

Cape Town
12th December, 1910

Dear Mr. Deane,

What a long time it is since we have heard from one another, and yet how quickly the year has run out, and such a year, so full of stirring events, historical and otherwise; the dream of the paper line of Remond being among the unexpected happenings of this year of grace.

The death of a European monarch and the birth of a confederate South Africa, the former with a little Rhodes and the latter without any, afford the student much food for reflection. It is not about these things, however, that I mean to write, but of ourselves, what you have been doing and how you have spent the year now dying out.

For myself some changes have taken place. In my last letter I told how, after so many long years of the best I could give of my services to the Row Board at Montserrat, I was badly treated and was forced to bring an action against that body for damages.

You must not be surprised to hear that the case has not yet been tried which is mostly due to the congested state of our Law Courts and the absence out of the colony of my Counsel who has just returned & taken steps to go on with the action. At the general election in July last I was asked to stand for election which I did not do, so strong a hold has corruption on our ignorant electorate that without a change in the franchise it is impossible for any honest man to get a seat upon the Board. Under the present law any person assessed on a house or land to the small amt. of 24s per annum has a right to vote, the scale being as follows:- one shilling to £1.5 = one vote;

$\frac{1}{2}$ S. to $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 2. 10 = 2 vote: $\frac{1}{2}$ S. to $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 3. 10 = 3 vote: $\frac{1}{2}$ S. to $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 4. 10 = 4 vote: $\frac{1}{2}$ S. to $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 5. 10 = 5 vote: $\frac{1}{2}$ S. to $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 6. 10 = 6 vote, which is the limit. The schedule operates unfairly on the people of substance, owners of large properties, who are but 30 to 40 out of an electorate of 4500 in the County. When it is considered that of the very large proportion but a Committee for example, read and write and then understood the meaning of an election it will be readily seen how much such an electorate is exposed to mislead and unprincipled designing people, of whom Denmark has its full proportion. I am glad to say that after continued exposure of this state of affairs in the papers the Government will take steps to remedy the evil. To a freeborn American anything which bears the semblance of restriction of the Privileges of the People is intolerable, but to us natives of the land, British American, I think who have become estranged from the feeling is not quite the same as the condition under which we live are entirely different. Our Government made a huge mistake in giving too much representation before the people were ripe for it and with the result that the cry throughout the Island is to restrict what exists and educate the masses, in this the home Government concurs. With all the election there was a candidate, a real country bumpkin, whose qualifications have to be unequalled, which fact I brought to the notice of the Returning Officer for the election, adding that if he took no heed of the information given him & the man got returned I would contest the matter. This Official treated my statement with little concern with the result that the man got in, I knowed him at and in accordance with our laws, I was returned automatically, all within a month of the election, & I am now a full-fledged member of that election (P) Board! Now this all seems

We idle long. If as, still one & I will say no more about it.

After getting rid of one or two members of last year the men on the Board, a most unscrupulous lot, were in high place and felt that in the event was clear they would have a fine time & do just as they pleased. I would not forget to say that they are led by one man, the chairman, the most clear and unscrupulous of them, in order to be superior things and from had to arise & then they began to be superior about & when they found that I was going I entered one of the vacant seats very much and then in New Britain were brought into play to keep the interests out, with what success I've already told. Well, it is but three and a half months since I have taken my seat and I have attended for regular meeting, I am happy to say that the public and the Government have been afforded quite sample proofs of the rotten state of affairs which stand. The papers are full of the exposure & are able to bring out. I hope before long it will upon the Government to denounce the Board as corrupt & inefficient.

In looking back I am that I have taken on ten thousand papers to tell of my triumph which certainly looks splendid when we know that the paper of a letter must necessarily be limited. My excuse for this, however, is that when writing to you I feel I am opening my heart to a real friend, the kind that helps to make life worth living for.

Mr. Carr, the little one and I have been here since the 27th of August, by far the longest stay since 1895, the year of Mr. Brewster's visit. Mr. Brewster has sent us a very pretty card (Xmas) for which I must write to thank him. These remembrances are so pleasant, especially so this year, as it is the first. Since he left we have shown that I have received one here, where we, and the small parents who know him, hold him as dear. We had a visit from a Mr. & Mrs. P. Whippley of Newburgh, N. York: early in the year. They are ardent friends of the Thayers and are fine and lovable people. We suppose there

visit immensely and felt badly when the parting moment came. They returned home in a unique & most interesting manner, taking first at the various small and insignificant Islands (after having visited the more important ones) actually stopping three weeks at Oahu, that volcanic rock of an Island within sight of St. Kitts. The chief village is situated in what is known as the Bottom, which is nothing less than the bottom of an old crater!

