

# THE POTTER JOURNAL

AND

## NEWS ITEM.

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**The Old Surprise.**  
Now what hath entered my loved woods,  
And touched their green with sudden change?  
What is this last of Nature's moods  
That makes the roadside look so strange?  
Who blameth my thistle's blushing face,  
And gave the winds her silver hair?  
Set golden rod wit in her place,  
And scattered asters every where,  
Who splashed with red the smutch hedge—  
The saffrass with purple stain;  
Gave ivy leaves a ruby edge,  
And painted all their stems again?  
Lo! the change reaches high and wide,  
Hath toned the sky to softer blue;  
Hath crept along the river-side,  
And trod the valleys thorough and through;  
Discolored every hazel copse,  
And striken all the pasture lands;  
Flung veils across the mountain tops,  
And bound their feet with yellow bands.  
Is, then, September come so soon  
Full time doth summer ne'er abate?  
While yet it seems but summer's noon,  
We're floating down the autumn tide.  
—Atlantic Monthly.

**A Christmas Eve in Germany.**  
Of all the numerous Christmas gatherings at which I have assisted in Germany, the most interesting was that of the Bergwerk, the most distinguished of the numerous club associations of the city where I was residing. The members are either artists or authors. It is called the "Bergwerk," or "Mine;" its members are "Knappen," or master-workmen. As the most precious substances of the material world are gained only through hard labor, so in the realms of intellect and art treasures of thought and genius are obtained only after much hard drudging and delving. In accordance with the significance of their name, the members at their meetings adopt the costume and phraseology of the miners—each one throwing over his coat—upon which often glitters more than one decoration festowed by princely hands—a miner's blouse and placing upon his head a little round cap with no ornament but a gilt hammer and pick, the badge of the society. In his hand he carries a wooden hammer, and all expressions of approbation are given by a vigorous rapping and thumping upon a wooden block beside him. The assembly presents a most grotesque appearance, the uninitiated would hardly suspect the bright stars in the world of literature and art which are hiding away under this curious disguise.

I will premise that ladies are not admitted to their weekly meetings. It is only the expansively generous influence of Christmas which induces them, once a year, to throw out their Society's arms and embrace the fair ones allied with its members.

Years ago, when the organization was in its youth and the "Miners" brisk and lively, they gave, from time to time, the finest balls of the season, which were often graced by the presence of the king and court; but now they assert that although there is great art in dancing well, it is not the noblest art to pursue.

Each member is called a "Knapp," as I have said, but on admission to the order he must be christened anew—receiving some comical name suggested by the peculiarities of his profession. Under penalty of a fine for violation of the rule, these names must be used by the members as they address each other.

Some of these appellations are very droll, perhaps a little sarcastic. A celebrated romance-writer, somewhat diffuse in his style, is called the "Knapp Tintenklecks"—"Ink-splash!" A renowned violinist gets no better name than "Pizzicato;" a singer is but a "Kehlkopf"—Larynx; a wealthy banker, who in his leisure hours dabbles with the muses, is told, in the word "Zahlwort," to look to his counters. An architect, under whose direction some of the finest buildings in the country have been erected, is christened "Shinorkel"—Flourish. A German savant, who has more than once visited the icy regions of the north, is dubbed "Esquimaux," and the word "Croup" keeps the poet-doctor constantly in mind of the responsibilities of his profession. One of the greatest baritones that the world has ever known, now retired into private life, has his past triumphs brought to mind as the members call out "Knapp Furioso." Another musician, a pianist, whose weakness, if he has any, is a leaning towards a certain school perhaps not over popular, is design-

ated "Futurus." A classical professor is the "Lexicon" of the party, while a mathematician is but a "Fraction." A poet is told to look to his "Feet," an artist is a "Sketch," "Fig-leaf" suggests to a sculptor the difficulties of properly adjusting drapery; an amiable young Pole, whose exquisite silhouettes have created a new branch of art, is called "Knapp Tusch"—Indian Ink. A group of architects form "Beams," "Squares," "Freestones," "Keystones," etc., while a company of musical celebrities answer to the euphonious titles of "Fiddlestick," "Fiddlestring," "Shake," "Trill," "Quaver," "Quodlibet," "Sharp," "Valve," etc. A renowned student and teacher of aesthetics, who soars into regions high above those where the ordinary student dwells, is called "Plackholz"—"Plodder" or "Plodhorse." Just think of it! What a shock it must give to his exquisitely refined nature to be brought down to common life in that abrupt manner.

