

Tearful adoration has been wafted to the Babe of Bethlehem from earliest times in the history of the colony, by French missionaries to the Indians and lumbermen scattered throughout the backwoods of Canada.

The Huron Indians of Lorette sing in their own language a very fine carol *Jesus Ahatonnia*—Jesus is born. The oldest existing copy of it is a manuscript in the Parliamentary library at Quebec, in the handwriting of Père Chaumonot, and the words are supposed to have been composed by the martyred Jesuit missionary, Jean de Brebœuf. At all events, they date from the time of the bloody missions of the Huron Peninsula. The Christianized Montagnais Indians who inhabit the forests that stretch from the north of Quebec to Hudson's Bay, sing to French Canadian airs, a number of cantiques in their language, throughout the night of Christmas Eve, which they call "the night when we do not sleep."

One of the old French-Canadian midwinter holiday customs that has now become obsolete was the practice of collecting alms for the poor, known as *La Guignolée* or *La Ignolée*. The word signifies both a custom and a song. Brought from the northern provinces of France by the early settlers of the province of Quebec they are rapidly passing into oblivion except in the more remote parts of the country. On the eve of the New Year bands of youthful masqueraders serenaded the various residents of the locality after nightfall, with music and song, knocking at doors and windows and begging for offerings for the poor, generally eatables, with threats of revenge if gifts were refused. A piece of pork with the tail adhering, called *La Chignée*, was the traditional offering expected. Until about the year 1860, the curious custom prevailed in the city of Montreal, where, up to that year there are records of the Mayor, on New Year's Eve, issuing permits to a number of young men "to run the *Ignolée* without danger of arrest or molestation from the police." This precautionary measure did not always prove effectual in preventing disorder; and when rival bands met there was sometimes a fight, the victors adding to their store of gifts by despoiling the vanquished. In France the *Ignolée* was often celebrated early on the morning of New Year's Day, and this practice was followed, up to a few years ago, in many of the country parishes of Quebec, families being awakened at an early hour by the firing of musketry and singing of song outside the house, and the loud ringing of