

The *Adeste Fideles* is usually sung at the midnight mass with full orchestral as well as organ accompaniment, and all the church bells in town and country ring out their chimes together. In addition to the music of the bells, the midnight mass, under the French régime, was always saluted by the guns of the fortress at Quebec five times in succession. From the earliest days of New France special efforts were made for a fitting observance of the midnight mass. Before the early missionaries had any means for heating, at night, the interior of their little chapels, they were satisfied with the little warmth that proceeded from the torches carried by the worshippers.

From the sanctuary lamp, an old tradition in France in the sixteenth century prescribed that the fire must be taken to light the Christmas log. In the early days of French Canada, as well as in Brittany, when this was not done, a very pretty ceremony marked the burning of the Yule log upon the hearth, which would appear, in some respects at least, to have come down from Druidical days. The youngest member of the family capable of officiating, and called the Benjamin of the household, knelt before the fire and pronounced this invocation, taught him by his father: "O fire! re-warm during the winter the chilly feet of sick and infirm old men and women and little orphans! O fire! spread thy light and heat in the homes of the poor! O fire! never destroy the workingman's stable nor the navigator's bark!" At the conclusion of this appeal, a glass of wine was poured over the flames by the representative, for the time being, at the family hearth, of the Babe of Bethlehem.

Christmas day, 1635, was a sorrowful festival for the infant colony of New-France. The intrepid Champlain, its first governor, and the founder of Quebec, lay dead in the little fort which covered the commanding site upon a portion of which has been recently erected by the citizens of Quebec the stately monument to his memory.

A century and a year later, upon the inhospitable coast of Anticosti, the Recollet missionary, Father Crespel, who had been shipwrecked on the island in the preceding November, thawed out some wine and celebrated midnight mass in the presence of a number of his dying companions, huddled together in a miserable hut on Christmas eve 1736, without church ornaments of any kind.