

Wood

Wilmington W.C.

7  
February 22<sup>d</sup> 1876.

My dear Sir:

The season is so well advanced that I will probably be able to send you by mail in a few days a few specimens of Dicoua and varaceua and perhaps of crasera.

In reply to some of your Enquiries I would say "Let No any animals feed on it, or profit by it in any way?". The savannahs in which the dicouas abound is a favourite place range for Cattle. The dicouas come out with the Early Spring grasses, but as far as I know they are not touched by the Cattle.

I have noticed carefully in my rambles but have not been able to discover that they formed the food of any animals.

"2<sup>d</sup>. What are the effects on the soil in which it grows and does it help or promote the future growth of the plants? The soil in which they grow is moist and sandy with an admixture of organic matter. A coarse stiff grass called by the local name of wire-grass, *Sarracenia*, *Drosera* (*rotundifolia*) *diaphysia* & *liatris* grow side by side in abundance, and but few woody plants are seen near them. There is no perceptible change produced in this soil by the growth of *Dionaea*; year after year the same crop unchanged in appearance as compared with each other. Not every ~~leaf~~ <sup>leaf</sup>

Entraps an insect; sometimes for a whole season plants live without Entrapping a single insect. They grow and thrive on Congeial soil Entirely independent of insect food; but are Ruinate Flourish when suitable soft-bodied insects are caught; while on the other hand the leaves lose colour by catching hard-bodied insects, which are not soluble in the digestive juice. It continues long in the same situation, except when disturbed by drainage. Ditching the land cuts off the entire stock in a few seasons. This plant does not appear as a "volunteer" in cleared ground; it requires careful attention to propagate its seeds.

"What are the causes of its limited distribution?"

I have frequently asked the question but have not been able either to answer it myself, or get a plausible reason from others. If the plant was wholly dependent on insect-food, it could be traced, perhaps, to insect distribution of a peculiar sort, but this is not the case.

The sarracenia flava is by far the most rapacious insectivorous plant. Insects are attracted into its long tube by something they find there, and the retrose hairs in the mouth of it, prevent their escape, and they are finally drowned in the water, <sup>nearly</sup> always present in this tube. In mid Spring, nearly every tube has flies and much or two deep in it. The drosera abounds here but not the fly-catching drosera.

S. Hillsboro in this state

To D.<sup>r</sup> Moses A. Curtis, is due  
the first notice of the peculiarities  
of the *Dicouea*; or it would be more  
strictly true to say, who first gave  
an account of the digestive power  
of its leaves.

Following the teachings of D.<sup>r</sup> Curtis I  
have followed out some of his Experiments  
for amusement, and D.<sup>r</sup> Darwin will find  
much to interest in the habits of the *Dicouea*  
after he Examines them more closely.

I am very respectfully yours,  
Thomas J. Wood.

Prof. W. Lawson L.L.D.