

## GRUBBING.

IN OUR WOODS IN WINTER.

The farmer's day in winter is a short one, and his obstacles are many. He gets his cattle fed and attended to. When he has too many he kills them and prepares them for sale. When you see long rows of nice fat pigs in the butchers' stalls, frozen, with their feet and arms stretched out, then know that they came from the farm of some of our brave farmers, who have sometimes a very hard life, that we may get eating all their nice things. Then they go in the woods, too, to fell, and cut, and split cedar rails for their fences, to be ready when the spring comes. Then cord-wood for the fire, for their fire and ours, has to be cut, hauled home and piled. Logs, too, for the saw-mill are cut and drawn. Many a long day does the Canadian woodsman's axe flash in the sunshine. But he is happy, is our farmer, with his grain all threshed and ready for market; his rosy boys and girls growing up, and his thrifty wife in the dairy and in the kitchen. Some day I will tell you all *she* does. She is a busy woman. No farm can get on without her.

There is a little titmouse. In the very coldest day you may see the merry little creature in his warm fur coat among the branches, chirping as if it were summer. He gets tiny little morsels of food in the bark, insects that are hiding away from the cold, spiders, a few flies, and a few seeds of evergreens for desert. When he comes upon the pupa of a moth, he smacks his lips and sits down for a good feast, a regular Christmas or birthday feast. How he knows where to find one. You and I might hunt about for a very long time when we want to find a pupa.

By the way what is a pupa? I think I will tell you for this time, but another day when we go out grubbing, I shall expect you to turn up these things for yourself. There is no better habit. Better than reading all the books in the world is the habit of finding out for yourself everything you don't know. Well, a pupa is a snug little house that the caterpillar has made for himself to keep him warm in the winter, and to give him peace to think upon the colour he should have his wings when he comes out as a moth, and a snug little house it is. How the titmouse enjoys nibbling it.

But hush, do not stir. There is a little field mouse stealing over to the barn. See the dainty marks it makes in the snow with its toes and the tip of its tail. And that trail, still more curious, shows that a red squirrel has been here. His two fore-paws are short, and make marks close to each other; the hind ones are wide apart, and there is now and then a brush from his tail. He keeps his eye on the barn for wheat, grain, and oats.

However, it is cold, and we had better get home soon. Just one more look at the snow. Why is it so white and the ice so blue? Why can we see through ice and not through snow? A flake of snow is composed of minute films of ice, all resting upon each other at every imaginable angle. A single film is quite transparent. If they all rested on each other in the same level, the whole mass would be as transparent as ice.

AN OLD GRUB.

## HOW OUR PRETTY CHRISTMAS BOOKS ARE MADE.

Marvels they are! Are they not? With their chubby baby faces, their fascinating boys and girls, their bewitching pictures of life, serious and comic, bright and shady, gay and sad. How we wish we could always look as pretty!

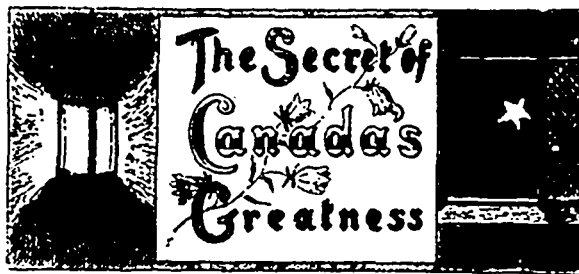
And yet so cheap, it is wonderful. You would hardly believe if I told you they take two years to prepare. The publishers begin in good time to think of what we should like, and no small business it is. I daresay most of you think the stories are the first thing, but it is exactly the reverse. The pictures are the first and chief consideration. After they are finished, they are sent away to have stories written for them.

The pictures are first drawn on stone, a fine-grained limestone; traced on in chalk or with a fine pen. Every separate colour needs a separate drawing on a separate stone, containing that and nothing else. In some Christmas books as many as eighteen different colours and stones are used. First one colour is printed in its proper position from one stone, then the next from another stone, then the next, and so on. Imagine the skill and care to print eighteen different colours, one after the other, so that the picture looks as if it had been done at one stroke of a brush.

The most of this work, for English books, is done in Germany, though sometimes in Paris. The German work is the best. The labour there is cheaper, and the hours are longer. The paper, however, is nearly all of English make, but foreigners have an advantage in manual skill distinctly traceable to kindergarten drill in their early years. The business is an expensive one, and full of risk, as after all that is spent, some freak of youthful fancy goes against the book that may have had best prospects at first. Arrangements are made for French, German, and Italian, as well as English editions, and the market is the whole world. Every country has its young folks, and all young folks must have their Christmas books.

Early in the month of June travellers start from London and go all over with samples of their books. Each is called into the chief to receive instructions as to contents and charms of each book. The travellers set off, make appointments with booksellers, and discourse on the merits of their wares. The booksellers listen, admire, inspect, and order. The orders are at once sent in to headquarters, and long before we are dreaming of our Christmas stockings the whole thing is decided. The books are all ordered, packed up, and shipped off.

We know who does the rest.



HOW, WHEN, WHERE, AND WHY WE GOT  
OUR BIBLE.

I need not explain to Young Canadians what a *father* is. The duties which a father performs to his child, and the blessings a child enjoys in having a father, are