

UNCLE TOM'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES:—

Last month we wrote of some who had lately gone
 "Where the wicked cease from troubling
 And the weary are at rest,"
 and who had been laid to rest, leaving behind them many memories and what they had written. Yes, that, if it be worthy, will live on through the years. Old men, like your Uncle Tom, children, cling to the loves of long ago, and the years seem to make them dearer. Two poets who had grown up with him—grown to hoary hair—had passed away.

We have read our favorite poems at the close of the old year, and listened to the ringing of the New Year bells. We thought of the past year, and of all the years now gone for ever, and with which 1892 is now numbered. We tried to look forward, too, as if we would peer into the mysteries before us, but with a tremor, yet with hope and faith, asked for guidance and a blessing on the opening year.

We are not going to lament for the great old men who are gone, nor for the past or passing years, but, with a resolve to make this the best year, look about us for the fresh young faces who are going to fill some empty places. In fiction, at least, this is not difficult, for there stands J. M. Barrie, author of "The Little Minister" and "A Window in Thrums." My nephews will be pleased to know he is a great lover of games and out-of-door sports. He is dark-haired and dark-eyed. He was born in Forfarshire, Scotland, and his writings are sketches of Scotch life and character simply told. When attending high school he used to see Thomas Carlyle, and he read his writings with interest, and believes that author to be the only one who has influenced him. Young Barrie began writing for the press by contributing accounts of cricket matches and letters. He went to a university at the age of eighteen, and seems to have succeeded well in studying literature, but was not a very persevering student in earlier years. One of his Professors, Dr. Masson, of Edinburgh University, and his minister, Dr. Whyte, gave him recommendations, and he secured a place on a newspaper called the Nottingham Journal, and during his last months on that paper contributed articles to London newspapers. He wrote books of less note, but when "A Window in Thrums" came out it gave Barrie at once a place in literature, taking the reading world by storm. "The Little Minister" is a later book, and he is now engaged on others, of which you will hear later.

Of Rudyard Kipling, another author, I have not room in this letter, but you may hear all the sooner again from
 UNCLE TOM.

The prize-winners for best original puzzles during 1892 are: 1st, Charlie Edwards, Clarence, Ont.; 2nd, Geo. W. Blyth, Marden, Ont.; 3rd, Lily Day, New Carlisle, P. Q.; and for answers: 1st, Geo. W. Blyth; 2nd, Addison Snider, Floradale, Ont.; 3rd, I. Irvine Devitt, Floradale, Ont.; 4th, Almer Borrowman, Middleville, Ont.; and 5th, Charlie Edwards.

For 1893 I will offer over \$10 in prizes. For the best original puzzles: 1st prize, \$3; 2nd, \$2; 3rd, \$1; 4th, 50c; and for the most correct answers to the puzzles: 1st prize, \$1.50; 2nd, \$1; 3rd, 75c; 4th, 50c; 5th, 25c. Miss Ada Armand and Fairbrother again debarred from competing, although I hope they will assist us again, for I'm sure that you all enjoy their excellent puzzles.

Now that the ADVOCATE is to appear twice a month, I will not give a fixed date for your puzzles (one or two at a time is plenty) to be in our office, for if they are late for one issue they will come in for the next. All answers to puzzles will be credited, and they will now come out in every other number. For instance, the answers to the 1st January puzzles will not be published till the 1st February, and so on. So please all work hard, and may many new names appear among our numbers. Write on one side only, and send the answer along with your puzzle.

With every good wish for the new year to you all, from
 UNCLE TOM.

POET'S CORNER.

First Prize for Selected Poetry.

WM. L. ROSE, PILOT MOUND, MAN.

JOHN KEATS.

John Keats was born at Moorfields, London, October 29th, 1795. He received his education, which was very limited, and included a smattering of Latin, but no Greek, at a school kept by a Mr. Clarke, at Enfield. Leaving school at fifteen, he was apprenticed for five years to a surgeon in Edmonton. Here he received his first impulse toward poetry, in 1812, with the reading of Spenser, of which poet he was always an ardent admirer. After having served his apprenticeship, he came to London to walk the hospitals; but the practice of surgery soon became distasteful to him, and in a short time he abandoned it and devoted himself to writing. His first great poem was "Endymion," published in 1818. This poem has survived the adverse storm of criticism with which it was assailed, and has now taken its merited station in English literature. His other chief poems are, "Isabella," "Lamia," "Eve of St. Agnes," "Hyperion," which last was never finished, and many shorter poems. Failing health forced him to leave England, and he went to Italy. Consumption soon did its deadly work, and he died at Rome, February 27th, 1821, aged 26. His ashes are buried in the Protestant cemetery, just outside the walls of Rome, and beside Shelley, who was buried in the following year.

Beauty.

BY JOHN KEATS.

