

music sank deep, deep, into his heart, and then seemed to pass into his soul. It was Mozart's heavenly music:

"Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,

Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

"Vainly we offer each ample oblation;
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure;

Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

* * * * *

Peter rested easily in the great coat, clasped close to Big Tom Brown's breast. He felt the gliding motion of the sleigh as it sped to town, but he could not gather enough strength to tell the man that he must hurry home with his tree. It somehow seemed that trees did not matter any more, that something very wonderful was coming into his life.

Men's voices came to him. One voice said, "Lucky we came this way for Christmas trees to-night. Poor little fellow would have been too sound asleep by morning ever to waken."

Another voice said, "It's a wonder our singing did not wake him up." Still another voice said, "We'll drop in at the concert hall and hear the famous singer that came to town to-day."

Peter was not at all surprised at seeing Aunt Elizabeth on the platform. She was the only famous singer in the world as far as he knew. As the opening piano music fell softly on the little listener's ears, he realized that the pillars in the church he had seen were simply the trunks of cedars and fir-trees, the carpet of gold cloth was the snow lighted up by the lanterns of the men who had found him; but he could not bear to part with the thought of his singing tree.

Then Aunt Elizabeth began to sing! Oh! how lovely the song seemed. Yes. Even lovelier than when the tree sang it. He could part with his tree now. Only Aunt Elizabeth could sing Mozart's music till it seemed that heaven came down to earth. The last verses came rose-red and throbbingly to Peter's ears.

"Richer by far is the heart's adoration;
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor."

The music dazzled Peter. The glittering bells and stars and streamers

and candles dazzled him, too. But when Aunt Elizabeth came to him after the concert, and putting her arms about him said, "Come with me, O Peter! I want you," he could scarcely see for the happiness that dazzled his eyes.

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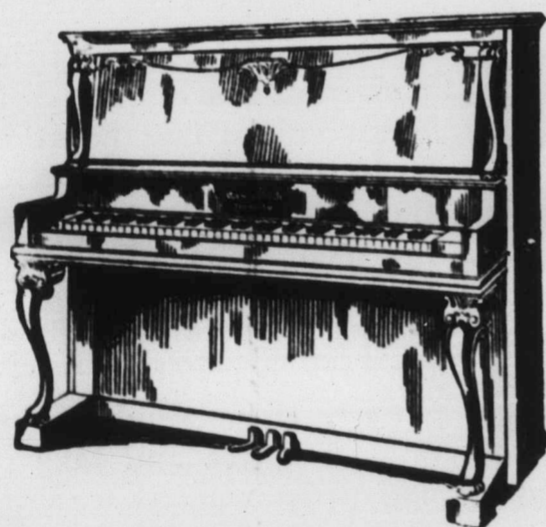
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