

# THE POTTER JOURNAL

AND  
NEWS ITEM.

Jno. S. Mann,  
Proprietor.

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**NEWS ITEM.**  
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**I WONDER WHY.**  
I wonder why this world's good things  
Should fall in such unequal shares;  
Why some should taste of all the joys  
And others only feel the cares?  
I wonder why the sunshine bright  
Should fall in paths some people tread,  
While others shiver in the shade  
Of clouds that gather overhead.  
I wonder why the trees that hang  
So full of luscious fruit should grow  
Only where some may reach and eat,  
While others faint and thirsty go!  
Why should sweet flowers bloom for some,  
For others only thorns be found?  
And some grow rich on fruitful earth,  
While others till but barren ground?  
I wonder why the hearts of some  
Overflow with joy and happiness,  
While others go their lonely way  
Unblessed with aught of tenderness!  
I wonder why the eyes of some  
Should never be moistened with a tear,  
While others weep from morn till night—  
Their hearts so crushed with sorrow here.  
Ah, well! we may not know indeed  
The ways, the wherefores of this life;  
But this we know—there's One who sees  
And watches us through joy or strife.  
Each life its mission here fulfills,  
And only He may know the end,  
And loving Him we may be strong,  
Tho' storm or sunshine He may send.

(From Appleton's Journal)  
**TOM'S WIFE.**  
We had just finished breakfast.  
Tom laid down the egg-spoon he had  
been playing with and looked across  
at mother.  
"Aunt Anne, I think I'll take a  
wife," he said, exactly as he might  
have said, "I think I'll take another  
cup of coffee."  
"Take a wife?" repeated mother, by  
no means receiving the information  
as tranquilly as it had been given.  
"Well, I don't know," answered  
Tom, thoughtfully. "It's a notion  
I've got in my head, somehow."  
"All nonsense!" said mother, sharply.  
"Do you think so?" said Tom, ap-  
parently doubtful, but not in the  
least put out.  
"Think so? I know it. What in  
world can you want of a wife? After  
all these years we have lived so com-  
fortably together, to bring home  
somebody to turn the house upside  
down! And then, what's to become  
of that poor child?"  
The "poor child"—that was I—red-  
dening at being brought into the  
argument in this way, was about to  
speak for herself when Tom inter-  
posed, warmly:  
"I'm sure May knows I would never  
have any wife who would make it  
less a home for her—don't you,  
May?"  
"Of course," said I.  
"And I'm sure she knows nothing  
of the sort," persisted mother, "nor  
you either, Tom Dean. How can  
you answer for what a wife may take  
into her head to do, once you get  
her fixed here? You can't expect  
her to forget, as you do, that May  
has no real claim on you."  
"That I have no real claim on her,  
I suppose you mean, ma'am, Tom  
put in for the second time, just as I  
was getting thoroughly uncomfort-  
able. "But, for all that, I intend to  
keep her—that is," added Tom, with  
one of his short-sighted blinks side-  
ways at me, "as long as she'll stay  
with me, eh, May? And whoever  
has anything to say against that ar-  
rangement will have to go out of my  
house to say it—not that I'm afraid  
of any such result in this case—and,  
on the whole, Aunt Anne, I should  
like to try the experiment."  
"Mother smiled grimly, but Tom was  
so evidently bent on his 'experiment,'  
as he called it, that she gave up the  
argument.  
"You can dance, if you're ready  
to pay the piper," she said, shortly.  
"And, pray, how soon do you mean  
to be married?"  
Tom's face fell a little at this  
question.  
"Well," said he, "I can't say ex-  
actly. I suppose we shall have to be  
engaged first."  
"What!" said mother, opening her  
eyes; "why, you never mean to say,  
Tom, you haven't spoken to her yet?"  
"Not yet," answered Tom, cheer-  
fully—"Time enough for that, you  
know, after I had spoken to you."  
Mother, as a minister's widow, was  
not much given to the idle mirth  
that is as the crackling of thorns  
under a pot, but now she leaned  
back and laughed till the tears stood  
in her eyes.  
"Well," she said, "if it was anybody  
else, I should say he was cracked;  
but you never were like other people