A thing of beauty is a joy forever:
 Its loveliness increases: it will never
 Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
 A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
 Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
 Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
 A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
 Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
 Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
 Of all the unhealthy and o'erdarkened ways,
 Made for our searching? Yes, in spite of all,
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
 Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon

For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
 With the green world they live in; and clear rills,
 That for themselves a cooling covert make
 'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest lake,
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms;
 And such, too, is the grandeur of the dooms
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;
 All lovely tales that we have heard or read;
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences
 For one short hour: no, even as the trees
 That whisper round a temple become soon
 Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,
 The passion poesy, glories infinite,
 Haunt us till they become a cheering light
 Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast
 That, whether there be shine or gloom o'ercast,
 They always must be with us, or we die.

[Extract from Endymion.]

Modern Love.

And what is love? It is a doll dress'd up
 For idleness to cosset, nurse and dandle;
 A thing of soft misnomers, so divine
 That silly youth doth think to make itself
 Divine by loving, and so goes on
 Yawning and doting a whole summer long.
 Till Miss's comb becomes a pearl tiara
 And common Wellingtons turn Romeo boots;
 Then Cleopatra lives at number seven,
 And Anthony resides in Brunswick Square.
 Fools! If some passions high have warn'd the world,
 If queens and soldiers have play'd deep for hearts,
 It is no reason why such agonies
 Should be more common than the growth of weeds.
 Fools! Make me whole again that weighty pearl
 The Queen of Egypt melted, and I'll say
 That ye may love in spite of beaver hats.

Second Prize.

THOMAS W. BANKS, HAZELDEAN, ONT.

John Greeleaf Whittier, the Quaker Poet of America, was born near Haverhill, Massachusetts, in 1807. In all his writings he has shown himself in sympathy with civil and religious liberty. He expresses himself in clear, strong, idiomatic English, and his poetry is marked by simplicity, harmony, and a living appreciation of nature.

Lines.

This day, two hundred years ago,
 The wild grape by the river's side
 And tasteless groundnut trailing low,
 The table of the woods supplied.
 Unknown the apple's red and gold,
 The blushing tint of peach and pear;
 The morrow of the pow-wow told
 No tale of orchards ripe and rare.
 Wild as the fruits he scorned to till,
 These vales the idle Indian trod;
 Nor knew the glad, creative skill
 The joy of him who toils with God.
 O, Painter of the fruits and flowers!
 We thank Thee for Thy wise design,
 Whereby these human hands of ours
 In Nature's garden work with thine.
 And thanks that from our daily need
 The joy of simple faith is born;
 That he who strikes the summer weed
 May trust Thee for the autumn corn.
 Give fools their gold, and knaves their power;
 Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall;
 Who sows a field, or trains a flower,
 Or plants a tree, is more than all.
 For he who blesses most is blest;
 And God and man shall own his worth
 Who toils to leave at his bequest
 An added beauty to the earth.
 And, soon or late, to all who sow,
 The time of harvest shall be given;
 The flower shall bloom, the fruit shall grow,
 If not on earth, at last in heaven.

Third Prize.

RACHEL M. KNIGHT, RENFREW, ONT.

The following lines, written by Hon. Harvey Rice, in his eighty-first year, were sung by the Arion Quartette at the first annual convention of the Early Settlers' Association of Cuyahoga County, Cleveland, O., May, 1880:—

THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

Give me the good old days again,
 When hearts were true and manners plain;
 When boys were boys till fully grown,
 And baby belles were never known;
 When doctors' bills were slight and few,
 And lawyers had not much to do;
 When honest toil was well repaid,
 And theft had not become a trade.
 Give me the good old days again,
 When only healthy meat was slain;
 When flour was pure, and milk was sweet,
 And sausages were fit to eat;
 When children early went to bed,
 And ate no sugar on the bread;
 When lard was not turned into butter,
 And tradesmen only truth could utter.
 Give us the good old days again,
 When women were not proud and vain;
 When fashion did not sense outrun,
 And tailors had no need to dun;
 When wealthy parents were not fools,
 And common sense was taught in schools;
 When hearts were warm, and friends were true,
 And Satan had not much to do.

The Fountain in the Desert.

BY JOSEPH VEREY.

In the desert, wide and lonely,
 Lovely flowers bloomed unseen,
 Where, in all the waste around them,
 Never mortal step had been;
 Yet the flowers every morning
 Moistened with the early dew;
 And the song birds in the twilight
 To their sheltering branches flew.
 From afar there came a pilgrim,
 Passing through the desert wild,
 And he rested, faint and weary,
 Where the rosy blossoms smiled;
 While the happy birds above him
 Warbled in the evening hours,
 As the pilgrim slumbered, dreaming
 Of a fount beside the flowers.
 When the pilgrim woke at morning,
 Underneath the blazing sky,
 Parched with thirst he scanned the desert,
 Hoping only but to die;
 A remembrance of his dreaming
 Came his lonely heart to cheer;
 And he found beside the flowers
 A fountain sparkling, fresh and clear.

