maggie.

Here is a letter which was mislaid when received, but is too good to destroy even if it is late in the season:

Tilsonburg, May 19th, 1874.

Dear Uncle Tom,—I have just come in from setting one of my ducks (I have six); her nest is close to the water—such a nice nest—and she has plucked almost all the down off her breast to make it warm. I put 15 eggs under her, and she looked up at me so pleased, just as if she wanted to thank me for them.

I want to tell you about my little brother's kitten; it was the wisest thing I ever saw. When Eddie cried it always ran to him to comfort him, and it was such fun to see them play hide-and-seek together. Eddie would hide and call kitty, and she would run and look around till she found him, and then look up in his face for him to hide again. No more now from your loving niece,

AGGIE FRANCIS.

Stone Ridge Farm, May 15th, 1874.

Dear Uncle Tom,—Will you allow me to become one of your nephews? On looking over my cousins' letters (I don't know that I can call them cousins until I am adopted), I cannot find one from good old Prince Edward. I really think it too bad. I should be proud to be considered one of your nephews, but more so to be the only representative of our beautiful county. I think our cousin, Aggie Smith, was about right when she said big brothers wasn't a humbug, for I have a sister some years younger than myself, and she don't consider me as such. I have no puzzles to send in this month. I will wait until we are better acquainted and see whether this letter slips through the great hole in your pocket. Hoping I may be adopted in your family, I remain

your would-be nephew,

WM. H. ECKERT.

Rednersville P. O., Ont.  
All right, William; you are in the family, now; see that you help in the work.

And now you are all going to be sorry. Your cousin, Willie Rutherford, whom we all like so much, has been unfortunate. His father's store was burned on the night of the 18th of August, and he had barely time to escape with his life. He lost his watch and his gun, and a great many other knick-knacks of his own, including the family picture (he has sent for another of them). I know that you will all feel for him in his trouble.

### HIDDEN RIVERS OF ASIA.

276.—I went in, dust and all.

277.—O Bill you bad boy.

CANADIAN CUFF.

278.—I express an odd number; behead me and I am even. What am I?

279.—Without me, city ne'er arose, Nor would man find secure repose; Behead me and a stream I flow, Through northern England's moorlands low; Again behead me and I am Just what my whole is unto man.

### SQUARE WORDS.

280.—The title of an emperor; a division of the earth; a girl's name; to peruse a book.

281.—My first is what eagles do, My second is less than twice, My third is a portion of land; My fourth is too weak for a cane.

282.—There were fifteen travellers who stopped at a public house and called for a dinner. It was served up and placed upon a three-cornered table, five sitting on each side. They invited the landlord to dine with them. After they had finished their meal, they proposed to count, commencing at some one, and count five, and whoever counted five was to leave the table, or in other words every fifth man step out. They further agreed that the last man left was to pay the bill. They so counted as to have it fall upon the landlord.—Now, what seat did the man occupy who started the count?

### ANSWERS TO OCTOBER PUZZLES.

267.—Timothy Johnstone courts Susanah Dunn. It was Dunn when it was begun; it was Dunn when it was half done, yet it wasn't Dunn when it was finished, for it was Johnstone. 268.—Rhubarb. 269.—Carpet. 270.—Pennsylvania. 271.—Durham. 272.—Fox. 273.—Elbe. 274.—Herring. 275.—Bass.

### GAMES.

#### 11—BLINDMAN'S BUFF, SEATED.

The company arrange themselves in a circle upon chairs, which are placed very near together. The person who offers to play the part of the blind man allows a handkerchief to be bound over his eyes by a person who undertakes this part. The players hastily change their places to baffle his sagacity. Then he approaches the circle without groping, for this is expressly forbidden, and seats himself in the lap of the first person he comes to, and without feeling, but by listening to the stifled laughter around, to the rustling of the robes (the sound of which often discovers the wearer), or perhaps by a fortunate guess, he is enabled to tell the name of the player upon whose lap he is seated; and in case he is unsuccessful with the name of the personage, describe her in such a manner that she can be recognized. If the blind man guesses correctly, the person discovered takes his place, puts on the bandage and performs the same part; if, on the contrary, he is mistaken, the company clap their hands to inform him of his error, and he renews the experiment in the same manner and without employing any other means than those authorized by the game. It is customary for the company, in order to prevent the blind man from recognizing persons too readily, to resort to various stratagems, as, for instance, some spread over their laps the skirts of their neighbors' dresses, others cover their's with the cushions of the chairs, and the ladies who are dressed in silk place their shawls over their laps; in fine, all try to disguise themselves in the best manner possible.