and you never will be, Tom Dean.  
But, at least, you have fixed on the  
lady?"  
"Oh, yes," answered Tom; "but, if  
you will excuse me, Aunt Anne, I  
would rather not say anything about  
her just yet; for, if—anything  
should happen, it wouldn't be pleas-  
ant for either party, you know."  
With which veiled allusion to his  
possible rejection, Tom took his hat  
and left the room.  
Our household was rather queerly  
put together. There was no particu-  
lar reason why I should have been  
of it at all; for I was not really re-  
lated to Tom, nor even to "mother,"  
as I called her, though I am sure we  
were as dear to each other as any  
mother and daughter could be. She  
was the second wife of my father,  
who, like most ministers, had been  
richer in grace than in goods and  
had left us at his death with very lit-  
tle to live on. Then it was that Tom  
Dean had come forward and insisted  
on giving a home to his aunt and to  
me, whom he had scarcely seen a  
dozen times in his life before. That  
was exactly like Tom—queer Tom  
Dean, as his friends were fond of  
saying, "who never did anything like  
anybody else." I suppose in spite  
of his clear head for business, there  
is no denying that he was whimsical;  
but I am sure, when I think of his  
unfailing generosity and delicacy, I  
can't help wishing there were a few  
more such whimsical people in the  
world. Naturally, at that time I am  
speaking of, my opinion had not been  
asked; all I had to do was to go  
where mother went, and, while she  
gave her energies to the house-keep-  
ing, give mine to growing up, which  
by this time I had pretty well accom-  
plished. But perhaps for that very  
reason—for one sees with different  
eyes at twelve and eighteen—my po-  
sition in the house had already be-  
gun to seem unsatisfactory to me;  
and the morning's words put it in a  
clearer light since it had been used  
as an argument against Tom's marry-  
ing. I knew that mother had spoken  
honestly, believing that such a  
step would not be for his happiness;  
but was not he the best judge of  
that? I knew him, if reflection should  
bring him round to her opinion, to be  
perfectly capable of quietly sacrific-  
ing his own wishes for my sake,  
who had not the shadow of a claim  
on him; so it must be my part to  
prevent his own kindness being  
turned against him now. Still, it  
was not so easy to see how I was to  
provide for myself in case it should  
become advisable. What could I  
do? Draw and sing and play toler-  
ably, but not in a manner to compete  
with the hosts that would be in the  
field against me. Literature? I had  
read so many stories whose heroines,  
with a turn of the pen, dashed into  
wealth and fame. That would be  
very nice, only—I was not the least  
little bit literary; I had never even  
kept a journal, which is saying a  
great deal for a girl in her teens.  
The "fine arts," then, being out of  
the question for me, what remained?  
There was some clerkship, or place  
in some family, and—and there was  
Will Broomley!  
That may seem like going away  
from the point, but it was not. I  
was matter-of-fact, but I could see  
well enough what was going on right  
under my eyes and I had a pretty  
clear idea of what was bringing Will  
to the house so often as he had taken  
to coming lately. There was a "situa-  
tion," then, that would give me the  
home-life I liked best and felt myself  
best suited for; but—would it answer  
in other respects? I overcast the  
long seam I was sewing twice over,  
I was so busy trying to make up my  
mind whether I liked Will Broomley  
well enough to pass my whole life  
with him; and even then I had not  
come to any decision, when I was  
called down stairs to Letty Wal-  
ters.  
Letty was the prettiest, I think,  
of all my friends and certainly the liv-  
eliest. Tom called her "the tonic,"  
and used to laugh heartily at her  
bright speeches. I suppose it was  
this that made mother fix on Letty  
as his choice. When I came into  
the sitting-room, I found a kind of  
cross-examination going on. It was  
amusing to anybody in the secret, as  
I was, to watch mother's artful way

