



**W**HEN Pierre Nadeau brought his blooming bride to the River Pachat, he was young and strong, fresh from the lumber camps of Lake St. John. He had been appointed wharf foreman in his new home, and had grown old and gray as time went on, until a small farm and dwelling, bought with the fruits of his toil, provided a shelter for his declining years.

Two sons had been born to the Nadeaus, who, as they grew to manhood, went naturally to the lumber camps. After a time, however, attracted by promises of higher wages and cash payment, in lieu of store trade, they sought the growing West. When they left their home they were clad in provincial fashion; when they returned, on a visit only, they were clad in store clothes and radiant neckwear, and they used strange English, such as made the Pere Nadeau sick at heart. Finally, after unbridled depreciation of the surroundings in which they were born and bred, they departed by schooner and melting finally into the Orient were seen no more.

But their daughter Angeline remained to them, brown of hair and eyes, the trimness of her supple form manifest despite the fashion of dress considered at that early period becoming to the daughters of old France. The long, loose blouse, and short, homespun flannel kirtle, relics of a Norman peasantry, which on other women made them to appear squat, failed to hide her well rounded proportions and maidenly grace.

She had a sharp tongue, had this daughter of the Nadeaus, and when she was merry her laughter rang out like sleigh-bells in winter's frost. Sunday afternoon, when vespers were over, was the time when she would exercise her sharp wit; when, with the other maids of the hamlet she sought the lumber wharf to swap words of badinage with the lightermen, deal handlers and trimmers gathered there.

There were no frivolities on week days, however, when Angeline milked the cows, and made tasty butter for the Nadeau table. This done she would seat herself at the loom, which would ring out its rapid click-clack to the push of her vigorous foot, as it turned out its webs of linen, flannel or catelonne, for village consumption. She was as quick with her little hands and feet as with that biting, scornful tongue of hers.

Every year, as the big ship Margaret Pollock anchored off the shore for cargo, Captain Locke would pay her a visit the moment he set foot on land. Clean shaven, but for a fringe of fierce red whiskers, his face was vast and lurid as the setting sun. He wore broadcloth on such occasions, with a beaver hat as high as an ordinary chimney; his shirt-front rivaling in expanse his main t'gallant sail.

He always brought her a present, some trifle picked up in a foreign port, which he would donate in an offhand manner. Sometimes the girl would kiss his gnarled cheek, and he would clap her on the shoulder softly with a hand which, clenched, could fell an ox.

One day the schooner Notre Dame des Anges came in, to load farmers' stuff, having been chartered for this purpose by a black-browed man of thirty-five about, who gave his name as Boisvert. He swaggered to a certain extent, and was clad in garments supposed to be of fashionable cut and texture. The women thought him handsome, but his eyes were set rather close together for beauty, and his nose, bent, and with a scar in the concave section, gave to his face a sinister expression. During the intervals of loading he sat much in the house of le pere Nadeau, depreciating their surroundings.

His constant disparagements at length took root in the girl's mind, and her environment grew narrow and bald the more he talked. He assailed the feminine fashions of the port, too; so that when a modiste drifted to the village from St. Michel, with steel engraved fashion plates not three years of age, Angeline became her first customer. One Sunday she went to church in a new gown, of bright color, with a hat decked with red paper flowers, and a ribbon at her neck of poppy hue. M. Boisvert was filled with admiration.

"How the boys would cast soft eyes at you in St. Roch," he assured her with a melting look.

"Go away, M. Boisvert," was her rebuff, but it was accompanied with an affected toss of her pretty head, which the old Nadeau and his wife disliked, though they could not just say why. So did Claphas Ouellet. He had been a log jobber, and having been successful in his contracts, he had invested his capital in a snug farm in St. Angele, where his old mother kept his house clean until such time as Angeline would consent to become the mistress. Alas for his hopes; the girl had of late become contemptuous of the prospect.

"It's bad enough here by the sea, but St. Angele, with nothing but the big woods to see—bah!"

"It's all that Boisvert," said Claphas angrily. "Octave Lavoie, the navigator, says he has a wife and five children in Lorette."

"It's false," snapped Angeline with flashing eyes.

The Notre Dame sailed at length for Quebec; but the supreme content of Claphas and the old Nadeaus was but short-lived. But a few weeks had passed when she returned to her old moorings, laden with wind-blown apples for sale or exchange, with Boisvert, debonaire and cynical as before, at his former post. Captain Locke was in port at the time, and took an instant and un concealed dislike to him.

One dark fall night, while the hum of a coming easterly wind was heard in the trees which overhung the river, the Notre Dame des Anges swung round to the current, and slipped out seaward, with Angeline seated, scared, and already repentant, on a cabin locker.

There was consternation in the Nadeau dwelling when the morning light revealed an empty nest in the old familiar attic, from which she had never been absent for a night since her cradle had been consigned to the barn loft. She had discarded her despised house dress, of blouse and flannel kirtle, woven by her own hands, of striped purple and yellow. The sabot-

barking his winter's cut of cordwood on the schooner of the navigator, Octave Lavoie, sailed for Quebec, returning after an absence of a couple of weeks. He stepped into the Nadeau dwelling casually on his return.

