

Gran Laura

February 11th 1900

Dear Mr. Deane,

Both of your letters, 9th and 23rd 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. No one enjoys 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, ~~as~~ a representative institution having the control of all roads water-ways etc. in their respective districts. The Island is divided into nine counties each which are subdivided into wards, in some cases two or three wards constitute a county, ^{the roads of} 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 ^{have} 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 our blood-wort tree. This is more than our best student on butterflies (Mr. H. Caracciolo) has ever seen, but it does not help one any



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