of continually bringing the conversa-  
tion round, as if by chance, to hear  
on what she wanted to know. But  
it all amounted to nothing, either be-  
cause Letty was too good a fence,  
or because she really had nothing to  
betray. But, when Tom came home,  
mother took care to mention that  
Letty had called.  
"What, the tonic?" said Tom.  
"Too bad I missed her."  
"But for your choice being already  
made," said mother, with a covert  
scrutiny of his face, "I dare say you  
might have as much of the tonic as  
you liked."  
"But I go on the homoeopathic prin-  
ciple, you know," answered Tom,  
with a twinkle in his eye.  
After that, mother's belief in Let-  
ty's guiltiness wavered. Her suspi-  
cions were transferred from one to  
another of our acquaintance, but al-  
ways with the same unsatisfactory  
result.  
"It passes my comprehension,"  
she said to me, despairingly, one day.  
"I am positive I could tell the right  
one by Tom's face in a minute and  
yet I have mentioned everybody we  
know."  
"Perhaps it is somebody we don't  
know," I suggested; "some friend of  
his we have never seen."  
"What! a perfect stranger?" said  
mother, sharply. "Never talk to me,  
child; Tom's not capable of that!"  
I was silent, for I did not want to  
worry her; but that was my opinion  
all the same.  
The same evening—it was rather  
more than a week since Tom had  
hurled that thunderbolt of his at us  
—mother began about it openly.  
"When are you going to introduce  
your wife to us, Tom? I suppose  
you have come to an understanding  
by this time?"  
"Oh, there's no hurry," Tom said,  
as he had said before; but this time  
he did not speak quite so cheerfully.  
"The fact is," he continued with a  
little hesitation, "there—there's a ri-  
val in the case."  
"A rival!" replied mother, with  
unfeeling briskness.  
"Yes, a younger fellow—yonger  
by a good deal than I am," and  
Tom's face assumed an absurdly  
doleful look. "He's always there  
now. I confess I don't see my way  
clear; I'm waiting for her to make  
up her mind."  
"And she's waiting, most likely,  
for you to make up yours," said  
mother, forgetting, in her propensity  
to right matters, that she was play-  
ing the enemy's game.  
"There's something in that that  
never occurred to me," said Tom, his  
face brightening. Mother saw her  
mistake and made a counter move  
at once.  
"But the ways of my time are old-  
fashioned now; young ladies nowa-  
days take matters into their own  
hands. If she cared for you you  
may be pretty sure she wouldn't  
have waited till this time to let you  
know it—that is, I judge by the  
girls I am in the habit of seeing;  
but if this one is a stranger to me—  
(here mother riveted her eyes on  
Tom's face; oh, dear, my unfortu-  
nate words!) "if she is an entire  
stranger, I cannot pretend to form  
any opinion of her, of course."  
"Of course," repeated Tom, ab-  
sently.  
"Not that I have any such idea,"  
resumed mother, growing warmer;  
"I have said and I say it again, that  
to bring a perfect stranger under this  
roof is not my opinion of you, Tom."  
I felt mother's words like so many  
pins and needles; for Tom was look-  
ing meditatively across at me, and,  
though that was just a way of his, it  
seemed now as if he were reading in  
my face that the opinion was mine,  
and that I had been meddling in  
what did not concern me. I felt  
myself, for very vexation, getting  
redder every moment, till it grew in-  
tolerable.  
"It is so warm here," I said, for an  
excuse, turning toward the French  
window, "I am going to get a breath  
of air."  
I went out into our little strip of  
garden-ground; "Tom" followed. I  
thought I should never have a better  
opportunity to say what I had it in  
my mind to say, so I waited for him  
by the bench under the old pear-tree.  
"Sit down here, Tom," I said, "I've