"Well, Claphas," said the old man in greeting, "your health is good?"

"Yes, thanks."

"The cordwood sell well?"

"Not bad. Twenty-five shillings."

"See anything of my girl?"

"Yes."

"Is she well?"

"Yes. Works in a hotel."

"Hotel? Not with him, then?"

"No. She left him quick. He had his own wife and family, same as Octave said."

"The accursed. Didn't speak of coming back?"

"No. Well, I must go; the old mother will be anxious by now for me. If she comes, you will send me word, eh?"

"Yes, we will send you word, Claphas."

When the Margaret Pollock anchored for cargo that fall, and the news of Angeline's abduction was conveyed to Captain Locke, his face grew purple with fury, and he stormed so terribly on the wharf that the hands, in their terror, hid behind the deal piles, peeping round the corners with scared faces. From Octave, the navigator, he extracted the news of her present circumstances, and became somewhat more calm, though still awful in his frown.

For the second time since the flight of Angeline, Christmas eve came round.

"We will go to church this year, my wife."

"Yes, we will go."

Having prepared a store of kindling wood against their return, they extinguished their lamps, and locking the door, deposited the key in a secret niche of the porch, known to no outsider. As they turned into the Kempt road, which like a three-mile tunnel, by reason of the spruce boughs which met and interlaced

deau reined up, and crossed himself with a trembling hand.

"What is wrong, my husband?" asked his wife.

"A light in our window," he said, in a scared whisper. Then he heard a soft, happy laugh, half smothered by her shawl, and wondered.

"Drive on fast, my husband; one person only knows the place in which we hide the key."

The windows were all alight when they reached the porch, and from the pipe which served as chimney, clouds of long, feathery cinders from the fire of dry deal ends flew hissing into the whirling drift. Then he saw sleigh tracks, which came to and turned from the door, and understood.

"The mail driver must have brought—whom?"

He brushed the snow from a window pane, and looking in, saw Angeline dressed in her once discarded blouse and girtle of purple and yellow—even the moccasins, had come, bringing such happiness as he had never dreamed could be his again.

He led the old mare to her stall, and as he rubbed down her shaggy coat he recalled the old, old parable, grandest of all the Book. The poetry of the story, he could not grasp, of course, any more than he could realize the glory of the antithesis, with which it ended; but the words came to him, even in the voice of the wind, as it moaned in the eaves or round the corners and gables of the barn, and he uttered them in a voice which broke with the very weight of his joy.

"For this my child was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found."—Montreal Star.

**The Mystic Mistletoe.**

For many generations after the last Druid was dust the mistletoe had its votaries. The plant had almost every medical property, according to early physicians. It was believed to be a remedy for all ills, physical, mental and senti-

**CHRISTMAS BELLS.**

Ring out in joy, O chiming bells!  
For in your melody there dwells  
The music glad of Christmas-tide,  
On every hearthstone far and wide,  
And rosy lips, with laughter sweet,  
The happy songs of life repeat—  
Ring out in joy!

Ring out in hope, O chiming bells!  
For your clear voice of patience tells  
To waiting hearts who promise yields  
No golden fruit of harvest fields,  
Whose garnered grain of toiling hand  
Lies heaped upon a barren land—  
Ring out in hope!

Ring out in grief, O chiming bells!  
For in your trembling echo dwells  
To saddened hearts a thought of gold,  
A picture framed in memory's gold,  
A vanished face beneath the snow,  
A dream of life's sweet long ago—  
Ring out in grief!

Ring out in cheer, O chiming bells!  
For in your peals a promise dwells  
To listening hearts that strive to hear  
The future's voice of hope and cheer;  
For love and joy will have their birth  
As snowdrops spring from icy earth—  
Ring out in cheer!

Ring out in peace, O chiming bells!  
For Christmas-tide a message tells  
To eager souls that havelly wait,  
And loyal hearts too strong for fate  
To crush to earth—oh, listen, then:  
'Tis "Peace on earth, good will to men"—  
Ring out in peace!  
—Clara Lee Puckette, in Washington Post.



In the darkness ahead there were occasional flares of red flames, and from them ascended long, comet-like tracks of light that flashed into momentary blazes. The boom of the cannon, the wondrous shrieking of the shells and their sharp explosion blended in one wild devil's concert.

The boy from Maine drew back quickly, from the muzzle of the starboard gun No. 1 of the United States gunboat Mackinaw. The old gunner standing rigid drew the lanyard toward himself with a sudden jerk. There was a deafening roar and a cloud of choking smoke enveloped the gun crew. Another shell had been sent into the solid earthworks of Fort Fisher.

The boy from Maine rushed forward through the smoke and thrust the cleaning rod into the muzzle of the gun. Another of the crew dashed a pailful of water over the long steel tube. The gun was reloaded and another shell was hurled at the spurts of flame ahead. They had been doing this at intervals since the early afternoon, and now it was almost midnight—midnight of Christmas eve, 1864.

