

Grau Laura

February 11<sup>th</sup> 1900

Dear Mr. Seane,

Both of your letters, 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> ultimo, came safely to hand as also did the net you so kindly sent us. It is the most handy thing of its kind I have ever seen and it is no wonder to us that you were so successful in bagging so many little innocents during your recent vacation. Ah! what a jolly laugh we had over your sketch of the wife in pursuit of some new species of Lepidoptera. We are enjoying the joke more than herself, her sister, who is spending a few months with us, being also convulsed with laughter. But how are we ever going to repay your kindness? There is no one from whom we appreciate a letter more than yourself, knowing, as we do, how much you must put aside when writing us, and I feel that I must plead guilty to what? well, laziness in allowing two letters to reach me before I send one. Your card we enjoyed very much also the poem, which was very appropriate to the occasion. We are anxious to know whether Mr. Brewster received his card. It was sent at the same time that yours was. I shall write him by this mail and enclose a photograph of what I think is the largest Shaddock ever seen in this Island. Its circumference lengthwise was 31 inches, crosswise 28 inches and weight 8 lbs. and was grown not far from my house on the Estate of a friend. I am also sending you a picture

of a portion of our drawing room. Of course I do not claim any artistic merit in the work as it is my first attempt at photography. It is however sufficiently clear to convey an idea of our little home and its tropical appointments. You will see ~~marked~~ on a mat on the floor, a cat which occupies the proud position in the household of a pet. She is exceedingly cute and amusing. I shall enclose one of our moths in this letter. Of course, I do not expect it to reach you perfect, as from our experience of the rough handling of letters by Postmen and others it is not to be expected that such delicate little creatures will escape scathless. During my Xmas holidays I had expected to do some collecting work, but was unable to do so on account of a slight attack of intermittent fever. I am now plunged into work on the roads and have all I can do. I don't remember whether I told you that I have been in charge of one half of the roads of this district, a matter of about 50 miles of road to look after. These are scattered over a rather large area requiring my attention everyday in the year - Sundays and Public Holidays excepted. Besides this I am Secretary and Paymaster of the Local Road Board, ~~an~~ representative institution having the control of all roads water-ways etc. in their respective districts. The Island is divided into nine counties with which are sub-divided into wards, in some cases two or three wards constitute a county, <sup>the roads of</sup> each ward etc, being put into the hands of the aforesaid Boards and the money for the working of same is voted by the Government annually. This system, which has been in existence for six years has proved to be a great improvement on the old one which was the Public Works Department of the

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Colony. The members composing the Board are elected by popular vote annually. It is therefore an easy matter to replace any member should he be pure unsatisfactory. Of course, we are governed under the Crown Colony system, and the establishment of this representative body is said to be the beginning of Representative Government which may come about in twenty years or more. I do not think we are yet ripe enough to govern ourselves. From time to time we <sup>have</sup> had great public demonstrations demanding the right to govern ourselves. Petitions and counter-petitions have been sent to the home government on the subject, but our long-headed government at home have always refused to grant to our people the right of self-government, and in this they are right. Such great changes in the policy of a nation cannot be brought about in a day or a year, but must take place gradually, and this is what is being done. Well, I am taking you into a region that perhaps you do not care to go or I shall retrace my steps and get into a path more congenial to you. Did I tell you that we have just had the largest & longest flight of "Green Pages", a large species of papilio I have ever seen in this district? It began somewhere about July last and lasted up to late in November. Just think of it, a flight covering five months, all going in one direction, from west to east. This occurs every year and yet no one living, so far as I know, possesses any knowledge as to where they come from nor as to what plants their eggs are deposited. I followed them as much as I had the time to and the most I could learn, and that was a great satisfaction to me, was that they fed on horray in the blossom of any blood-wood tree. This is more than our best student on butterflies (Mr. H. Caracciolo) has ever seen, but it does not help one any

further. Many naturalists would give a great deal to see one of these beautiful insects at rest on a leaf. They seem to be perpetually on the move. Their flight being most erratic, and what is more their sight is very keen. When one first starts with a net, standing in the course of their flight, nothing seems simpler than to say that crazy little insect, but what's this? you have had a try, over sure of success, and presto! the little chap is so job. past you.

Our war in South Africa is just 4 months old and so far as a layman can tell we have not gained any material advantage. We know that roughly we have had somewhere about 10,000 casualties, that upwards of 200,000 men are <sup>now</sup> to be on the spot, that our best generals now have the work of crushing the enemy in their hands. We also know that instead of forcing our way into the enemy country we have all we can do to <sup>shut up</sup> retire our men in our own country and to drive the enemy back into theirs. Of course all this never would have been if the Boers were fighting by themselves. As it is they are aided by some of the best military talent in Europe - envious Europe of England's power and greatness. We are fighting for equal rights of all white people in South Africa and against selfishness, tyranny & injustice. The end will come and all right, but I fear at a very great cost. Our little Island has done grandly and nobly towards assisting in the <sup>in aid</sup> fund for the wives and orphans of our soldiers. We have just had a patriotic concert, chiefly of local talent which will bring in at least £300 and besides this we have subscribed over £500. Well after this rambling letter the least I can do is to ask you to excuse the scribe. The wife joins in wishing you and Mrs. Deane every happiness and again thanks you for your good present. Write again when you can & believe me yours very sincerely, A. B. J. 1897



Carr, Albert Bonus. 1900. "Carr, Albert B Feb. 11, 1900." *Walter Deane correspondence*

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