#### 12—BLIND MAN'S BUFF BY THE PROFILE.

In this game the blind man's eyes are not bandaged, but he is, notwithstanding, obliged to exercise all his penetration. A piece of white and rather fine linen is stretched upon a frame like a screen, in the same way as when exhibiting a magic lantern. The blind man is seated upon a stool, so low that his shadow is not represented upon the linen which is spread over the screen. Some distance behind him a single lighted taper is placed upon a stand, and all the other lights in the room are extinguished. When these arrangements are made the rest of the company form a kind of procession, and pass in single file between the blind man (who is expressly forbidden to turn his head) and the table upon which the light is placed. This produces the expected effect;

the light of the candle, intercepted by each of the company in turn as he passes before it, casts upon the piece of white linen a succession of shadows quite accurately defined. As these shadows pass before him, the blind man is obliged to name aloud the person who he supposes is passing at the moment, and the errors into which he falls cause shouts of laughter, more or less prolonged. It is hardly necessary to say that each one, as he passes before the light, tries to disguise his air, his height, his gait, to prevent his being recognized.

#### 13—PORCO, OR ITALIAN BLIND MAN'S BUFF.

Several persons, male and female, join hands so as to form a circle, and one person, who is blindfolded, is placed in the centre with a small stick in his or her hand. The players dance round the hood-winked person, who tries to touch one of them with the wand, and if he succeeds the ring stops. The player then grunts like a pig—hence the name of the game—crows, or imitates some animal, and the person touched must endeavor to imitate the noise as closely as possible, without discovering his or herself. If the party touched is discovered, then the hood-winked player transfers the bandage and the stick to that person, and takes the vacant place in the ring, who once more resume the dance until another person is touched.

#### 14—FRENCH BLIND MAN.

In this game, instead of blindfolding one of the players, his hands are tied behind him, and in that difficult way he must endeavor to catch one of his companions, who must, when caught, submit to the same restraint.

#### 15—THE RIBBONS.

Each person in the company takes a ribbon and holds it by one end. The other ends are all united in the hand of the one who leads the game, and who consequently is placed in the middle of the circle. When he says "pull" they must let go; when he says "let go," they must pull the ribbon which they hold. It is astonishing how many forfeits are won at this simple game.

#### 16—THE COTTON FLIES.

One of the players takes a flake of cotton or a bit of down, which he casts into the air in the midst of a circle formed by those present, who are seated close together. He at once puffs with his breath to keep it floating in the air, and the one towards whom the flake takes its course must puff in the same manner to keep it from falling upon his lap, which would cost him a forfeit.

#### 17—THE HUNTSMAN.

One of the players is styled the "Huntsman," and the others must be called after the different parts of the dress or accoutrements of a sportsman; thus, one is the coat, another the hat, whilst the shot, shot-belt, powder, powder-flask, dog and gun and every other appurtenance belonging to a huntsman has its representative. As many chairs as there are players, excluding the huntsman, should next be ranged in two rows, back to back, and all the players must then seat themselves. Being thus prepared, the huntsman walks round the sitters and calls out the assumed name of one of them; for instance, "gun," when that person immediately gets up and takes hold of the coat-skirts of the huntsman, who continues his walk and calls out all the others one by one. Each must take hold of the skirts of the person before him, and when they are all summoned, the huntsman sets off running around the chairs as fast as he can, the other players holding on and running after him. When he has run around two or three times, he shouts out "bang," and immediately sits down on one of the chairs, leaving his followers to scramble to the other seats as they best can. Of course one must be left standing, there being one chair less than the number of players, and the player so left must pay a forfeit.

HATTIE HAVILAND.

To be Continued.

## UNCLE TOM'S SCRAP BOOK.

Landlady (fiercely)—"You must not occupy that bed with your boots on!" Boarder—"O, never mind; there only an old pair. The bed-bugs can't hurt 'em. I'll risk it, anyhow."