something to say to you."  
"Have you?" said Tom; "that's  
odd, for I—well, never mind that,  
just yet. What is it, May?"  
"Tom," I said, still surer now he  
had misjudged me and more resolved  
to set him right, "I want a place."  
"A place?" repeated Tom, puzzled  
as well he might be, by this sudden  
and indefinite announcement; "what  
kind of a place?"  
"I don't know," I said, for, indeed,  
my ideas were of the vaguest. "I  
thought you might, being in the way  
of those things. Now, pray, Tom,  
I went on quickly, "don't fancy I am  
discontented, or—or anything of that  
sort; the truth is, ever since I left  
off school I have wanted something  
to do and had it in my mind to speak  
to you about it."  
With this I looked at Tom, fearing  
he might be vexed; but he did not  
look vexed, only preoccupied.  
"I do know of a place, as it hap-  
pens," he said, after a while, "only  
I'm not sure how it would suit you."  
"That's soon seen," said I. "What  
is it like?"  
"Well, it's a sort of—of general  
usefulness—"  
"Why, it must be to run errands,"  
said I, laughing. "And where is it,  
Tom?"  
"Well," said Tom, hesitating again,  
"it's with me."  
"How very nice!" I exclaimed.  
"How soon can I have it?"  
"The sooner the better, so far as I  
am concerned," said Tom, and with  
that he turned round and looked at  
me, and directly I met his eyes, I  
knew, somehow, all in a moment,  
what it was he meant; and I knew,  
too, both that I could not have passed  
all my life with Will Broomley and  
why I could not.  
I am sure Letty Walters, who in-  
terrupted us just then, must have  
thought my wits were wandering  
that evening, and, indeed, they were  
for I was completely dazed with this  
sudden turn things had taken. But  
Tom, who had the advantage of me  
there, took it quite coolly and laugh-  
ed and talked with Letty just the same  
as ever till she went away.  
It was pretty late when we went  
in. Mother sat where we had left  
her, knitting in the twilight.  
"Wasn't that Letty Walters with  
you a while ago?" she said, as we  
came up.  
"Yes," said I, with a confused feel-  
ing of an explanation of something  
being necessary; "she just came to  
bring the new crocheted-pattern she  
promised me."  
"H'm!" said mother, as much as  
to say she had her own ideas as to  
what Letty came for.  
Tom had been wandering about  
the room in an absent sort of fashion  
taking up and putting down in the  
wrong places all the small objects  
that fell in his way. He came up and  
took a seat by mother. I became of  
a sudden very busy with the plants  
in the window; for I knew he was  
going to tell her.  
"Wish me joy, Aunt Anne," said  
he, "it's all settled."  
"Settled, is it?" said mother, in  
anything but a joyful tone. "So it's  
as I suspected all along. Well, you  
have my best wishes, Tom; perhaps  
you may be happy together after all,  
I'm sure I hope so."  
This wasn't a very encouraging  
sort of a congratulation and Tom  
seemed rather taken aback by it.  
"I'm sorry you're not pleased," he  
said, after a pause; "I had an idea  
somehow you would be."  
"I don't know from what you  
judged. But there, it's no use cry-  
ing over spilt milk. You'll be mar-  
ried directly, I presume; I must be  
looking out for a house," and mother  
stroked her nose reflectively with a  
knitting needle.  
"What for?" said Tom; "I thought  
of keeping on here all the same."  
"I never supposed otherwise," said  
mother. "Of course I did not ex-  
pect to turn you out of your own  
house."  
"But what is the need of looking  
out for another, then?"  
"Why, for myself."  
"For yourself?" repeated Tom, in a  
tone of utter amazement. "Going to  
leave us just now? Why, Aunt  
Anne, I never heard of such a thing!"  
"Now, Tom," said mother, speaking  
very fast and making her needle fly

in concert, "we might as well come  
to an understanding at once on this  
subject. I am fully sensible of your  
past kindness—now just let me finish  
—I say I appreciate it and have tried  
to do my duty by you in return, as  
I hope I should always be ready to  
do. I wish all good to you and your  
wife and shall be glad to help her if  
ever I can, but to live in the same  
house with her is what would turn  
out pleasantly for neither of us, and,  
once for all, I can't do it."  
"Aunt Anne," said Tom, pushing  
back his chair and staring in moth-  
er's face, "either you or I must be  
out of our wits."  
"It's not me, then at any rate," re-  
torted mother, getting nettled.  
"Amusement and a certain embar-  
rassment had kept me a silent listen-  
er so far, but there was no standing  
this; I tried to speak but could not,  
for laughing."  
"I think you are all out of your  
wits together," said mother, turning  
sharply. "What ails the child? it's  
no laughing matter."  
"You don't understand each other,"  
I gasped; "oh, dear! it's not Letty—  
oh—oh, dear!" and relapsed again.  
"Not Letty?" repeated mother,  
turning to Tom. "Then why did you  
tell me so?"  
"I never told you so," said Tom.  
"Why, yes you did," persisted moth-  
er. "You came in and told me you  
were going to be married."  
"Yes, so I am," said Tom, still at  
cross purposes.  
"Now, Tom Dean," said mother,  
rising and confronting him, "what do  
you mean? Who is going to be your  
wife?"  
"Why, May, of course," answered  
Tom.  
"May!" and then, after a pause of  
inexpressible astonishment, it was  
mother's turn to laugh. "Do you  
mean to say, Tom, it was that child  
you were thinking of all the while?"  
"Why, who else could it be?" said  
Tom, simply.  
"Well," said mother, "I ought to  
have remembered you never did do  
anything like anybody else. But,  
still, why in the world did you go to  
work in such a round-about way?"  
"I wanted to see how you took to  
my ideas," said Tom.  
"And how did you suppose we were  
to guess your idea meant May?" moth-  
er asked.  
"Who else could it be?" repeated  
Tom, falling back on what he evi-  
dently found an unanswerable argu-  
ment. It was no use talking to him.  
Mother gave it up with a shake of  
the head.  
"And you won't want another house  
then, Aunt Anne?" said Tom sudden-  
ly. That set mother off again; Tom  
joined with her, and altogether I  
don't think we ever passed a mer-  
rier evening than the one that made  
us acquainted with Tom's wife.

