

once more."

I have looked upon this young man with anxiety ever since I have understood his character. His passion for botany is as absorbing as Naumen's for Arctic research, Edison's for electric science and that of others who give their whole thoughts and life to some engrossing pursuit; they seem possessed by a power over which they have no control. So Floyd has seemed to me; I have read his letters with vague presentiments of trouble ahead, and now it has come. He has done the work of two men too long. He is a civil engineer and from that business comes his living, for he must depend on himself for his support, but after work is over, he is off to some collecting ground; every Sunday and all holidays devoted to this loved pursuit of his, - recreation he would call it, but it required as much strength of body as his regular business

Springfield, Mass. - July 12. 1897.

My dear Mr. Deane,

I am glad to think of you and your wife up in the mountains; the whole of July so far has been a heated term of high waters. We are standing it well enough in this house, but I don't do much myself but read, and write a letter occasionally. My children are in Colorado. Walter had a very severe attack of rheumatic fever that began April 11. Dr. Morris, who attended him, goes out to Greenwood Springs for three months every year - resident physician at the Colorado ^{Hotel}. He advised Walter's going out to take the course of waters, baths &c. to complete his cure, so he started June 28. Amelia went for company, and an attendant, two day nurse was taken, because even then Walter could neither feed nor dress himself.

I have had many letters from Amelia, - all encouraging. The hotel and springs are 5200 feet above the sea, but it is hot in the day time even there, - very pleasant however in all the surroundings.

Mr. Floyd wants to know where you would like to have specimens of the *Potentillas* and *Leontodon* sent.

One of the former answered the description of *P. recta* so exactly that there seemed to be no doubt about the name. The other seemed all right for *P. Pennsylvanica*, but was out of the region laid down in the Manual. *P. recta* appears in the Middlesex Flora in Malden + Concord.

Mr. Floyd wrote from Henniker, N.H. and I am much concerned about his condition. I did not know but that he was in his usual health, - no hint of anything different in any of his previous letters, and in this last one, of

July 5., the first four pages were on botanical matters. Then he says "This is a very quiet little country place. I came here for complete rest and am doing nothing as yet. I have let everything drop, all care and all thought almost and I think I feel better". He thinks he feels better, - that is very little to say. "It is not very often I am absolutely inactive like this, but it pays at times. In driving about the village - 'driving' - that goes to my heart; in health he would ask nothing better than a chance to walk miles and explore a new locality. He speaks of plants that he saw from the carriage and then closes with 'I shall do more collecting now. As yet I haven't been up to it, I was simply all tired out. I think I am all right now. I shall stay here a week longer, and then back to town

A NEW FLORAL WONDER.

[From the London Mail.]

The annual Temple gardens flower show opens to-day, and among the exhibits will be an extraordinary orchid from the collection of Mr Sander of St Albans. It is a specimen of the *Cattleya Reineckiana*. The wings of its seagull-like blossom are white as snow, while the body portion is of gold and vermillion, eight inches across. It is the largest and most beautiful *Cattleya* ever known to the civilized world, and it would take 1000 guineas to buy it. Arnold, the famous orchid collector, sent it home to Mr Sander just before he lost his life while hunting for further similar treasures. Arnold was the man who, while traveling for Messrs Sander in Venezuela, made the acquaintance of a young fellow who appeared to be roving for pleasure. Arnold traveled with him for some distance, but a few chance words in a wayside inn made Arnold aware that the supposed pleasure-seeker was really another orchid collector, bent on the same errand as himself, and using every means to supplant him. At once Arnold drew his revolver, and there and then gave his acquaintance the option of either fighting a duel with him or retiring from the field. The latter course was chosen.

Arnold's death, soon afterward, under circumstances which have never yet been cleared up, is by no means a solitary example of the perils of orchid hunting, and though in the more civilized districts the work is comparatively easy, there are still countries in which an orchid seeker may be said to carry his life in his hands. Mr Sander yesterday told a *Daily Mail* report-

er that he has at the present time a collector who has been in his service for years, and was well acquainted with Arnold, who for love of his work voluntarily offered to go to the East in search of a splendid orchid known to exist there, but of which hitherto only one solitary specimen has been sent home. A magnificent kind in floral beauty, it surpasses all its kindred, but its habitat is located on the terra of skull hunters and skull collectors. Yet this enthusiast, fully aware of the risks he runs, has started with the determination to return with it. Those who know the treacherous character of the Javan sea natives, and the deadly nature of the climate found in the jungle and swampy districts, will obtain a slight idea of his undertaking. Once before, taking advantage of a punitive expedition organized by the chief of a small island against a neighboring tribe, he was within a short distance of the locality in which he believes the coveted treasure to exist, and possibly, had the tribe he accompanied been victorious, orchid collections would have been all the richer for one more of nature's choicest gems. But it was not to be. The opposing tribe had received notice, and the collector's friends met with such a warm reception as caused them to retreat with more precipitation than in such a climate, and under such circumstances, is conducive to comfort. More than one narrow escape befell the collector. The scar from a jagged fish spear which grazed his cheek still remains, and shortly after he found himself facing two of the enemy, armed with their long, curved krisses, but fortunately he reached the boats in safety, though with the total loss of his equipment, and finally arrived at Singapore. One experience such as this would be sufficient for most men, but, nothing daunted, he has returned again to try to secure the orchid. No news has yet been heard of his luck.

with July 12, 1897
letter

and his study, pressing, mounting & letter-writing took as much mental exertion and I fear, shortened too much his hours of sleep. If he had seen a near neighbor coming to me every day with his finds, his doubts & queries and his plans, I think I could have held him back, but I saw from the beginning that I could not influence him by anything I might write.

This world is far from right in many ways, but it will be some time, and when it is, nice young men won't have to work themselves to death in the wrong places. Mr. Floyd in a right world, would be on his way to becoming a famous plant collector, — serving his apprenticeship, we'll say under Mr. Pringle in California and then pushing forward into virgin wilds, seeking for orchids like the men told of in the enclosed cutting, only I hope he would never

drive away a rival by threats of shooting him. No, when the world is right, it will know that Co-operation not Competition is the law of life.

I will send you a few headings. Mark particularly The 2d Life Guard; I should advise you to give it to some special pet, or else to some one who would know the meaning of the word on the scroll, word doubtless carried also on the regimental flag.

The winter work amongst birds that you are looking forward to will be pleasant I am sure, from the way you speak of it - What it is you did not explain.

Mrs. Robinson says flowers are very abundant in Nantucket this year. She has found new localities for some plants in the Catalogue. She was going to invite Mr. Dime to spend a day with her in botanical Conference, going over her home - &c -
With regards to both, Yours very truly M. L. Owen



Owen, Maria L. 1897. "Owen, Maria Louisa Jul. 12, 1897." *Maria L. Owen letters to Walter Deane*

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