

BALBOA, C. Z., PANAMA October 24, 1922 192

My dear Dr Ames:

I have your letters of Oct 10 & 11 both of which I have carefully read over. Tonight I will consider only that of the 11th as it is the most important and requires a prompt reply- In considering it there are certain fixed fundamentals, which are inescapable:

- 1
 - a, The wages of men on the Isthmus are governed by the rate of pay as set by the Panama Canal. It governs wages all over the Isthmus by influence, and the pay of a man cannot be gauged by the rate of pay of the natives in other tropical states.
 - b, The wages of a common laborer is \$ 40. per month and I cannot employ my man for less than \$ 50 as he is intelligent, a plant man, and can be taught up to certain point to do anything. He can read and write.
 - c, The incidental expenses of this man will amount to more or less; say for street car fares, horse hire, boat hire, and lodging etc when he remains away more than a day at a time. Panama being a land of distances and poor trails requires time to get about. These expenses will have to be incurred, as it will be necessary for him to go distances from the city to successfully prosecute his searches.

2My garden is a purely scientific effort on my part, because

- a, There was no Botanical Garden in Panama or in the Canal Zone.
- b, There was a constant need for it, and
- c, My love of Botany and Orchids, influenced me to make the effort.
(Since starting it I have learned how weak the Bot Gardens are in Panama Orchid knowledge)
- d, This garden has cost me 8 years of the most constant painstaking care, and about 3000 or more dollars in money.
- e, I am a man on a Government salary; every cent of which over and above the living expenses of myself and my daughter, have been spent in its care and extension; and I could have spent much more to a great advantage if I had have had it.
I would be very glad to have an additional income to relieve these needs.

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Considering the foregoing, I am going to make you a proposition along the lines of your letter, but more extensive in its nature. For this reason I did not cable you as requested- there being no emergency need for it.

Lay out his trips for him & do as I would for myself.

- 1 Subsidize my garden by paying me a salary of \$ 200. per month.
- 2 In consideration of which I will agree
 - a, To employ the man, and a boy when indicated; pay his salary and expenses; teach him; and overlook his work in making specimens from the field; also see that they are put in proper condition for shipment, and send them to you.
 - b, You can have your field men in Cent and South America ship plants (encountered by them in their Botanical trips) to me to be cultivated in my garden, (as they cannot be sent to the U.S. on account of the plant quarantine and other difficulties) and from which I will prepare and send you Botanical specimens as they flower. The plants to be permanent to the garden. We have ships up and down both ^{costs} _{costs}.
 - c, Your field men to be privileged to use my garden for any observation and study desired. *all S.A. men will have to pass through Panama.*
 - d, You can have them or a special gardener to do extensive hybridizing work for investigation purposes.
 - e, The garden can be considered as a repository, or a branch *for* of your U.S. garden- as far as procuring information of plants or their cultivation is concerned, and for any other scientific purposes.
 - f, I will give your field men the benefit of my knowledge at all times.
 - g, It is understood that the foregoing is for Orchids only.
 - h, My services in this matter are to be understood as secondary to my Official duties.

you can then get many specimens which must be insured.

Canal Zone
I have thus outlined a plan which I believe will redound to ^{our} the great mutual benefit, This will ^{also} enable me to be more liberal in my employments, when I go on my annual vacation to the mountains in search of plants.

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Should you consider this favorably I would suggest that you reply as promptly as possible, as the dry season will be here by about the middle of November, when plant collecting should be actively begun. Also the flowering season begins with the dry season, and every day should be taken advantage of.

If this arrangement is consummated I can then sever relations with Dr Schlechter without any wrench to my conscience. I am only bound to him by my agreement to send him my specimens, upon his proposal to give me determinations and to publish them promptly. Both of which he has broken many times. Still, I have rather felt that his shortcomings did not ipso facto release me from my promise; but this ^{arrangement} would so change the status that it would. You can write such a letter as should be sent him, and I will copy and send it.

I will within the next few days send you ^{bottled} a rarissisimo- the female flower of *Catasetum bicolor*. This plant Dr Schlechter wrote me was one of the lost ones (like the *Masdevallianum*) and was a very rare herbarium specimen. Female not known. I have only one small plant. *The lady will be small, only one on stem.*

Most sincerely yours

C. Powell

The flower is now kept open.
You have made specimen No. 168.



Powell, Charles W. 1922. "Powell, Charles W. Oct. 24, 1922 [to O. Ames]."
Oakes Ames Orchid Herbarium correspondence files

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