### STORY OF A TOMBSTONE AGENT.

Gibbs is a tombstone agent. He finds it to his advantage to work upon the feelings in making a sale. The other day he happened to be in a strange section, and was sent to call upon a Mrs. Brown, who had lately lost her husband. He introduced himself and was invited to sit down; spoke of the weather, and then getting a round to business, said rather tenderly,—

"So you have lost your husband?" She wept and said that it had that resemblance. He said he sympathized with her in

her hour of affliction; that the best of friends were doomed to part, and but few knew any more whose turn would be next. He had not the honor of being acquainted with Mr. Brown, but he had heard him spoken of all over the country in the highest terms of praise (this was his usual style whether he had or not); everybody considered him an honorable man, and an affectionate husband, and they mourned his loss with the most tender affection, and he deserved a fitting memorial to his memory; and as it was the last sad rite that she could do, he begged her to look over some excellent monumental designs in Italian and American marble, which he was prepared to sell at the lowest terms. Said she—

"Looky here, mister, you said he was an honorable man and an affectionate husband, when you know you lie; he wasn't no such thing. It's true I've lost him, but he ain't dead; he ain't the kind that dies. He run off last Wednesday with another woman, and doesn't need a tombstone, I'm sorry to say; and I'd be much obliged to you if you'd light out, and not come back here until you have an occasion, mister."

He faded away from there, and stayed in that neighborhood two days, endeavoring to cultivate an acquaintance with the man who sent him there.

### ACHIEVEMENTS FOR WAGERS.

(From Chambers' Journal.)

Some of the achievements depending on the incentive of wagers were in past times very odd; and journalists always looked out for such narratives in times when society had not yet begun to move on, literally and figuratively at railroad speed.

In the early part of the reign of George III two gentlemen made an eccentric wager at a coffee house near Temple Bar. One of them undertook to jump into water seven feet deep, with all his usual clothing, and undress completely. He did it, and if we picture to ourselves the twisting and wriggling involved in such an operation, floating the whole of the time, we must admit it to be as difficult an affair as it was ludicrous.

A butcher, on a calm summer's evening, undertook, for a wager, to cross the Thames in his wooden tray. In this exploit, using his hands as paddles, he made his passage safely from Somerset Stairs to the Surrey side, providing himself with a cork jacket in case of accident. The chronicler took care to record that "seventy boat-loads of spectators were present; and bets to the aggregate amount of more than a 1000 guineas depended on the event."

A gentleman undertook, for a wager, that he would stand for a whole day on London Bridge, with a tray full of good sterling sovereigns, and would fail to find customers for them at a penny a piece. The report is that he won the wager, all the passers-by believing that he was merely trying to cheat them with brass imitations.

During a visit paid by one of the royal dukes to a victorious ship of war at Spithead, a sailor got on the very top of the mainmast (the truck), and stood there upon his head, waving his hat round and round on one foot. It is to be hoped that display of antipodean loyalty was duly appreciated.

Heidegger, Master of the Revels to George II., was considered to be the ugliest man in England. A wager was laid that a competitor for this doubtful honor could be found. An old woman from St. Giles' was brought forward, and the umpire, with Heidegger's own approval, was about to award the palm to her; but Heidegger, in response to a suggestion, put on the old woman's bonnet, to render the conditions more equal: the additional ugliness was so indescribable, that the victory was awarded to him.

Long before the days of steamboats, a gentleman wagered a thousand guineas that he would make a boat move twenty-five miles an hour. He accomplished it in a very singular way, and at a considerable outlay in money and ingenuity. He caused a circular canal to be dug, 100 feet in diameter and nine feet wide, and filled with water; a horizontal pole, equal in length to the radius of the circle, was pivoted at one end to a strong post in the middle, and fastened at the other end to a boat; a horse trotted in a smaller circle, at a point nearer to the post than to the boat, dragging the pole round; and the leverage thus singularly obtained sufficed to give a velocity of twenty-five miles an hour to the outer end of the pole, and consequently to the boat.

We have only space left to notice finally the wager concerning Sir John Throckmorton's suit of clothes, on which a thousand guineas depended. At five o'clock on a June morning in 1811, two Southdown sheep were shorn; the wool was washed, carded, slubbed, roved, spun and woven; the cloth was scoured, fulled, tented, raised, sheared, dyed, and dressed; and at 6:30 the same evening, the wool which had clad the sheep in the morning was worn as a dress suit by Sir John at his own dinner-table.