

UNCLE TOM

66 **T**O WHOM are you writing now? I declare, I never come to see you that I don't find you with that everlasting inkstand open and the pen just ready to dip." And Ruth Boyden tossed her gloves on the stand, her hat on the bed, and her jacket in the big chair. Then she proceeded to give May Gleason an enthusiastic hug. "Who is it? Tell me quick!"

"Oh, you crazy. It isn't always the same one. This morning it's Tom."

"Tom? Tom who?"

"Tom? Oh, just Tom. Uncle Tom, if you must have all the particulars."

"Well, then, May Gleason, I should think you would say Uncle Tom. I think it does sound so rude and discourteous when children fail to give their relatives their proper title. There's Joe Kenney always calls his mother Helen, and his father Joe. I'd lecture you well if you were my niece."

"Oh, Tom doesn't care."

"How do you know he doesn't care? His feeling might be very much hurt, and he would not say a word—just suffer in silence. Old people are very sensitive."

May giggled, though Ruth couldn't see a thing to laugh at.

"I think just as you do about it, and I'm going to reform. Now what shall we do? You haven't seen my new idea for sachets, have you? Wait till I wipe my pen and cover the ink, for it's sure to tip itself over if the cover isn't screwed on tight."

One morning later in the season Ruth Boyden received a note from her friend, which read something like this:

"Dear Ruth: Can you come up to tea to-night? I have just had a letter from Tom—I mean Uncle Tom—and he is coming up here for a few days before starting on a trip West. I should like to have you meet him, for he is my dearest relative. Wear your maroon trimmed with sable, you do look so superb in that. Come early, by 5 o'clock, so we can talk. Tom—I mean Uncle Tom—doesn't get here till the six train. Your most devoted MAY."

Ruth dressed herself in the maroon dress, and as she studied the reflection in the mirror she hoped he would feel satisfied with May's nearest friend. "I must try to be dignified and quiet. Old people don't ever like fly-away girls. Of course May has told him all about me. I do hope she hasn't overrated me. She thinks the world of Uncle Tom, and some way I should like him to be pleased with me. I am going to carry my lace handkerchief that Mrs. Baker gave me. It will make talk, for she was a returned missionary, and I am sure there is nothing better than that work. Almost all old people are interested in that."

"Oh, Ruth, you darling," was May's eager greeting. "I am so glad you wore that. I do think the white yoke and the fur bands round the neck and wrists do soften the tints so. Tom—there was a catch in her voice—"I mean Uncle Tom—is such a judge of beauty. But don't be alarmed; he will like you, I know—and your lace handkerchief, too—I am honored."

"I really put it on to have something to talk about, you know. Does your uncle enjoy missionary work?"

May half snickered and then covered it with a cough, but she hastened away with Ruth's wraps; while she was gone she laughed heartily. Her face, when she re-entered the room, was gravity itself.

Ruth tried to find out some of Uncle Tom's tastes, but May avoided the subject, and Ruth finally decided to trust to luck to show her what to say and do.

A little past 6 there was a commotion outside, and from the station cab Uncle Tom descended. He was welcomed at the door by May's mother, and May excused herself to greet him, saying: "Oh, Ruth, he is the handsomest, dearest man."

"I'm glad to see you, Tom, and I have a friend here to meet you."

"The friend?" was the laughing question.

"The only," was the reply. "I predict you'll say so, too."

Ten was called in a few minutes, and so Ruth did not meet Uncle Tom till they entered the dining-room. Then before she had become accustomed to the lights or could think what she would say May's voice said in a sort of trembling quaver: "Ruth, this is my Uncle, Mr. Gordon—Uncle Tom, you know."

Ruth looked. A young man not over 25 stood before her with right hand extended. He had the brightest of laughing blue eyes, and his hair of brown was so curly that May was always threatening to buy him side combs to keep it in place. He was, to say the least, somewhat astonished at the demeanor of May's friend, for he suddenly collapsed into a chair.

He laughed, and laughed, and laughed, until tears ran down her face, and May was fearful of an attack of hysterics. Tom turned to May, "Is anything the

matter with me? Is my necktie straight?" he asked, anxiously.