The mock gravity with which these hoary-headed savants, wits, poets, artists, etc., employ these terms in addressing each other, is to a stranger, the most comical part of all.

On that memorable Christmas eve when I was admitted—the first American lady who ever entered into those sacred precincts—we assembled at an early hour in the beautiful rooms belonging to the Bergwerk. The president of the society, being a royal architect, was enabled, in the construction of one of the government buildings, to reserve a cosy room for his pets. The liberality of the government in accord the space has not been unequalled by the generosity of the "Miners" in decorating it in a becoming and characteristic manner. It is furnished with a library; statues adorn the niches; paintings, engravings, and elaborate architectural plans cover the walls—all the productions of the Miners' own hands and hands.

Of course the evening commenced with a peace offering to the demon of appetite. How little we should hear of discord and dissension if people reserved the discussion of all knotty questions till after dinner! At any rate, on that occasion groups of three, four, and a dozen gathered around the tables, ate, drank and cracked jokes till the whole company was in a most genial mood. Do not imagine that any had imbibed too much. The Germans drink copiously, but the liquors are light, and their natures are not easily excited.

About ten o'clock, a curtain drawn across a temporary stage was removed, revealing a forest scene. Deep in its recesses sat the goblin Rubenzahl, guarding the entrance to a dark cavern, which, by a stretch of imagination could be supposed to represent the shaft of the "mines" in which we were then revelling. Rubenzahl is the goblin of the mines of Riesengebirge. Whatever his usual temper may be, he was, on this evening, well disposed—and sat grinning before a bright fire, delighting mightily in the fun going on during the distribution of the gifts, which were heaped on the rocks around.

The youngest members of the Society, acting as servants of the elder, hastened to distribute the presents to the gentlemen first. Each member had sent something to another member, who had been apportioned to him by lot. Of course, the recipient of the gift had no idea who was the giver. A comical challenge to address the company accompanied each; and after the wrappers were removed and the presents inspected, the president, by several vigorous strokes of the hammer, brought the meeting to order. In a few appropriate words he thanked the "Miners" for his exquisite present, the donation of the whole Society, read a few business reports, and then called upon the others to return thanks to their unknown donors.

Here followed, for more than an hour, such "a feast of reason and flow of souls" as I had supposed existed only as a figure of speech. No one present that evening could ever after call the Germans a "heavy people." Their jokes were not a mere play upon words—a conglomeration

of slang phrases which sometimes passes for wit, but they were the true, current coin, coming forth pure and sparkling from the mint—no base alloy tarnishing their purity or depreciating their value. The speeches were all improvised, but the gift was always the suggesting topic. The incoherent was hunted out and decorated with flaming titles, conferred either in poetry or prose, as the genius of the speaker dictated. The present, which was sure to be of a most absurd kind, was represented as filling a want long felt in the menagerie of the receiver for which he poured forth the most profuse thanks in a style so finished that it was difficult to believe that each one spoke without the slightest preparation. I could not enumerate all the gifts, but remember a few as being absurdly boyish in character. The banker received a huge multiplication card, which he facetiously remarked was more acceptable than the division table would have been. The violinist had a sugar violin in return for the "linked sweetness, long drawn out," with which he had so often entertained his friends. The thin, spare "Lexicon," who looked as if he never smiled—might indeed have thrust the word mirth out of his vocabulary—was told in a huge *Po-kal*, or goblet, to drink and be merry. A renowned actor had a box of toys—a puppet-show—which he said would beguile many a weary hour. The romance-writer promised to take the lessons, in a book of sermons on the "sin of lying," seriously to heart; while the poet said, after reading the *History of the Quakers*, he too might learn to appreciate plainness of speech. Do not suppose that I am attempting to transcribe the wit and humor of that evening, which flowed in such copious streams. The manner, the time and place, lent the charm which a mere description must fail to convey. But I gasped for relief when the speeches were over, for my poor brain was in a whirl; it could not take in so much at once, though truth compels me to state that the humorous charger, prancing so gaily, sometimes ignominiously threw its rider to the ground; but these were exceptional disorders to the harmonious brilliancy of the whole.

