

Hösterwitz m. Dresden Febr. 9. 1902.

My dear Mr. Deane, It was with great delight as always that I received your good letters of Dec. 12. and Jan. 2., and it was so very sweet of you to send us the pretty Christmas-card. Many thanks! My mother and I wish sincerely 1902 will keep on giving Mrs. Deane and you a good time, full of health and pleasure. We are much pleased this winter to feel well, though our winter is very unusually warm with damp unhealthy air. The presages for a cold season have utterly failed. Though there is no snow in the woods we have always lots of birds on the feeding-place. It is so lovely what you tell me of birds and squirrels taking food from your hand. Ours are somewhat shy, but finches, *Fringilla coelebs*, dainty-mouthed fellows, come very near if allured by ^{means of} sugar. The insectivorous birds with exception of *Merula* are generally shy but get very tame in captivity. My old robins and linnets ate every day a number of meal-worms from my hand. I wished you could see our lovely robin-read-breasts, I love these little elves most of all. The owl at Mr. Brewster's garden must give you much pleasure, as it gives to me to see him on your drawing, sitting in the box like a surveyor. I always enjoy to see the screech-owls in the Zoological Garden. They sit solemnly in their cages by dozens like the members of an academy in a meeting. We have had owls about here some years ago, *Screech-owls*, *Syrnium aluco* and *Athene noctua*. They nested in the rocks of the near ravine and in the towers of the neighbouring castle. The concert all night was not very lovely and so probably people have caught them.

You probably have translated since the German terms on your etching of the, 'Albrechtsburg'. The first line means: Original etching by H. Mannfeld, the second: Editor: Paul Kette Berlin, the third: L. Stenger's printing office, possessor W. Pick. It is the use here and in most countries that every work of art carries the name of the artist, and, if multiplied by printing the editor and printer partake in the glory. Bernhard Mannfeld is a renowned engraving artist, born 1848 at Dresden and yet alive. I have been down at Meissen at several times and I am pleased to tell you what I know about it. I enclose a photograph showing ~~the~~ ^{half} most of the town Meissen including cathedral and Albrechtsburg, and I think it will complete your picture. Thousand years ago all the eastern part of the present German empire, Saxony and most of Prussia was exclusively inhabited by Slavonian tribes, Sorbs etc, who have founded a great many settlements. They got germanised by and by and mixed with their western neighbours, the Germans, but the present names of our towns and villages are yet the memorial of their founders. Dresden, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Breslau, ^{Berlin} etc, are old Slavonian names as well as all those names of places in Germany ending by -witz ('Hoosterwitz'), -itz, -ow, -au, -in etc. The name Meissen is derived either from the Slavonian terms, Mezni 'the bound, or misenina' 'fleet'. In 927 or 928 the German emperor Henry the first founded a boundary castle and fortress on a hill at 'Misenina', on purpose to subdue the Slavonians, and in 933 a cathedral with a bishopric

on the same hill. United with the later margraves of 'Meissen' the bishops were masters there. In 1471 the prince, later ^{elector} ~~elector~~ Albrecht der Bekerete (Albrecht the Courageous) and his brother, elector Ernst commenced to renew the building of the castle. The new building was finished inside in the 16th century. In the general devastation by the 30 years war the castle was much damaged by the Swedes. John George the Second, elector of Saxony restored it in 1621 to 1624 and gave it the name in 1676 the, 'Albrechtsburg', in memory of the founder, duke Albrecht. Since the founder's time Saxon regents, electors, dukes and kings never have used it for residence or only for a few days. In 1205 the Elector S. Friedrich Röttger was imprisoned in the castle in order to make gold from out of earth, to fill the empty money-bag of the elector of Saxony and king of Poland Frederick Augustus the Strong. Instead of gold-making Röttger has invented the Meissen porcelain. A Royal porcelain-manufactory was then founded, and yet nowadays the Royal Meissen china ware is marked with two crossed swords ~~X~~ the coat of arms of Poland, because the mentioned elector of Saxony Fred. August. was at the same time (as well as his son later) king of Poland. The rooms of the Albrechtsburg were much damaged by the china-manufactory, so the government has removed it to another building in 1863 and the castle got restored with 125500 Dollars expenses. The Albrechtsburg contains 6 huge saloons, 34 rooms & vaults and 8 kitchens. Furniture and ceilings are very precious and artistic.

The photograph shows on the right the northern exposure of the Albrechtsburg with its Late-Gothic architecture. Behind the castle you see the renowned old cathedral founded in 933 finished till 1411, with the nodose (rugged) gothic tower 78 metres high and the broad belfry. Here was a chief seat of German hierarchy, a saint, bishop Berno lived here and there were 56 altars in the church and 200 priests, quite an army, until the reformation drove them away. The large round tower aside the Albrechtsburg is called the bishop's tower, the adjoining old building, covering the view of the cathedral on the picture, is the old bishop's palace (1476) at present used as court-house. During the next years the cathedral will be renovated and it will probably get one or two more towers. Meissen has some more churches (all protestant) the city-church is not visible on the photograph, a high school (St. Afra) and some manufactories in china and other earthen ware. Population 20,000. You and Mrs. Seane must come over sometime so we can ramble everywhere.

Prof. Goodale has told me that Dr. Greenman is revising the nomenclature in the Museum. He found a few garden-forms done in the earlier periods ~~very~~ to be determined. You have mentioned them already in your excellent article in 1893; but we cannot be blamed for doing models exactly after material furnished by Botanical gardens. It is possible the forms have somewhat changed there but also very probably they really occur somewhere in wild state. The usual change in cultivated specimens can be observed that plants, owing to soil and climate, get poorer or richer. I have felt this point lately. If I can

get an American plant here valuable as a gap-filler I use the occasion to do it. In single cases I have joined one or the other model acquired in that way, specimens that I could not collect on my journeys. Last summer the Dresden Bot. Garden offered me without having been asked by me, some plants. They were all good except a spray of *Fothergilla Gardenii*. The flowers of this Southern shrub get very poor and imperfect here in the open air, and when lately an imported Virginian plant with native buds bloomed in my room I saw the difference. By Jove, if I had sent the Bot. Garden specimen, the American critics would fillip me! I am very careful otherwise in taking up cultivated things. I have yet about 80 species material from my journeys at hand, but there can be now and then an occasion to get a very valuable gap-filler here, not yet represented in the collection, while among the journey-material there are Leguminosae, *Solanums* etc., of which types are already represented. I have been delighted to get acquainted with Dr. Greenman. I am sorry to think he has seen little of our home in that unfavorable season and time of my health-trouble. Please remember me to him if you have an occasion.

We have much hello-balloo in policy in Germany, opposition against state-treasurers who have spent millions more without asking the parliaments.

Everybody here is satisfied with the dismissal of the Saxon cabinet. We are sailing slowly but surely to topsyturvy land, where the butterfly catches the collector!

Please give my mother's and my kindest regards
to Mrs Deane and accept for yourself all good
wishes,

very sincerely yours

Rud. Blaschka



Blaschka, Rudolf. 1902. "Blaschka, Rudolf Feb. 9, 1902." *Rudolf Blaschka letters to Walter Deane*

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