"What is the matter, Ruth?" and Mrs. Gleason brought the camphor, while Mr. Gleason stood wondering what ailed the girl; but then there was no accounting for girls, they are always surprising.

Ruth suddenly recovered herself at sight of the camphor, rose to her feet, and said, "I do hope you will forgive me—all of you. But I—it was so funny—I had no time to recall my senses. Oh, May, you did it on purpose. You see I expected to see an old man of 65 at least, who would be interested in missionary work—ha, ha, ha, isn't it too funny? I can't get over it."

"I might wear a white wig if you'd like to have me look older," said Tom shortly.

"Now, Tom—I mean Uncle Tom," began May.

"Come, now, drop that."

"Well, she said it was irreverent to call you just Tom, and it would hurt your feelings, and I promised to reform, and I'm going to," but she was laughing as she said it.

"I don't believe I can ever forgive you, May," said Ruth.

"Oh, yes, you will. But didn't I fool you most completely?"

A jollier party never sat at the Gleason table than the one that night, for every now and then May would say, "Tom, I mean Uncle Tom," or Ruth would suddenly have a laughing fit in her handkerchief.

"I don't quite understand it yet."

"Oh, Tom, I mean Uncle Tom, is mamma's half brother, and there is twenty-five years difference in their ages."

Tom Gordon deferred his trip West, and when he went he took Ruth.

"Dear Aunt Ruth," whispered May as she kissed the bride. "Don't you ever dare," was the reply, whereupon May declared it sounded so discourteous, and she didn't want to hurt her feelings, "but if you insist you'll forgive me if I sometimes forget to put on the title."

"I'll forgive you on condition that you always forget it."

Wale's Life Saved by a Frenchman.

The credit for saving the life of the Prince at the recent attempt to assassinate him at Brussels, rightly belongs to M. Louis von Mol, a young Parisian law student. M. von Mol says: "I had just alighted from the train coming from Liege, which reaches Brussels at 5 o'clock, when I heard that the Prince of Wales was in the station, and I went into the carriage to see his royal Highness and bow to him. I saw a servant alight from the carriage; then, as the train was starting, I perceived a young man springing upon the footboard and holding something in his hand. I at first thought that it was the servant returning; but all at once there came the report of a firearm. I sprang upon the malefactor, caught him with one hand by the throat, and with the other disarmed him. We rolled upon the ground. As I picked myself up an individual tried to seize the revolver I held—in order to claim the honor of having apprehended Spido; and an altercation then ensued, with the result that the police came up, and on seeing that I held the revolver and that my hand was covered with blood from an injury I had received in my fall, at once arrested me. Fortunately, the confusion did not last long, but in the course of it I was brutally ill-treated by the police. At last, seeing their mistake, they wished to apologize to me, but I refused to accept their excuses until the things I had lost in the scuffle—an umbrella and a pair of gloves—were returned."—New York Journal.

Preferred Speech.

The spirit of love and kindness to all, which pervaded every word and deed of Phillips Brooks, did not hinder his keen appreciation of others' failings and short-comings, or his own.

"Why in the world doesn't Brown write his autobiography, and have it published?" said one of the bishop's friends, referring to an incessant talker and most egotistical man, who had been wasting an hour of the bishop's most precious time by a rehearsal of some unimportant happenings.

"Why, he'd rather tell it, of course," said the bishop; and then like a flash came regret for the quickly spoken truth, and he turned on his friend with a half-humorous, half-distressed face.

"What do you mean by asking me such a question as that, when I'm off my guard?" he demanded, reproachfully.—Youth's Companion.

American Savings Banks.

In 1895 there were 1,030 savings banks in the United States, and the deposits in them amounted to \$1,841,000,000. In 1839 there were 942 savings banks in the United States, and their deposits were \$2,401,000,000.

CHICAGO'S CHURCH CENSUS.

In a Population of 2,000,000 the Believers Number 871,152.

As Chicago passes the 2,000,000 mark in population the city comes to the front with a noteworthy showing in religious statistics. The total church membership foots up 871,152, while the number of edifices or places of worship has increased to 789. If the number of points at which mission services are held are added the total would reach considerably over 900.