Then came a musical entertainment, partly serious, partly comical. Some artists did their best, while others, for our greater delectation, tried to do their worst. A quintette party gave us a representation of an amateur concert; and certainly only great artists could have done the thing so badly. The leader commenced by an address to the performers, urging upon the necessity of unanimity of action, the subduing of each individual will for the common good, and telling them that if one of them should for a moment feel inclined to improvise an obligato, he should, before rushing away with his idea, ascertain if the others were willing to await his return to reason—and the tune. Above all, he exhorted them, if they could not exactly keep together through the whole performance, they should at least try to strike the final chords *ensemble*. The exerting discords which followed were drowned in roars of laughter.

Thereupon came a comic song called the "Isthmus of Suez," in which every political event of the last decade was drolly set forth to the music of a *Vollstied*.

Then the president announced that a celebrated preacher had asked permission to address the company upon the sin of *Langeveile*—tediousness. A furious rapping of the hammers greeted the entry of an artist, whose pictures, in their rich coloring, rivaled Titian's, disguised as a Jesuit Father. With downcast eyes and hands crossed upon his breast, he slowly passed to the speakers desk and commenced his discourse, which consisted of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. For five minutes he rang the changes upon A B C alone, but they were all given with such fire, such variety of modulation and gesture, that one would hardly believe that he was not really haranguing the audience in a most eloquent manner. At one moment his voice rose in tones of the loudest denunciation; the next it assumed an

argumentative strain. Again he besought, supplicated, seemed to weep even with sorrow for the obstinacy of his hearers. Then he turned to sarcastic weapons—hurling bitter, cutting sounds at his imaginary opponents. After twenty minutes he retired, and although not one word had been uttered, we all exclaimed, "What an eloquent speech!" I had never in my life heard anything so supremely ludicrous. And so the evening wore on with a variety of entertainment, enough to have filled up a dozen evenings.

One of the by-laws requires the members to bring something of their own work, for each meeting. Thus the poet's last effort, the artist's newest work, the architect's grand plan, treatises upon topics grave and gay, are proved in the caverns of the "Mine" before emerging into the outer world.

Once or twice in the course of the evening, just to prove that the members were not too old for such things, one and another of the musical celebrities—whose thrilling harmonics charm the multitude—thought it not beneath their dignity to strike up a bewitching waltz, a jolly polka, or a romping galop, and away went the joyous crowd, spinning, whirling, jumping, with all their youthful fire and elasticity. To one of my many exclamations of delight a Knapp replied:

"It is heavier than usual this evening. There seems to be no life in us."  
"Well!" I said, "you must have adamant natures if you can bear any more than this."  
"Ah!" was the sad rejoinder, "it is plain that we are growing old and grim. The cobwebs of time are spun upon the gray walls of these caverns where we dig and toil; these intellectual gymnastics avail naught but to show that no human efforts can renew the vigor of the muscles from which youth has departed forever. Better were it that we rest content with the laurels already won, leaving the rising generation to penetrate into the deeper recesses and bring forth the yet undiscovered treasures."

Occasionally simple refreshments were passed: lemonade and cakes ornamented with sugar hammer and pick.

Finally came the ladies' turn to receive their gifts. They were escorted to the table, where the presents lay heaped up. Each one being disguised, the lady selected any shape that struck her fancy and removed the wrappings to find some exquisite article *de vertu*. The ladies were not required, as were the gentlemen, to address their thanks to the assembled company. Perhaps they thought that if we once got the floor the house would never be brought to order again. We did our best to appear grateful, casting thankful looks right and left.

A touching tribute was paid to the memory of their fellow-workers, who, after years of toil, side by side, had since the last Christmas-tide cast away their implements and gone beyond those walls which, once sealed, are never more repassed.

