

## UNCLE TOM'S DEPARTMENT.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES:—

The threshing machine has gone its rounds, and the yield of another year is in bins in the granary. The potatoes are pitted, and soon, now, the turnips and cabbage, carrots and mangels will be in their allotted places. The fall plowing will still be to do, while Jack Frost leaves the ground fit for your hands to guide the bright steel through it. Now, do not think I am sorry that you have all this work to do; I think it is one of your greatest blessings. Thomas Carlyle, the "Apostle of Work," thought so, and if you want to know further of what he thought about it, just let his writings be your reading book for this fall and winter. Byron wrote:—

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore;  
There is society where none intrudes,  
By the deep sea and music in its roar."

In work, well done, there is a truer pleasure even than these give, whatever that work may be. In school, at home, in the shop or in the field, you will find it just about the same.

My large family of nieces and nephews are stretching out over such distances that it is with difficulty Uncle Tom keeps track of you all. While some of you "away down by the sea" can see old Atlantic's breakers, there are others in British Columbia who see the Pacific's swell. All the way between are young folk to whom old Uncle Tom claims kindred. He is willing and ready to be friends with all from east to west who need a word of counsel, or who are willing to learn from his life experiences. While some are looking earnestly seaward at this beautiful season, with Indian summer's glory over land and sea, some look on the old Rocky Mountains enclosed in purple mist. Others again are catching gophers on the plains, and others again who have learnt how from their Indian comrades are snaring rabbits or shooting prairie chicken, and yet others are after wild duck or geese among the marshes, which they call "sloughs," or making their way at evening where the partridge hide; for boys "out west" all ride a horse and shoot at least a "chicken," and, for that matter, the girls too, who can do both almost as well as their brothers. Then there is the quiet school-house and the shady road thither, where many little feet have trod and learnt their first lessons in the school of life—

"Free from tyrant fashion's rule,  
Coming to the district school."

In the busy noon of life  
Mid its restless fevered strife,  
As your pathways shall divide,  
From the roof tree wandering wide:  
Memory of these morning hours,  
Song of bird and scent of flowers,  
Beat of lamb and song of rill,  
Will come sweetly o'er you still,  
And your thoughts go yearning back,  
O'er the simple childhood track,  
When the longest road you knew  
Was the one that led you to—  
The school-house just a mile away,  
Where the birch and rule held sway."

UNCLE TOM.

## Wanted—Sunshine.

It is a curious fact that the world hasn't the slightest use for us when we are sad or in trouble. Our best is all that it cares for, and our worst it will not have under any circumstances. Some years ago, a lady who had met with more mishaps and reverses than often fall to the lot of mortals, invited an acquaintance, whom she had not met for some time, to call upon her. This acquaintance was a man not unknown to fame, and one who had some reputation as a writer of helpful and comfortable articles. He stood for a moment in a thoughtful attitude, and then said slowly: "Oh, well, I will come round some time when you get your affairs all straightened up. It gives me the blues to see you so full of mishaps and trouble. When it's all clear sailing again let me know, and I will come in just as I used to." It was a sort of brutal and cold-blooded answer, but it echoed the sentiment of the world exactly. The world doesn't want us when we are in trouble, and it doesn't want to come near us. It has no special sympathy to give us, but is an insatiable monster and is ever demanding. It will take even our heart's blood if we will give it, and sometimes take it whether we will or no. Unpleasant as the fact is, there seems to be no gainsaying it, and the only thing left to us is to accept it and make the best of it. We all know people whom we instinctively shun because their entire conversation is a recital of their misfortunes. They are depressing and trying to the nerves; and, after all, we cannot blame the world so much, for as individuals we are quite worried by them as is the community at large. There are two classes of people who are comfortable and comforting to have about—those who are too easy-going and indifferent to take or hold trouble, and others who have self-control and philosophy sufficient to keep their misfortunes to themselves.

## Conversation.

BY F. C.

One of the most useful and necessary accomplishments is that of being able to converse correctly, easily and intelligently with our fellow-men. Conversation is an art worthy of the most careful study, the most earnest attention. It is an art which yields the richest fruit, the choicest pleasure to the faithful student. There are two fundamental principles which constitute the requirements for success as a conversationalist, viz., thoughts to express, and language by which to express these thoughts.

