



THE SNOW FORT

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BY ETHELBERT STAFFORD—(Ipsid. nunc.)

Fred and Frank one day made a fort. First, they took a spade and made bricks of snow. then piling them up they poured cold water on them, and in the night they froze so hard that Fred could not knock it over with an axe, and could not break a single piece off it. A lot of boys came along and had a snow ball fight, and Fred was never hit once, for the fort was near and he jumped onto it.

TOM'S BICYCLE.

BY R. L. E.

Tom was a little boy who lived very far away from most of his relations, for Tom's father and mother had gone out to China as missionaries, and Tom and his older sister, Elsie, were born and brought up in that strange, far-off country where people eat bird's-nest soup and wear their hair in long queues down their backs.

But Tom was a little American boy just the same; and, being an American boy, of course he wanted a bicycle. He knew that his father could not afford to give him one, but he asked his mother if he might pray for a bicycle.

"Yes, dear," she said, "you may ask God

just as freely for anything as you would ask your father or me. He is able to give you anything in the wide world. Perhaps he will not think it best that you should have one, but he likes you to ask him."

So Tom, and Elsie, too, prayed for a bicycle. And meanwhile Tom was quite happy wheeling himself about on two wheels that had been part of somebody's old tricycle and that he had found one day.

Just a few weeks after Tom had commenced to pray for his bicycle, a lady from America came to the Chinese city where they lived, and brought a letter to Tom's mother from a friend, introducing her. This lady took quite a fancy to Tom, and he found she had a little nephew at home in America who was very fond of stamps, and had not many Eastern ones. So Tom, who had a good many duplicates, and who was a very generous little boy, sorted out ever so many stamps for her to take home.

He explained to her that he didn't have an album, and so couldn't arrange the stamps very well for her, but that her nephew would know all about them. The next day the lady left the city, but before she went she sent an envelope to Tom with the message that what was in it "might help toward an album." And what do

you think was in that envelope. A one-hundred-dollar bill! for the lady was rich, and just as generous as Tom was. Do you wonder that the first thing that Tom and Elsie did was kneel together and thank the Lord for the answer he had sent to their childish prayers?

And the best of it is, that this is a real, true story.

THE YEAR ROUND.

January brings the snow,
Makes our feet and fingers glow.
February brings the rain,
Thaws the frozen lakes again.
March brings breezes loud and shrill,
Stirs the dancing daffodil.
April brings the primrose sweet,
Scatters daisies at our feet.
May brings flocks of pretty lambs,
Skipping by their fleecy dams.
June brings lilies, tulips, roses,
Fills the children's hands with posies.
Hot July brings cooling showers,
Apricots, and gillyflowers.
August brings the sheaves of corn,
Then the harvest home is borne.
Warm September brings the fruit,
Sportsmen then begin to shoot.
Chill October brings the pheasant,
Then to gather nuts is pleasant.
Dull November brings the blast,
Makes the leaves go whirling past.
Cold December brings the sleet,
Blazing fires and Christmas treat.

POOR BOYS.

There is no doubt about it; it is "as true as preaching" that the large majority of the men of to-day who count for most in the world, who fill the high places, and who are most useful, began life as poor boys. Many of them were so poor that, in their boyhood, they went without shoes the greater part of the year, and anything like luxury was unknown to them. The average boy of to-day spends more for things to amuse him than the boys of half a century ago spent for clothing.

No one wants or expects the boys of our day to live as the boys of long ago lived. No one argues that going ragged and bare-footed adds to one's mental vigour or increases one's chances of success in life; but some "old foggy fellows" are of the opinion that the desire to simply have a good time dominates a good many boys of our day, and keeps them from being the bright and useful men they might be if they made the right effort. We incline to this opinion, that many of the boys of to-day look with utter indifference on golden opportunities that some of the boys of long ago would have seized with delight and made the most of immediately.

Every true and loyal Canadian is proud of the fact that poverty is not an insurmountable barrier to the highest positions of trust and honour in our country, and it ought to encourage every poor boy when he reflects on the fact that many of the men who are highest in public trust and confidence to-day were once very poor boys.