The *grande finale* was the mimic torchlight procession through the galleries of the "Mine." Adjoining the Society's rooms is a concert-hall capable of accommodating three or four thousand persons. Its Egyptian darkness on that night was but little relieved, as the company, with woe Christmas candles in hand, wound round and round this immense space, the flitting fire-fly light of the tiny candles producing a drolly weird effect.

What else could be done? The night was far spent; so a wag suggested, for variety, that we should all go home. With deferential politeness the cavaliers pressed their lips upon the ladies' hands, thanked them for having graced the evening with their presence and wished that they might be oftener among them. Why do they not invite them, then? One can hardly tell where the fault lies that the sexes are so much divided in their amusements. The German gentleman professes to like the society of ladies, but as he rarely seeks it, it would follow that he regards the time passed with them as in a measure wasted.

But I do not propose to write a treatise upon the condition of woman in Germany. It would be ungenerous and ungrateful on my part to pass any censures upon a people who have always been kind to me as a stranger, and have given me an evening's entertainment which I shall all my life remember with delight.

**Letter from Edinburgh.**  
Continued from last week.

I cannot give you a very clear account of these demenses. They belonged to the Earl of Clare who died some twenty years ago in India when he was Governor, and the estate fell to his maiden sister, who still lives and is in her maiden third year. She resides in London and has never even visited the estate, nor has a master or mistress put foot on it for twenty-one years, and yet I was credibly informed that not a book, or paper, or a piece of furniture or bed-linen ever been removed except for the purpose of cleaning, dusting, etc., and then immediately returned, during all this time. The rental is £14,000 a year. There is a boy now at school who is the next and only surviving heir.

After seeing Limerick, we took train and in due time arrived at the Irish capital, Dublin, where we occupied ourselves in visiting the Castle, St. Patrick's Cathedral and the Cemetery, famous for being the last resting-place of Curran, who died in France and was, after many years, removed to this place, also O'Connell, the great liberator, to whose memory the Irish have erected the finest and largest burial-place and monument (except, perhaps, that of the Napoleons in France) that I have seen. We have attended two theatres, neither well attended, although there were good actors at both, and the celebrated Charles Matthews performing at the other. The most important place to me was the Mount Joy prison. It is what we call a State Prison and is an exact duplicate of that of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania in every particular, but more severe in its discipline and works the prisoners harder, but the male and female prisoners do not inhabit the same building. One of a similar form and construction, situated within the same plot of ground and confined by the same high wall but similar to the Insane Asylum at Philadelphia under that wonderful man, Dr. Kirkbride. Another peculiarity is that no woman, except by special permission, is permitted to visit the male's apartments, but men can visit the female's apartments. We could not learn the cause of this strange law further than it is the *love of the prison*. Before dropping this subject I must, and with pleasure, bear witness that I never visited a prison under better discipline or kept in better order with a view to the comfort and health of the unfortunate prisoners than that of Mount Joy Prison of Dublin, and I have visited hundreds in all parts of the world.

There is a great deal to see in and around Dublin and our time was used to the very best advantage. The docks, ship-building yards and some manufactories all had our attention and after all was done we started for and arrived at the far-famed Belfast, passing through a beautiful piece of country, many small manufacturing towns and nearly always in sight of the Irish Channel.

Belfast is one of the finest towns in Ireland. It has a large commerce, but, as you are aware, celebrated most for its linen. Some of the manufactories are immense but we visited only one. It was in full blast and gave occupation to twenty-five hundred men and women who were all at work when we visited it and gave us an opportunity to see the flax as it was received from the grounds and passed successfully through every department and phase and machinery until it was packed into the case and the case addressed to the firm it was ordered by. We also visited "Linen Hall," a building occupying four squares, or a whole block as large as Independence Square in Philadelphia. This building has samples of linen on exhibition from all the principal manufactories in the place, besides a very fine and expensive library. The "White Star" steamers are all built here. There are two on stock for this company at present. I visited them.

There is one theatre, which we attended, but it was not well patronized although it had a good stock company. The western part of this city is occupied by some magnificent buildings or residences, most of them very large and nearly all built within fifteen years and some beautiful buildings. There are one or two castles near the city.