Then, courageous and undaunted,
 Rose the pilgrim from the sand;
 And pursued his weary journey
 Till he reached his native land.
 Thus may all earth's pilgrims gather
 Flowers of hope and love and praise,
 And from fresh and sparkling fountains
 Drink in life's untrodden ways.

Puzzles.

1—CHARADE.

(Partially by sound.)

Miss Armand doth excuses make,
 And I must do the same;
 But LAST, to look the matter up,
 I have no one to blame.

Unless it is perhaps myself:
 FIRST, grant that if you please.
 But, truth to tell, I busy was,
 And had no time for ease.

And so my puzzles had to go
 For once unto the wall;
 But then I see our honored REVERE
 Has given us a call.

He says, "I'm back again forever"—
 I hope that means to stay.
 And do his best for "Uncle Tom,"
 And work at puzzle play.

'Mongst the posers for November
 A familiar name I see;
 'Tis that of our eastern cousin,
 It fills my heart with glee.

Thou art ENTIRE, cousin HARRY;
 Thrice COMPLETE let it be.
 Although you dwell in Sackville,
 There's a TOTAL here for thee.

FAIR BROTHER.

2—

More than reading or writing
 All schoolboys delight in—
 At least by their mirth they confess it.
 That little word make,
 Only one letter take:

And a hundred to one you'll not guess it.
 GEO. W. BLYTH.

3—ARITHMETICAL PUZZLE.

A man with five weights can weigh any number of pounds
 from one to one hundred and twenty-one. What are they?
 GEO. W. BLYTH.

4—PUZZLE.

If you all well
 Perhaps you will see
 A word of six letters;
 From which take three,
 And ten will remain.
 Now how can this be?

CHARLIE S. EDWARDS.

5—TRANSPPOSITION.

The darkest FIRST has a silvery lining,
 If we LAST only see.
 Now cousins, let us cease repining,
 And cheer up old Uncle T.

I. IRVINE DEVITT.

6—DECAPITATION.

Old '92 has passed, and we
 His reign shall see no more;
 But in his stead comes '93,
 So his loss we must not deplore.

Our circle is existing still,
 Many friends have left 'tis true.
 Yet should not our hearts with rapture fill
 When an old face comes in view

Again?—'Tis the revival
 Of friend REVERE, and now he's here
 I send him a hearty welcome, and hope
 Sincerely that he'll remain in our sphere.

Cousin ADA's remarks seem to affect us all
 Similarly; and if I truly earn
 Her praises, they should PRIMA! me so
 That I fear my head, too, would turn.

Her LAST counsel I appreciate.
 My merits I'll not ignore—
 This race, when completed, good Uncle Tom
 Will judge for the best, I am sure.

LILY DAY.

Answers to December Puzzles.

1—Carpentry. 2—Backward. 3—Something.
 4—Never—Ever. 5—Reason.
 6—In the word *trade* may be found tread, read, eat, ate, are, dare, dart, tear, red, tea, rat, date, dear, art, ear, rate and at.

Names of Those Who Have Sent Correct Answers to December Puzzles.

I. Irvine Devitt, Geo. W. Blyth, Geo. Hagle, H. St. Clair Jellett, E. A. Fairbrother, A. Borrowman, Charlie S. Edwards, Ada Smithson, Addison and Olive Snider, George Rogers, Jessie Cumberland, Minnie Morrison.

What Becomes of the "Tomboy?"

And what of that little nondescript known as the tomboy? What becomes of the rouping, hoidenish girl who much prefers the society of the naughtiest boys to the nice, well-behaved daughters of respectable neighbors, and who can not endure the quiet games with the aforementioned cherubs and their meek dolls, who have such a tiresome fashion of forever smiling up into one's face?

Does she still continue to enjoy masculine sports when she has arrived at years of discretion? Is she still inclined to torn frocks, disheveled locks, and an abhorrence of all those things girls hold most dear? As far as our observation goes, we would most flatly say no; quite the reverse. The greatest tomboy we ever knew turned out to be the most demure creature at twenty that we could imagine.

She took to fancy work and hospital visiting with a vigor that seemed must be meant to atone for all those years when she could not be induced, save under the threat of being kept in the house, to take up a needle and struggle with the unhappy bit of patch-work that never seemed to progress beyond a most unsightly square that had been used to wipe away the tears from a very dirty little face bent over the obnoxious bit of lady-like employment, and the hospitals served to make up for the abhorrence of those childish days of anything that savored of respectable self-sacrifice.

Many other instances we have known where the most charming women have been evolved from the rude little tomboy girl; therefore, mothers, do not despair if the small daughter shows a decided penchant for tops and marbles rather than dolls and sewing.—[Philadelphia Times.]

NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS—"There are only two creatures," says the eastern proverb, "which can surmount the Pyramids—the eagle and the snail."