They are very simple fisher-folk and live in peace and harmony. Of late years a few of them have cast their lot among our fishermen to whom they can give many a wrinkle in navigating rough seas. On account of shortage of the proper kinds of native words I have not been able to complete our new book, but am hoping to be able to do so by June 1911. It has been a big job and considerable drain on the resources of the Estate, but I shall persevere until it is completed with all the details previously planned not forgetting the "Deane" sum to the West commanding the days sunset.

Our Agricultural Society and Dept. of Agriculture are doing very good work indeed. The former is composed of all sections of Agriculture and the latter is a Govt. Department with a good staff of scientific men, microbiologists and entomologists. A great deal has been done by this dept. in its researches into the various fungal and other plant diseases and the planters are beginning to reap the benefit of it all. To maintain this dept. our Crown is taxed 2¢ on every 100 lb. and sugar proportionately. The sum thus collected is quite sufficient to defray the expenses of the dept. While the Crown & this unreliable portion of the community are clamouring for self-government, the industrial and disorganising are calling for light, more light and less politics, may the latter prevail. I must now bring this rambling letter to a close and wish you and Mr. Deane in Mrs. Curri and my own behalf a Merry Xmas & a happy new year. Yr. old friend, W. Fern

12 ^{1/2} Dec. 1910

P.S. Our Mrs. Carr seeing my letter concluded she asked
me whether I had remembered to tell you how we have
been trying to raise a few little Triamou chicken joints
in our Cressa grove a few days ago. It is the smallest &
prettiest little creature you can imagine, grew up well, to
be or tame that it follows in about the house as a little
dog would, but the struggle for life was too much and notwithstanding
all our care our little friend succumbed. It appeared to eat
fairly well but seemed to have been pining for its mother
who, unfortunately was killed by accident. Isn't it strange,
come to think of it, how perfectly wild animals can be
tamed so quickly & in some cases, with so little effort? What
would you think of my old friend Poor-one-one (*Myiophobus*
jamacensis) selecting as his favorite perch the pinnacle of
my house! It is true that the house is built on the hands
of the birds who so condescendingly sang in the night of
Feb. 1895 for Messrs. Brewster & Chapin. At that time, however,
man had not yet interfered with nature's surroundings - I was
then creeping slowly but surely in the work of destruction, viz.
clearing the forest for my estate - and as the present birds
may be the second or third generation since then, they have
still kept to the hands of the grandparents & have grown
so secure in the knowledge that I will not harm them that
they have actually chosen the peak of my house to sing
from and make their perpetual meals - at sort of concert
& supper combined. By a piece of good fortune I manage to
secure a little over two acres of forest within 100 yds. of the
house which I intend to leave as undisturbed as possible. In
it walk deer, ^{& armadillos} at night & iguana by day not to mention a large

number of birds many which are tinamous, mountain & ground Anis,
trogon, motmot, hawk, owl - just as one or another, Tanager, several creepers,
green birds, & small paroquets. There must be more than fifty species
inhabiting this small patch of forest. Besides keeping this as a
bird reserve it affords us common mud for fuel and for burning clay which
makes a very good substitute for gravel. This we use for graveling our paths
and yards as we have sent to no store on the property or in its
near vicinity. For every tree removed I intend to replace at least three
good kinds; in this way the forest will always be kept alive. By the
bye, do you know that some enterprising planter in Ecuador has been ex-
perimenting for the last three years in the pollination of cocoa flowers &
has succeeded in making his trees bear a great deal more than when
left to nature. His story of the amount of time and work expended
is very instructive and a little amusing. Among other things he men-
tions how he had to fight to the death the little work of nature's
pollinators (Thrips, etc) when when they found that certain flowers had
more pollen than others (those pollinated by hand) swarmed into the yellow
to such an extent that he had to resort to spraying, etc. to get
rid of them. In this, after a long & hard fight, he was successful.
Our dept. of agriculture is now trying it for the benefit of the
colony. Some claim one year hence years that if artificial pollination
becomes general the price of cocoa will fall ^{very} to zero. This I do
not fear as it will never become general, at least not in this
nor the next generation, & if it did only small areas and large
plantations would become the order of the day. Besides many would become
disgusted & turn up the sponge for others to pick up & benefit by.
And in my belief, anyway. I think the right spirit is to
leave things broadly in the free.

Yours once more

M.H.



Carr, Albert Bonus. 1910. "Carr, Albert B Dec. 12, 1910." *Walter Deane correspondence*

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