To a naturally gifted mind thoughts come readily, but to the less favored man suitable topics can never be commanded when most needed. Now this difficulty can in time be gradually mastered and overcome. Proper cultivation, together with a supply of wholesome and necessary food, are the remedies, and may be administered in three ways: First, be observant, pursue your daily employment with wide-open eyes, meditate and soliloquize upon the events which take place every day around you. Carefully ponder and weigh causes and results. Be not content with noting the machinery at work, but investigate its structure, observing the relation of the part to the whole.

Secondly, if possible, no matter what your vocation may be, strive to follow one branch of study all through life. Select the one best suited to your taste and employment. Whether you revel mid the pages of ancient mythology, teeming with poetic imagery and ideal heroes, or delight in the historic scenes of politic struggles and bloody battles; whether you glean as an industrious husbandman in the fields of literature, or inclination lead you to choose nature's children as companions; whether you study the beauty and perfection of the flowers as a botanist, or compare the structure and habits of insect and bird as a zoologist; whatever you prefer, be it Philosophy, Mathematics or Geography, be diligent in its pursuit, slow and thorough of progress, advancing with steady, firm, set footsteps. The more you learn the more ignorant you will find yourself, the more cosmopolitan you will become.

Thirdly, read as thoroughly and extensively as possible. This will enrich your vocabulary, furnish food for thought, and enlarge your world. It will give you a command of language well nigh impossible to obtain otherwise. But be judicious in your selection of books. You have no time to waste in devouring trash. Confine yourself largely to standard authors until you have acquired sufficient judgment to select good books. Even with this limitation you have an extensive library in which you may pick and choose books suitable to your taste and fruitful of pleasure. I would suggest a careful reading of the best novels, essays, books of travel and poems. The following are some of the best-known works: The novels of Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Dumas, Walter Scott, the writings of Hawthorne, the essays of Macaulay, Addison, Goldsmith, Washington Irving, Lowell, the writings of Ruskin, Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, the dramas of Shakespeare and Moliere, the poetry of Tennyson, Milton, Chaucer, Longfellow, Byron, Dante, Goethe, Schiller, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Campbell. These may be interspersed with lighter reading, such as Ballantyne, Louisa Alcott, Wilkie Collins, Mrs. Hungerford, Stockton, Marion Crawford, etc. To those who are fond of travel and adventure I would recommend Miss Bird's books as extremely interesting and instructive, Robinson Crusoe, North-West Passage, by Milton and Cheadle, etc. But caution must be used in the selection of light literature, and the advice of others should be sought. When you do find a good author suited to your taste, read and re-read his books as frequently as possible, study the characters and arguments. Read every criticism and annotation you can obtain, which bears upon the book in hand. Mark your favorite passages and read them frequently. Commit to memory all the beautiful thoughts and description you meet with in a poem.

Then when you have furnished proper nourishment for the intellect and have culled the choicest flowers in this vast garden of prose and poetry, see that this rich in-gathering be used to the benefit of mankind—that you diffuse liberally the knowledge acquired by your own labor. To do this you must be able to express yourself correctly, clearly and concisely. Correct and fluent English is a most attractive accomplishment, and will win you many a good friend. That your language may be irrefragable as regards refinement, observe two rules. First, avoid all grammatical errors, slang and vulgar phrases. Mistakes are very common even among educated people, but a short time will suffice to remove this offence to refined ears. Watch your own talk, look for your vulgar phrases and slipshod sentences, and, last of all, correct them. In the second place, each day read some verses from your favorite poet; this is the surest way to acquire beautiful expression. Never read without a dictionary beside you, and master the meaning of each word as you proceed. This will extend your vocabulary and be a safeguard against verbosity. Besides frequent reading of poetry, select the best prose works for study. Ruskin's prose is the most perfect poetry. Goldsmith's essays contain the purest and best of English. Thus by following a plan similar to the foregoing you will become a pleasant companion, busy seeker after knowledge, and a useful member of the vast human association to which you belong.

## Puzzles.

1—CHARADE.

King Fairbrother, I now sit myself down,  
In compliance with your demand,  
And will try to explain myself  
To you, Dear Sir, the king of our band.  
But first let me exclaim,  
That I'm not a Dutchman, if a crank;  
Yet as neighbors I like the people,  
And I've ate Limburger and lager I've drank.  
Your friends down east,  
And I trust of these I'm not the least,  
Did reply to you while LAST in Carberry,  
But COMPLETELY getting a reply, either dull or cheery.  
And now, if to you we were to write,  
Pray what address would find out;  
Come answer quickly, if you please,  
And you'll find in corresponding well be PRIME YOU.  
HENRY REEVE.