The magnitude of this showing may perhaps be better appreciated if the figures are compared with those recently published in New York showing the number of churches and church members in that city. New York, according to these statistics, has only 541 churches with a combined membership of 723,172. The figures in detail show several differences between the two cities. While New York is far ahead of Chicago in Episcopal churches, having 121 to Chicago's forty-nine, the difference is more than balanced in Catholic and Methodist churches. In Chicago there are 116 Catholic churches with a membership of 600,000, as against 103 Catholic churches in New York with 543,163 members. New York has but sixty-nine Methodist churches

worship to 789 and the number of church members to 871,152. It is estimated that there are now over 2,000,000 inhabitants in Chicago making the average of one church for every 2,534 people. These figures show a great increase in the proportionate number of churches to the population over the figures of 1890, the relative number being almost as great as it was twenty years ago.

It is an acknowledged fact that women are mostly in the majority among church members. Some authorities place the percentage of women over men at 75 per cent. If this be correct, and it will not be disputed that this estimate is at least approximately near the right figure, then a rather small portion of the male population of Chicago is connected with the churches. In the average church the preponderance of women is always noticeable, and if one will take the trouble to count he will find that the women outnumber the men about three or four to one. Perhaps exceptions must be made to this rule in the cases of the independent and liberal churches, where generally men are found in larger numbers than at the orthodox churches.

Clara Barton's Characteristics.

"Everyone probably has an idea of what Clara Barton is like, but few have a correct one," said a Red Cross nurse to a New York Tribune reporter. "The photographs of her represent a plain-looking, elderly woman, of sensible appearance. She has attributes that a photograph never reproduces. Combined with the characteristics that go to make her the really wonderful woman that she is, is one that the majority would never suspect her of, and which, perhaps, more than any other, makes her beloved in the very kind of work to which she has given her life. Miss Barton is a regular bohemian. No daily frequenter of little out-of-the-way table d'hotes is a more thorough bohemian in tastes than is Miss Barton. When she is in New York she is never happier than when taking her meals hit or miss—somewhere—anywhere! The odder the place and time the better it suits her. As to time, Miss Barton never bothers herself. She gets things done when she gets around to it, and if she has planned a thing for Tuesday morning and gets it done on Thursday afternoon, it is all right. There may be considerable remonstrance and fussing on the part of those who were to do the things along with her, but she is never flustered in the least by that. She just pursues the even tenor of her way, and if a president and a cabinet have to wait awhile because she isn't just on time for her appointment, well, it is Miss Barton, and they simply wait.

Something in It.

The question, "What's in a name?" may be answered from one point of view by narrating a bit of experience confided to one of his friends by a man named Coward.

Now be it known that there are branches of the Coward family who can trace an honored lineage back to old colonial days, and are quite as proud of their ancestry as the Vere de Veres or Fitz Montmorencys.

"Have you never thought of changing your name?" asked the friend.

"No," answered the Coward in question. "There are too many thrilling associations connected with it."

"In what way?"

"Well, from the time I was a little boy until I went through college I had more than fifty fights on account of it."

An Anecdote of Stanley.

When H. M. Stanley was writing "Through the Dark Continent" he was in the habit of spreading his maps and charts upon the floor. One day his favorite cat went to sleep on a chart spread out on the hearth rug. By and by the chart was wanted, and one of the assistants went to turn pussy away, when Stanley stopped him. "Don't disturb the cat," he said, "we can get on without the chart until she wakes up. If you only knew how good the sight of that cat was to me, you would never let her move from where she is." After his trials among uncivilized tribes the sleeping cat was to him the symbol of domestic peace and comfort.

Giving Bachelors the Go By.

The town of Givet, in the Ardennes, is taking steps to put an end to the depopulation of France. Hereafter in all town offices first fathers of more than three children and next married men will be preferred to bachelors. Prizes of \$5 will be awarded yearly to those parents who have sent the largest number of children to school regularly, and scholarships in the national schools will be reserved for families only of more than three children. Fathers of families shall also have the preference for admission to almshouses and old people's homes.

Amusements for Hospital Patients.

The London Lancet contends that hospital patients should be allowed to play cards as well as to smoke, provided this does not annoy other patients.