**Sponges.**  
The fine, soft, Syrian sponge is  
distinguished by its lightness, its  
fine, flaxen color, its form, which is  
that of a cup, its surface, convex,  
voletted; pierced with innumerable  
small orifices, the concave part of  
which presents canals of much greater  
diameter, which are prolonged to  
the exterior surface in such a man-  
ner that the summit is nearly always  
pierced throughout in many places.  
This sponge is sometimes blanched  
by the aid of caustic alkalis; but  
this preparation not only helps to  
destroy its texture, but also changes  
its color. This sponge is specially  
employed for the toilet and its price  
is high. Specimens which are round  
shaped, large and soft, sometimes  
produce very high prices. The fine  
sponge of the Grecian Archipelago  
is scarcely distinguishable from that  
of Syria, either before or after being  
cleansed; nevertheless, it is weight-  
ier, its texture is not so fine and the  
holes with which it is pierced are at  
once larger and less in number. It  
is nearly of the same country as the  
former—in fact, the fishing for it ex-  
tends along the Syrian coast, as well  
as the littoral zone of the Archipelago  
and Barbary. The fine, hard  
sponge, called Greek, is less sought  
for than either of the preceding; it  
is, however, most useful for domestic  
and for certain industrial purposes.  
Its mass is irregular; pierced with  
small holes. The white sponge of  
Syria called Venetian, is esteemed  
for its lightness, the regularity of its  
form and its solidity. In its rough  
state it is brown in color and of a  
fine texture, compact and firm. When  
cleansed it becomes flaxen-colored  
and of a looser texture. The orifices  
of the great channel which traverse  
it are rough and bristly. The brown  
Barbary sponge when first taken out  
of the water, presents in itself an  
elongated flattened body, gelatinous  
and charged with blackish mud. It  
is then hard, heavy, coarse and of a  
reddish color. When well washed in  
water it becomes round in shape,  
still remaining heavy and reddish.  
It presents many gaps, the intervals  
of which are occupied by a sinuous  
and tenacious net work. It is val-  
uable for domestic use, because of the  
facility with which it absorbs water  
and its great strength. Other sorts  
of sponges are very abundant. The  
blonde sponge of the Archipelago,  
often confounded with the Venetian;  
the hard Barbary sponge called ge-  
lina, which only comes by accident  
into France; the Salonica sponge is  
of a middling quality; finally, the  
Bahama sponge, from the Antilles,  
is wanting in flexibility and is a lit-  
tle harsh and so is sold at a low  
price, having few useful properties  
to recommend it.—From the Ocean  
World.

**A Missionary Family Among the  
Lions.**  
When the Rev. Samuel Broadbent  
was traveling near to the diamond  
fields of South Africa he and his fam-  
ily slept in the wagons in which they  
traveled. One pitchy dark night  
they several times heard a noise  
among their cattle and the next  
morning found a young cow had  
been killed and lay in front of the  
wagon.  
"As I sat on the chest," says the  
missionary, "one of my little boys  
came and sat on my knee. I was  
conforting him on the loss of the  
new milk for his breakfast, as the  
lions had torn the poor cow, when  
there appeared a noble lioness walk-  
ing through the grass, bringing a  
whelp with her. At the same time  
my favorite dog, Malbrook, was  
feasting on the carcass of the cow.  
On seeing the lioness approach he  
barked at her angrily. She paused  
a moment, raised her head and lashed  
her tail about, then sprang furiously  
at him. By a nimble leap and rush  
towards us he barely escaped her  
claws and teeth. Just at the pole  
of the wagon, close to which I sat,  
with my eldest boy on my knee and  
my wife, the next boy and a servant  
girl inside, she turned away and we  
were saved.  
"The following night beasts of  
prey in great numbers prowled about  
our encampment. Several large lions  
had walked around us.  
"The next day, when travelling was  
pleasant, they shot a buck which they  
hoped to have for dinner. The re-  
port of the gun roused five lions.  
The wagons were turned another way  
and the lions slowly moved to a  
greater distance, rising on their hind  
legs and playing with each other like  
dogs.—N. Y. Observer.