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## A Tale of the Grand Pre Massacre,

OUTSIDE, the snow continued to fall. For a day and a half the fluffy flakes had been eagerly chasing one another down from the gray vault overhead. A certain mellowness seemed to pervade the air, faintly suggestive of Spring, and a trace of moisture caused the snow particles to huddle closely together upon whatever object they chanced to alight. Down, down, down whirled the flakes, dazzling the eye with their persistent dance. Inches deep they buried the frozen soil, and piled themselves on every available surface, covering the sharp outlines of man's handicraft with the graceful curves of nature. Back on the hillside the spruces bowed with the weight of their downy coats of crystals; now and then an over-burdened branch bent in protestation, and its load of snow slipped off with a swish into the bank below. With an elastic spring the branch once more held itself rigid, while again the flakes tumbled one over the other in eager haste to cover up the one scar of greenness that obtruded itself from the cone of white. And still the cloud of feathery whiteness settled down, down, ever down, without apparently getting one whit the nearer.

Within the warm kitchen of Monsieur Étienne Flèche sat in the rush-bottomed chairs, or lounged in the great chimney seat, a half dozen officers of Colonel Noble's New Englanders, utterly indifferent to the snow that heaped itself around the house. The air was wreathed with smoke rings that lazily wound themselves up from the pipe-bowls. A sociable after-dinner silence, bred by a good meal and comfortable atmosphere, pervaded the room, broken only by the crackling of the back-log in the giant fire-place, or the sound of moving chessmen from the table at the window. At length the stillness was broken by a sudden exclamation.

"Say what you will, I like not this way of doing things."