Considering the many old men who are struggling along in poverty, it is wonderful that young men do not take better care of their money, and save it for the inevitable rainy day.

DROPPING WITH A PARACHUTE.

Circus Balloon Man Says It Is Gentle and Not Extra Hazardous.

"Coming down from the clouds in a parachute is like a dream," said a circus balloon artist. "Ever dream of falling from a high place? You come down, alight quietly, and awake, and you're not hurt. Well, that's the parachute drop over again. No, there is no danger. A parachute can be guided readily on the down trip, but you can't steer a balloon. To guide a parachute out of harm's way a practical hand can tilt it one way or the other, spill out air, and thus work it to where you want to land, or to avoid water, trees, chimneys, or church spires. Circus ascensions are generally made in the evening. When the sun goes down the wind goes down. The balloon then shoots into the air and the parachute drops back on the circus lot, or not far away. A balloon is made of 4-cent muslin, and weighs about 500 pounds. A parachute is made of 8-cent muslin.

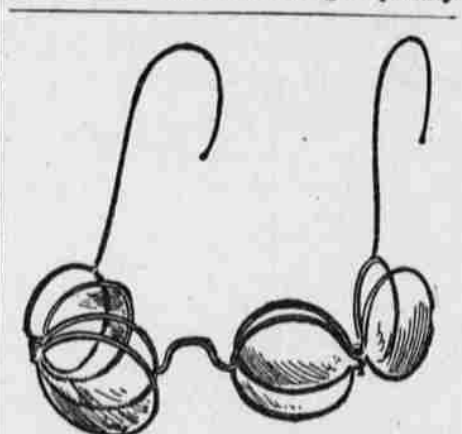
"There is much more danger in coming down in a balloon. When it strikes the earth it's like a big ball, and bounds up again, taking you with it. Not long ago in McKeesport, Pa., I came down in a balloon because the parachute would not let go. I nearly came down in a big stack of a blast furnace, but the hot air drove the balloon away. After that I never intrusted a parachute would not let go. I nearly ed the parachute arrangements to any one, but attended to it myself.

"The rope that secures the parachute is cut with a knife. The aeronaut drops fully 100 feet before that parachute begins to fill. It must fill, if you're up high enough. There are several hundred parachute men in the business, and the accidents are less in ratio than railroad casualties. Our business is new at that. After awhile the ratio will be less. A man can't shake out a parachute, if it don't open. A man in the air is simply powerless. Invariably the fall is head first. When the parachute begins to fill the descent is less rapid, and finally when the parachute has gradually filled it bulges out with a pop. Then the aeronaut climbs on to his trapeze and guides the parachute to a safe landing. In seven cases out of ten, you can land back on the lot where you started from. The first performers must have had nerve to make the drop. Now, it is a regular business, not considered hazardous at all. The hardest work is to bring back the balloon with a wagon. Sometimes it tears in the trees, or wherever it may land when not in open."

COMBINATION SPECTACLES.

Glasses Which May Be Used for Either Street or Reading Purposes.

If you are compelled to wear two pairs of glasses for street and reading purposes the convenience and utility of the pair of spectacles illustrated in the accompanying cut will readily suggest itself. This useful novelty is the invention of D. L. Falardeau, of Albany, N. Y., and has for its object the combination of the two pairs of lenses in one frame, in a manner which will allow either set to be brought quickly



STREET AND READING GLASSES.

into position for use. The lenses are attached at one end to individual brackets, which are pivoted in the main frame, being independent of each other and adapted to swing on pivot pins in either end of the frame. The screws which form the pins are so arranged that they can be tightened sufficiently to hold the lenses in place by a slight frictional contact with the brackets, thus preventing the accidental displacement of a lens while in use. The pair of lenses which are at rest are swung into the oblong frames at right angles to the pair in use.

Amber vs. Nicotine.

