

Nucle Tom's Department.

MY DEAR NEPHEWS AND NIECES.—Allow me to impart some good news to you, and that is that "Christmas is coming." Now, is not this news, and are you not delighted to hear it? I have hardly commenced to think about Christmas as yet, and find it rather difficult to imagine that it is so near. However, I presume that when I can bring myself to realize the fact, I shall be as elated as every one else. It is really true though, for we have now fully entered upon the last month of the year, and we will soon have to say farewell to 1880. Christmas, a time of general rejoicing, is welcomed by all, whether rich or poor; and when we think of the event which it commemorates, there is no reason why it should not be so. I suppose you are already anticipating the presents you hope to receive, and are also thinking about what you intend giving. Now is the time that mysterious looking parcels are conveyed surreptitiously into the house, and everybody wears the most unconscious look on their faces. The shop windows are also crowded with happy little faces looking at the toys, and eagerly selecting those they would wish Santa Claus to bring them. I hope my little friends have taken advantage of the cold weather and the "beautiful snow" to begin their amusements, but I do not wish to hear of any broken heads in consequence of first attempts at skating; however, I think you are perfectly safe as yet, for the weather has not been sufficiently cold to freeze any large body of water. Perhaps by Christmas you may be able to indulge in this pastime.

While I have been talking of all these plans for Christmas, I have forgotten to mention that though it is a time of general rejoicing amongst us, the numerous family of fowls rather dread it than otherwise, as they live in hourly expectation of becoming headless.

Most of our friends consider the maxim:

"Christmas comes but once a year,
But when it comes it brings good cheer."

a very good one, and live accordingly.

So now wishing you a very Merry Christmas and plenty of "good cheer," I am, your

UNCLE TOM.

PUZZLES.

94—BURIED ENGLISH TOWNS.

Do you know Carl is leaving us;
Frank, leave your card if Fred is from home;
Ay, Rose, to-morrow will be a sorry day;
A bat has lately been seen near the old church tower.

95—RIDDLE.

Though delicate and weak,
I'm wanting not in sense
I do, though silent, speak,
And ever need defence.
By day I shun what'er is bright,
And hang a curtain down at night.

96—CONUNDRUM.

Why is a boy that is learning to cipher like
dog with a broken leg? J. E.

97—ILLUSTRATED PUZZLE.



98—ENIGMA.

My first is in mat, but not in rug;
My second in wasp, but not in bug;
My third is in red, but not in blue;
My fourth is in false, but not in true;
My fifth is in wren, but not in owl;
My sixth is in bird, but not in fowl;
My seventh is in calm, but not in rough;
My eighth is in shawl, but not in muff;
My ninth is in poem, but not in ditty,
My whole is a European city.



THE ARRIVAL OF SANTA CLAUS.

The above illustration represents the entrance of Santa Claus into a village on Xmas eve. Let us picture to ourselves the entire scene. It is a clear frosty night, and along a road that is now completely deserted (for it is after midnight), a little old man with snow-white hair, may be seen rapidly approaching, in a miniature sledge, drawn by four reindeer. His eyes are glistening with merriment, as he imagines the delight of his little friends on receiving the presents with which his tiny sled is crowded. He is now within the village, and, a word from their master, the reindeer have already gained the roof of the first house. In a twinkling St. Nicholas is down the chimney and in the room, quickly filling the stockings that have been hung up by the juvenile members of the household. His task completed, he departs as noiselessly as he entered, and is out of sight in a

moment. I can assure you he waits no time, for he has many houses to visit before morning. Let us now take a peep, on Xmas morning, into one of many houses visited by St. Nicholas the preceding night. This thought is suggested by the remainder of the picture. A happy band of children are eagerly discussing the merits of the different presents. They have been scarcely able to sleep all night in anticipation of the next morning, and all agree in saying that Santa-Claus has brought them exactly what they wanted. Here I will leave the rest of my story to the imagination of my readers; I think that to all those who have experienced any of the pleasures of Christmas will not be a very difficult task.

Before the erection of the new pier at the Castle Rock, passengers from Dumbarton had to be conveyed down the Leven to the Clyde steamers by a ferry-boat rowed by two sturdy and generally elderly ferrymen. On one occasion an English commercial traveller had seated himself on the gunwale, at the stern. One of the old ferrymen, aware of the danger to any one so placed, when the rope of the steamer should be attached to the bow of the boat, took occasion to warn the man of his danger. "Noo, ma man, coom down off that, or ye'll coup ower."

The bagman only replied by telling him to "mind his own business, and trust him to take care of himself."

"Weel," said the ferryman, "mind I've telt ye; as sure as ye're sittin' there, ye'll coup ower."

No sooner had the rope been attached, and the boat got the inevitable tug from the steamer, than the fellow went heels up over the stern.

"Gowk, I telt him that." However, being in the water, it behooved that every effort should be made to rescue him. So the ferryman made a grab at what seemed the hair of his head, when a wig came away. Throwing this impatiently into the boat, he made a second grip at the collar of his shirt, when a front came away. Casting this from him with still greater acorn, he shouted to his companion, "Tummas, come here, and help to save as muckle o' this man as ye can, for he's comin' a' awa' in bits."

Answers to Nov. Puzzles.

- 88.—Faint Heart never Won Fair Lady.
89.—Drover, rover, over, rev.
90.—When shall we three meet again,
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
91.—Snow-storm.
92.—Patriot.
93.—Evil communications corrupt good morals.

Names of Those Who Sent Correct Answers to November Puzzles.

Josie and Eliza Clarkson, Emma Sherlock, S. E. Oldfield, Tom Stevens, Frank Johnson, Fannie Burns, Jessie Thomas, Geo. Barker, Minnie Hill, Arthur Simpson, Alice Wetheraby, Ben Lind, Edmund Findlater, Harry Hiscott, Mary Ellis, Robt. Parkins, Emily Wise, Georgina Cooper, Fanny Godfrey, Charlie Gordon, Joseph Roe, Emily Tremayne, Bertha Errington, Willie Silcox, Dick Somerville, Lee Smith, and Ella Thompson.

The hotel boy had been instructed, when he knocked at Dean Stanley's door and heard the inquiry: "Who's there?" to reply, "The boy, my lord." The boy answered the first call with considerable trepidation and surprised the dean by a loud response to his question. "The lord, my boy!"