I must here correct one omission. I forgot to mention that nearly every town has a botanical garden, generally would do credit to any country; also some fine public schools—but this business appears to be in its infancy, as the Government is now beginning to take a lively interest in the matter.

We also determined to visit the world-renowned Giants' Causeway. This took one entire day. It is about 60 miles from Dublin. So we started at

6 a. m. and returned to our hotel at 7 p. m. I cannot give you a description of this wonderful freak of nature, but it is astonishing. So I must refer you to some work on that subject, perhaps of geology.

Before leaving Ireland I must say a word about the fair sex. You cannot go through any part of the Island without seeing remarkable specimens of female beauty. They are in every town and hamlet, along the roadside, in the heathers, at the churches, in the streets, market-places, hotels and anywhere else. Of course there are very plain women to be met with also, but the pretty ones prevail and I never met more beauty in any one place than in Belfast, and the prettiest one of all I left attending a steam loom in a factory; in the above my wife bears out and coincides with me in every particular.

We left Belfast by steamer at 8 p. m., and arrived at Greenock, Scotland, at 5 a. m. but remained there but a short time and came on to Glasgow, about twenty-four miles up the Clyde. I would like very much to describe this important place. There is a great deal of New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh about it. I cannot form a correct idea of how many iron steamers I saw building, certainly not less than fifty and none probably less than 2000 tons; but from the time you get in at Greenock till you leave Glasgow you see nothing but activity. Everybody appears to have something to do and you are relieved of that continual lagging which torments you at every step in Ireland; neither do you see so much misery and yet you see more drunkenness, among both men and women. You also look in vain for the beautiful complexion, rosy cheeks, ruby lips, smooth skin and bright, large, almond-shaped, blue eyes, that you left in Erin; but you find matter-in-fact Scotchmen looking sharp after the Baubees, and the women with corn skin, high cheek-bones and general masculine appearance and voice; no poetry, but all life, energy and a determination to make money. Everything has a solid appearance—fine public buildings and memorials of every description at every turn and at the West End a beautiful park, a fine botanical garden, (not well kept), and many very handsome residences, all comparatively recently built, say within thirty years.

Time will not permit me to continue this much farther, so I must leave it, but before doing so let me tell you that Glasgow and went to the world-wide renowned Lakes in Trossachs, in the Highlands of Scotland, and very beautiful they are. The scenery in some parts is grand as well as beautiful, although the lakes, to an American eye, are rather small—a sort of miniature to ours; and after a very pleasant trip we arrived, night before last, near midnight, at this city (Edinburgh), pretty tired out well.

So far we have seen about all the notable places except this city, which will take us nearly or quite a week to do. Yesterday we went to the races, notwithstanding very great but very amusing, and last night to the theatre, where we saw a good comedy (Cold Castle) well performed and pretty well attended. I have not said anything about the theatre buildings simply because I have not seen anything notable. They will do very well for their place, but dramatic art does not appear to flourish much in any place I have been in, but is rather neglected, as the buildings remain the same as when built—I suppose some short time after the zenith of the great Shakspeare.

I will take up Edinburgh at some future occasion, with your permission.  
C. J. H.

**The Revelations of an Overturned Oak.**

In a hurricane passing over the Ohio River and down the Miami Valley on the night of the fourth of July, a splendid grove of oaks on the "old Anderson farm" of a Mr. Rogers, in the latter locality, was almost wholly prostrated. In connection therewith the following story is communicated to the Miami county *Democrat* by a Mr. J. F. Clark:

"Upon the morning subsequent to the storm (Saturday) Mr. Rogers went, in company with a hired man, to inquire into the extent of the damage inflicted upon his premises, and the first objective point was the ruined grove. The centre tree of the plat was a noble oak, the king over his fellows and a tree which had stood the ravages of time seemingly unscathed for several centuries. This tree had been snapped and felled by the storm. Upon examining the fallen giant for the purpose of ascertaining its worth as rail timber Mr. Rogers made a startling discovery. This was nothing less than the fact that the tree in falling had disgorged a skeleton. The bones were disconnected, yellow as gold with age and scattered promiscuously over several

Continued to fourth page.