

speaking with anyone. Marianne attended to his wants, and in answer to the questions of the neighbours she said the old man's heart was bitter and unforgiving against his son. The first few days she was always trying to bring in the name of Carolus before him, that he might see the matter in a more reasonable light, but the father forbade her to mention his son's name, threatening to curse him should she do so.

"Well, one evening as the *curé* sat on his doorstep taking the air, Basile appeared before him with the letters in his hand, and asked him to answer them and say it was his wish that his son should study to be a lawyer. And all as if nothing had happened or as if he had changed his mind because the church was not good enough for Carolus. That was the nature of Basile, and from that day no one ever heard him say one word of regret that his son had not followed out his plans. He seldom mentioned the subject, and if he did it was to congratulate himself that he had seen fit to give the boy another profession, when, being so young, he might have made a mistake, and become a parish priest, with so little chance of advancement. So few men become bishops! Also it was a very lonely life. His son should marry well, some young lady in the class that he mixed with now, rich, and as accomplished as himself, and let the old man see his grand-children about him before he died. And when in time Carolus became a lawyer, there was nothing in all the world as proud as old Basile. He had a picture of him in his robes hung on the wall, and whenever he received a letter he would have *M. le curé* read it to him every evening in the week, and would take it to church with him on Sunday and wait at the doors as the neighbours came out after Mass, in order to show it to them, and to say, 'I have had a letter from *M. l'avocat*, or *M. Carolus*.' From that time he never

spoke of his son in any other way.

"It was five years since *M. Carolus* had been seen in the parish, when one wintry night in the holiday season, when the snow was blowing across the fields, and the pines cracked in the wind, he drove up to his father's door. In honour of his return Basile gave a ball on Christmas Eve, and invited the neighbours from miles around. They were all there, the old people of St. Bernard, whose names I have forgotten if I ever knew them, and among the rest came Bibiane and her father. She was then about sixteen years of age, round as a snowbird, with a laughing child's face, big, black eyes, and cheeks like roses. With her came Athanase Thériault, who was courting her. Marianne had decorated the walls with pine branches, and the portrait of *M. Carolus* was hung between the blessed coloured paintings in their gilt frames. At the farther end of the room a long table was spread for the *réveillon*. The older people gathered about the stove, the men smoking, the women chattering over their knitting. There were many violins for Basile spared no expense, and the feet of the young dancers kept time with the tongues of the elders. But Bibiane, who was light as any butterfly, refused all partners, and Athanase also leaned against the wall with folded arms, and frowned all the time, for *M. Carolus* was at Bibiane's side from the moment she entered the room, and, flattered by his attention, she seemed to forget all about her lover. By and by when midnight drew near, and everyone was dressed ready for Mass, *M. Carolus* wrapped himself in his fur cloak and walked by the side of Bibiane across the snowy fields to the church. Here was something for the parish to talk about! Sitting by Bibiane all the evening, and again through the service, *M. Carolus*, who believed in nothing now, and who was so clever in his speech, that already he had