"Cease firing," came a hoarse order out of the dark. The gun crew of No. 1 flung themselves down on the sloping deck with audible sighs of relief. The devil's concert did not abate noticeably. The remaining vessels of the Federal fleet were still exchanging compliments with Fort Fisher.

The old gunner quickly filled his pipe, and the glow from the bowl half illuminated his wrinkled face now and then.

"Put me in mind of a Christmas eve I spent at the mines in California," he remarked, "only it's just a mite worse."

"Don't talk about Christmas," said one of the crew in a husky voice. "I left three children at home. They are in bed now and three little stockings are hanging above the fireplace same as always, I hope. The wife is sitting up a while maybe, a thinking of me or maybe saying a bit of a prayer. Don't like to think of it when things are so dubious. What are you thinking about, Fritz?"

"Of the Vaterland—some," replied an unmistakable accent. "Vat is the matter mit the boy? He is always talking before."

The boy heard nothing. He sprawled on the deck with his head on one arm. The smell of the pine trees and the odor of boiling maple sap was in his nostrils. He was many hundreds of miles away from the Mackinaw, off Fort Fisher, back in the Maine woods with a sugaring party. The smoke of the pine-knot fire was rising slowly and the golden brown syrup hissed and bubbled in the kettles. Merry little shrieks of laughter rang in his ears. She was there, the pink and white of her face so prettily emphasized by the mink tippet. How absurdly small those little red mittens seemed in comparison with his! How blue her eyes were! There was no one looking—just one kiss on those lips created solely for the purpose—

"Starboard batteries commence firing!" came the hoarse and relentless order from the darkness.

A none too gentle kick brought the boy back to the Mackinaw, but her face looked at him for an instant out of the gloom. Starboard gun No. 1 again added its voice to the devil's chorus.

The sky began to turn from black to gray. "A Christmas present," said the gunner grimly as he jerked the lanyard.

**She Knew.**

Sunday School Teacher (illustrating the workings of conscience)—What is it, children, that makes you feel uncomfortable when you have eaten all your Christmas candy and not given any of it to your little friends who had none of their own?  
Little Ethel Beenthere—Tumach-ache, ma'am.—Judge.

**Jumping at a Conclusion.**

Tommy—Santa Claus is coming to dinner to-night.  
Elsie—Oh! How do you know?  
Tommy—Ma told me a white-haired old gentleman was coming and we'd have to be very good.

**Vanishing Pomp.**

How worldly pride kin pass away,  
'Tis takin' for my text,  
What is a Christmas tree one day  
'Is kindlu' wood de nex'—  
—Washington Star.

**FATHER TIME FINISHES ANOTHER ROUND.**



shaped shoes had been tossed into a corner; all her newer belongings she had taken with her; and the mother Nadeau collected the despised truck and folding them up, laid them carefully away. In the sombre, inarticulate manner of the peasant, they accepted their sorrow.

These were the early, undeveloped days of the East, when the railroad and telegraph were unknown east of Quebec, and but a bi-weekly mail, by horse and caleshe or sled, carried tidings of the outside world. Once navigation closed, the door was shut upon the dwellers in the eastern hamlets bordering on the gulf. So the snow fell in deep drifts, and the lighters were packed-screwed high above the ice, which rose and fell with the tides, their masts looking ghostlike in the dark winter nights. The once joyous fetes passed unnoticed by Pere Nadeau and his wife—Christmas, New Year's Day—and they sat alone and silent, or went about their daily tasks as best they might. Sometimes the neighbors called, but while they spoke of what was passing; of the cut of logs, of the prospect of a good year's shipping to come, of Angeline they spoke no word. When the summer tides flowed blue and sparkling once more, Claphas Ouellet, em-

overhead, led to the church, a faint, long drawn wail from the opposite bank of the river came to their ears.

"It is the horn of the mail driver," said Pere Nadeau.

The church was aglow with the light of many candles, set in temporary sconces, on either side, and from the altar and the deep box stoves were like great rubies, so hearty were the fires of seasoned wood which crackled within. In the choir loft, fiddles were being tuned, and as the service proceeded there rolled forth to their accompaniment the vigorous throats of the young farmer chorists, the well-known carols of the season. Then the priest from the rail of the altar spoke in fatherly tones, and the duty of forgiveness, even as we expect to be forgiven, was his theme; Pere Nadeau touched gently his wife's hand, as the words of the preacher touched them both on a hidden, quivering chord, and their old lips moved in unison as they prayed.

The wind had arisen to a gale, as they returned to their home, a fine, cutting drift obscuring the sight; but as they drew near, in a momentary lull in the storm, a spark of light twinkled forth for an instant upon the snow. The Pere Na-

mental. In pagan days it was dedicated to Olwen, the Celtic Venus, and through the ages the plant and the tender passion were rather intimately entwined, says the Cincinnati Enquirer. Kissing beneath it began so far back in history that no one has ever attempted to trace the custom to its youth.

**Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained.**



Papa—Santa Claus may think you're greedy if you hang up both your stockings and may not leave you anything.  
Bertie—Huh! He won't know they're both mine; he'd think I'm twins.