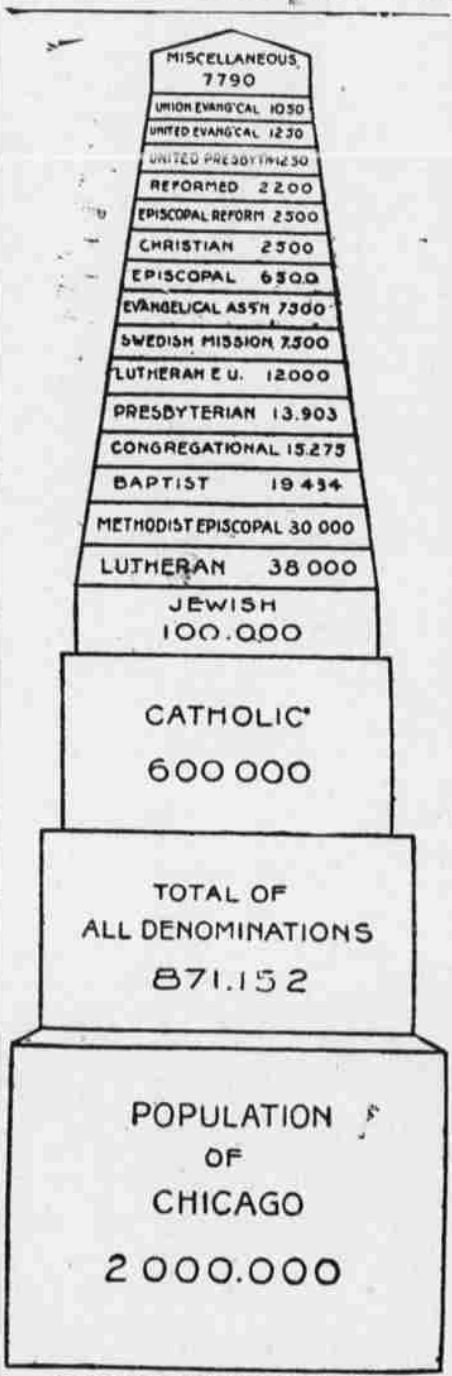
In Turkey amber is supposed to be a specific against the evil effects of nicotine, and, as the people are great lovers of tobacco, they freely indulge in the use of it, but take care to safeguard themselves by having amber mouthpieces to their pipes.

Continent of Plateaus.

Africa is the most elevated of all the continents. It is the "continent of plateaus." The great tableland in the South has a mean altitude of over 3,500 feet; the wide tableland on the north has an average elevation of about 1,300 feet.

Shamrock on Graves in Africa.

Shamrock will be planted on the graves of the Irish soldiers in South Africa. The Duke of York has accepted a thousand packets of seed, and has forwarded them to the officers of the Irish brigade.



RELIGIOUS CHART OF CHICAGO.

with 15,511 members. Chicago has 150 churches with 30,000.

Both the Catholic and Jewish denominations have more adherents than any other sect in Chicago, but the heavy percentage shown over other churches is partly accounted for in another way. Instead of counting only those members of the church who are actually affiliated it is the custom of both the Jews and Catholics to enumerate as regular adherents all of the members of every Jewish or Catholic family. It is estimated, for instance, that there are between 20,000 and 22,000 Jewish families in Chicago, including both the liberal and the orthodox Jews. It is calculated that the average family is composed of five persons. This computation places the number of Jews in Chicago at between 100,000 and 110,000. In this manner the total membership of the Catholic church is also reached.

In recently published statistics compiled by Rev. J. C. Armstrong figures were given in relation to the number of orthodox Protestant churches and the city's population. It was clearly shown that in every decade since 1840 the population of the city increased faster in proportion than did the number of these Protestant churches. The figures given up to date are as follows:

Year.	Population.	Churches.	population.
1840...	4,479	4	1 to 1,119
1850...	20,963	19	1 to 1,103
1860...	109,206	60	1 to 1,820
1870...	306,005	125	1 to 2,453
1880...	491,519	161	1 to 3,052
1890...	1,208,039	348	1 to 3,472
1899...	1,851,588	605	1 to 3,060

This table shows a constant decrease in the number of churches per capita until the present decade which shows a slight improvement. The last figure, it will be seen, is based on 605 churches and a population of 1,851,588. The 605 churches do not include Catholic, Hebrew, Dunkard, Ethical Culture, Salvation Army, Volunteers of America or the liberal churches, Unitarian and Universalist. The addition of these raises the total number of places of