

Christmas secrets until that night when little children who have been good may greet it with the clamor of their wondering delight.

But it was to no such limited circle of family rejoicing that our tree was carried. From the busy square it was taken to the spacious hall, from whose lofty walls looked down the marble busts of the Kaiser, his father and illustrious grandfather, and Germany's foremost poets. From the lower corridors of the great building there rises to this hall the sweet echo of girl-voices singing their favorite melody ;

"O du glückliche,  
O du selige  
Gnadenbringende  
Weihnachtszeit !"

A school closing-day comes, and then the stranger who has had a short Indian summer of student-life with these girls, first sees the tree as it stands on the platform, ablaze with lights and sparkling ornament. Honored old pine, to end its days in the face of that throng of bright school-girls ! Surely it yearned to bend over and touch lightly the bright hair of two wee maids who stood by it in their shy reciting ; surely the grand old Christmas songs from all those pure voices must have thrilled it as never before bird-note did ; and surely the sight of those young faces, those clear, untroubled eyes, had a power to gladden beyond the fairest scene of woodland loveliness.

The spell of the scene did work strongly upon the tree, for this little dry sprig holds some of it still, and at sight of it I can cross the ocean that lies between, coax Time backward a space, and see still the little Luise and her companions as they make glad preparations for Christmas, 1891.

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