

355 Commonwealth Avenue.

Boston, Mass., January 23d, 1926

My dear Lankester: I don't know of any sound just like it. An ear-splitting kind of applause. The kind that characterizes the last meeting with a large class in Harvard University. It breaks out spontaneously when your last word has been spoken, and lasts, without perceptible diminution, until you have gathered up your lecture notes and walked from the lecture hall for the last time. It makes you feel an uplift, until you realize that it marks the breaking of a bond that has never been too strong, and means the end of a mighty delightful association. For the minute you forget the hard work that has been done; the effort of throwing heart and soul into the task is forgotten. And then, as you retrace your steps to the laboratory, the distressing thought comes that perhaps you have failed to arouse in the young minds you are leaving behind, a true picture of the deeper meanings of biology. The noise you have just heard simply means, "All right, Old Top, it isn't your fault if your subject is deadly dull; you are entitled to a good send off, -- and here it is". All of this simply means that I am through with classes until next September. In the meantime there will be more freedom and plenty of time for research among "economics" and orchids.

Some interesting, and baffling specimens have just arrived from your Hacienda. Also a few good things from Alfaro. A report on these will be issued in the course of time.

I am sorry, deep down in my heart to learn of your decision to leave Costa Rica. Of course, you are entitled to the change of scene you long for. But it is hard for me to sink my selfish interests in true altruism. You have been a joy to me, in spite of your exasperating tendency to overlook the common species.

It is too bad that my determinations are not more satisfactory.



The truth is, one does not see in dried specimens all of those subtle distinctions that are so evident in the living plant when it is viewed from the horticultural point of appraisal.

I have reason to believe that the *Masdevallia* you sent to me as a specimen of *M. costa ricensis*, is simply *M. Tonduzia* Schltr. It agrees with the original description, but it does not agree with the description of *M. costaricensis*. I have just had dried specimens from Alfaro. They work out to be *M. Tonduzii*.

Now that I have a few months for recreation, I think I shall assemble the new species of Costa Rican orchids and publish another number of *Sche Orch.*

Have you any exceptionally good films from which to make lantern slides? This question is prompted by the thought that I must get ready some interesting illustration for the lectures that come next year.

I am not saying anything about cameras in this letter. The thing you returned to me under the name of camera hardly deserves the name. I should hand it to an expert repairer and ask him to put it in order he might ask me what part of an automobile wreck it belonged to. When I described its condition the other day, the man at the photographic supply shop said to me, "I think it would be cheaper to buy a new machine". Just as the news came to us that the World War was over, the truck men and milk men tied tin cans to the rear of their automobiles and the early morning hours were characterized by the bumping of tin cans over the paved streets of the city. Perhaps you have recently signed a peace in Costa Rica after a revolution and to celebrate the event you dragged the so-called camera up Irazu behind a horse. One never can tell.

With the best of good wishes,

C. D. C.



Married:

1922



Ames, Oakes. 1926. "Ames, Oakes Jan. 23, 1926 [to C.H. Lankester]." *Oakes Ames Orchid Herbarium correspondence files*

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