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A few of the older people were kneeling in prayer.

"There is Marie," whispered Janet, but John had already seen her. She was kneeling by the bed of the Infant Saviour. and on her face was an expression so rapt and beautiful that for a moment her husband was held motionless. Then he hastened toward her. She did not see him coming. Her eyes were bent upon the Child in the manger, her lips moved in prayer. John stood by her with bent head. He, too, was praying. At last Marie rose, and, turning, saw who was near her. A little cry of joy escaped her lips. "Dear husband, I

knew you would come!" was all she said. Hand in hand they went to Janet, who had come into the body of the church. The service was beginning. A young Indian girl brought the Scotch woman a prayer-book. "There is the place," she said, as she handed it to her. "Weel, what next?" was the inward comment, "haith gude English and gude manners!" She did not look at the book, but while the others kneeled, she bent her head. "Adeste fideles, Laete triumphantes," the congregation was singing now. "If that isn't the toon o' 'Oh, Come All Ye Faithful.' Mony a time I hae played it on the organ in oor sittin'-room." Almost unconsciously she joined in with her heavy, but rich alto. John's bass voice was also humming the tune, while Marie's high, sweet treble, sang the Latin words clearly and sweetly. Even with the others about her singing, Janet could tell that their three voices blended beautifully.

As they were leaving the church a black-robed sister smiled faintly at Janet, and a little child, separated from her mother, seized her skirt and began to cry. She lifted him in her strong arms, and the mother, seeing him, came to her. "Ye maun mind an' no' let the bairnies get lost," said Janet. The Indian woman did not understand her words, but she, too, looked into the Scotch woman's face and smiled. Before they reached the door, Father Bouchet, now arrayed in sober black, came to them.

"I'm glad to see you home, John Mc-Ivor," he said heartily. "I'm seldom deceived in a face, and I knew that yours was that of an honest man."

"Thank you, Father Bouchet," John nswered. "It was what they call a answered. 'put up job', on me. But the guilty ones were found, and there was no need of a trial for me, God be thankful.'

"Ah," said the priest, "we must thank Him for both the good and the evil. How should we rejoice in the sunshine of the one if it were not for the shadow cast by the other."

"A true remairk. The mon seems ta hae speeritual insight," said Janet to herself, as she listened.

"I hope your first Christmas in Canada will be a merry one, ma'am," said the priest to Janet, as he bade the three good night

"Weel," thought Janet, as she walked home, somewhat ahead of the others under the grandeur of the midnight sky, "if friendliness in ithers an' kindness frae them an' a strange feelin' in yer ain breast that the something that seemed wrang was the thing Christ, wi' a' his understandin', wad hae had ye do-if a' these things can mak' ye merry, Janet McIvor, then wi'out doot ye'll be merry. But I'm thinkin' we middle-aged people can be only happy an' no' merry unless-I hae never thought o' it before, but I'm no' sure but Jesus' mither may hae been merry-no' just happy, but real merry, as innocent wee bairnies are merry-when on that Christmas Day, sae lang syne, she helt the wee Babe tight up ta her ain breast."

Janet McIvor was destined to know something of the blessedness of the same feeling. Next morning, while the Christmas hells were still ringing out the glad tidings which they had announced the night before, she sat in front of the kitchen fire holding a little child in her arms. In the next room the mother was sleeping peacefully.

"Ah, John," Janet said to her brother as he hent over his little son, "I'm thinkin' that to-day is the first merry Christmas o' my life. My heart's kind o' samain', John, because I someway feel that we're a'-I mean everybody but the heatien-kind o' closer knit tagither than we think. I remember hearin' a meen-ister may ance—an' he was sair creeticised for it, too-that a' wha named the

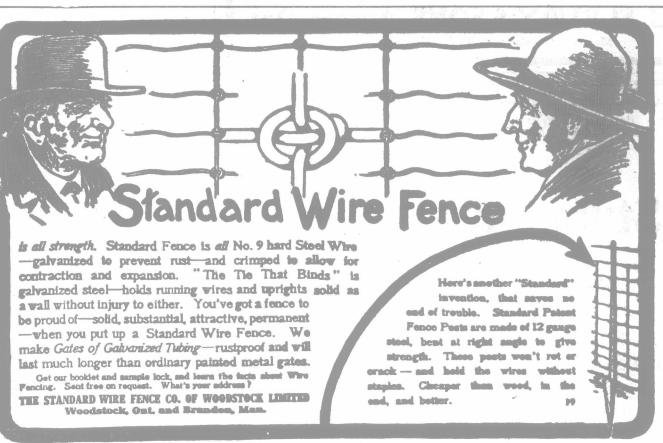


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