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NORTH EASTON, MASS.

July 15, 1933.

My dear Mr. Edwards:

Dr. Barbour has just returned from his fishing trip. I saw him yesterday at the Museum of Comparative Zoology and asked him about the sample collection you had sent in for him to examine. He was not at all enthusiastic about the specimens and I gathered from his remarks that he would not be interested in having you collect for the Museum. I am sorry about this, because I had hoped that you might be of service to the Museum while picking up a little more money for your efforts. However, in one way I think it is all for the best where the Arberetum is concerned, because I doubt that you could give your attention to a multiplicity of interests and make plant collections of the standard that compels the interest of a first-magnitude institution. Dr. Barbour, by the way, has a collector in Honduras at the present time. He is collecting near Trujillo, I understand, and I take it is a trained field man. It is highly probable that you might meet him if you decide to visit the coastal regions. I did not get his name, but the Fruit Company officials at Porto Catilla would probably be able to tell you something about him. I should not advise anybody to go to Truxillo for orchids, however, because it is a wind swept region and the drying air seems to discourage epiphytes. Perhaps if one got into the mountains back of the foot hills that rise from the coast back of Tuxillo, orchids and other good things might be found. I only had time to study the woods near the town and my press was empty when I returned to my base. I did not study the rain fall condition in that region. Perhaps the records would show some localities to be more favored than others. At Tela I did study rainfall and I found that there was a decided influence on orchid vegetation where the rainfall was heaviest. This is one reason why coastal lowlands are usually disappointing to the orchid collector. It is in the mountains and at high altitudes that orchids thrive best and may be expected to occur in quantity as to plants and species. The orchids of the low lying lands near the Atlantic coast usually contain orchid weeds, that is the species that one may expect to meet from Central America to Brazil. Endemism is usually associated with mountain valleys where the rainfall stimulates a rich vegetation. Such valleys, as is very true of Costa Rica, may each one support species that are either endemic to a particular valley or rare elsewhere. Mountains that are not cloud drenched during many days of the year may be orchid barrens. It is surprising what a rich feast for the orchid student a man like C. H. Lankester will bring back from a few days spent on the the sides of the great volcanoes of Costa Rica. And yet, the coastal country round Limon is most disappointing. This reminds me that where you found *Chysis aurea*, *Odontoglossum Williamsianum* and *Lacaena spectabilis* the conditions for orchids must be approaching promising proportions.

Yours sincerely,

Robert C. Anderson



Ames, Oakes. 1933. "Ames, Oakes July 15, 1933 [to J.B. Edwards]." *Oakes Ames Orchid Herbarium correspondence files*

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