2—CHARADE.

Oh, where! and oh, where! is Lily Day gone,  
Oh, where! and oh, where! may she be;  
She ran away from our puzzling band,  
And she lives in an eastern land.  
Her puzzles we did all admire,  
For they contain real blood and fire;  
And in the "Dom" she was getting higher and higher,  
And was near the COMPLETE of the spire.  
Go FIRST her a secret in her ear,  
And tell her we want her back,  
For we cannot afford to lose her, my dear,  
Since she's got so near the LAST of our class.  
HENRY REEVE.

3—CHARADE.

The picnic season now is o'er,  
Of summer we're bereft.  
The "ice cream" girls are scarcer, and  
The boys are getting left.

The dancing season's coming on,  
And winter'll soon prime night.  
When the boys COMPLETE to feel their LAST,  
And the "oysters" play, I spy.

FAIR BROTHER.

4—BEHEADINGS.

A little TOTAL in the orchard grew,  
Down the path walked Ed. and Sue,  
And into the tree a stick they quickly threw,  
And the little WHOLE fell at the feet of Sue;  
Sue took a bite, and LAST took a chew of Sue;  
Ed. felt a gripe, and Sue felt one too,  
And that was the end of these two.  
Adieu! adieu! adieu!  
HENRY REEVE.

5—METAGRAM.

I am a "hillock" or "bank" that is made with the hands.  
Change my head and I mean to be "fastened with bands."  
Change again and I'm "orthodox," or what some call a "strait."  
Again change and I'm known to "originate."  
Change again and I'm "globular," "open" and "plain."  
An "animal" to see, just change my head again.  
Change again I'm an "injury," "hurt" or a "bruise."  
Again, and I'm a "weight" of avoidupois.  
ADA SMITHSON.

6—DECAPITATION.

Another applicant we find,  
Ask ONE within our ranks,  
But sure he's there already—  
(I mean T. W. Banks).

Yes, gladly we all welcome him  
Into our puzzling sphere,  
For in this home of liberty  
All are welcome here.

A post within our ship you seek,  
If the good ones all be taken  
For this year, don't, I pray you,  
Retreat with courage shaken.

E'en tho' 'tis but to pull an oar,  
Your captain you assigns;  
Do not give up, but like Ben Hur  
Prepare for better times.

If you present two keep up,  
Although you're late beginning,  
I think you'll stand at New Year  
Within a THREE of winning.

ADA ARMAND.

7—ANAGRAMS.

There was a ship called ADVOCATE,  
It set its sails one day;  
Of its equipage some one said:  
"There's a hard crew sailed away."  
O, this sad man was surely wrong,  
For I myself was there,  
And truly such a noble crew  
Is what I can call rare.  
A bolt being loose beneath the ship,  
"I'll to rivet it dive in!"  
The middy said, but the water  
Just took him to the chin.  
Now, Captain Tom pulled near the shore,  
And through the deepening fog,  
They saw a stately maple tree,  
And it grew by the log  
On which I sat. They to it steered,  
And took me with them too;  
That's how I happened to be one  
Who sails in that canoe.  
Oh, such a ship, and such a ship  
As her ye never saw!  
"T'would be a severe critic  
Who'd find therein a flaw.  
Should such a one come meddling,  
He soon would be dismayed,  
He'd get a greeting fit to make  
Any bolder afraid.  
I meant to add a few more 'grams  
Before I closed my text,  
But had no time, so it must be  
Continued in my next.  
ADA ARMAND.

## Answers to 1st September Puzzles.

1—E T W E E 4—H A V E N  
T A I N T A L O N E  
W I D T H V O L E  
E N T R Y E N E I D  
E T H Y L N E E D Y

2—Forgot. 3—Lemonade. 5—A watch. 6—Without. 7—Each man had been married before, and each had a daughter, and each married the other's daughter. 8—Dearly, early. 9—Another.

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

Thos. W. Banks, George W. Blyth, Henry Reeve, Jessie Gordon, Josie Sheehan, Oliver and Addison Snider, A. R. Borrowman, Agatha Prudhomme, Geo. Rogers, Alice Anderson, J. W. Moore.