Herrera y Cairo 25

S.P.Tlaquepaque

Jalisco, Mexico

February 4, 1944.

Dear Viktor:

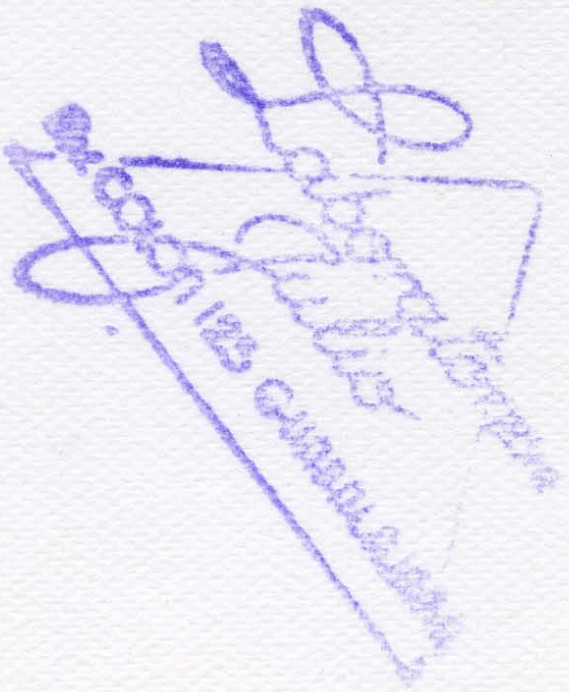
Your Christmas card was a great joy, not only becauseit was a beautiful and significant card, but because it bore so much incidental news. I have been away a year now, and the remaining two months look dreadfully long. Here in Mexico the countryside is lovely, the work interesting and absorbing, and the people generous and kind...but I have not talked to a biologist (with the exception of one corn breeder) or seen even a copy of Science in the four months we have been here.

Just got back from two days in Ameca, aprovincial Jaliscan city; a rather dirty one since it has a lot of sugar factories and the populace compensates by getting drunk every Saturday night. A sketch of my activities there is fairly typical. Arrived and walked to center of town. Two hotels. Selected the one with the best looking patio. Rented room (six pesos per day with meals). Went to mayor's office with credentials. Mayor not in until four thirty. Departed for noon dinner (the big meal of the day in all this country). Siesta. Called on mayor. Found him wearing a gun on his belt (Ameca MUST be tough, that's thefirst time I have noted this picuresque detail). Mayor with a three days beard and rather mussed clothes but intelligent and helpful(Conversation, like all others in Ameca conducted in Spanish on one side and my approximation of that language on the other). Mayor said to come at nine thirty tomorrow and he would have a man to go around to the big corn dealers. Tried to get him to call up just one on the telephone but mayor firm. Walked down street by my lonesome looking for corn. Spied some in sacks in a doorway. Stopped and convinced the lady of thehouse(who was rocking her baby to sleep in a little hammock in the corner of the room) that I could not harm her corn by studying it for an hour. Measured corn (25 ears) for an hour

and a half (population samples my dear sir; and 15 measurements or observations recorded for each ear). Fed chewing gum to lady's two dirty little girls and to friends of d.l.g. Lady went to get supper and grammaw came to rock the baby. Grammaw did not approve of my being in the front room and kept a fishy eye on me til I finally finshed. Lady, however, all smiles and very gracious by the time I departed. Walked on down street and saw man shelling corn in the doorway of a small shop (bottled drinks and grocery staples). Man very interested and we discussed the kinds of corn around Ameca. Man delighted to have me measurecorn and brought me a chair and offered me a table which I didn't need, however. So as the evening fell I sat in the front of his little shop, actually in one of the doorways and measured all the ears in the basket(not 25balas). Customers came and wnet....mostly came, however....most of them lingered to discuss corn and what did I think of Mexico. Proprietor's wife heard the laughter (I am even funnier in Mexico than at Zoology seminars) and came to investigate. A very nimble-witted old dear, with a thousand questions, and much interest in what was taking place on her doorstep. Finished measuring corn, then asked series of questions about various uses of various kinds. Old lady produced section of sugar cane as a delicacy and I peeled and ate two internodes with my jack-knife giving a long account of the difficulties of possessing an American stomach in Mexico. Home to hotel for late supper and to bed after a short walk. Mayor's at 9;30, mayor appearing at 10. Instead of the usual mozo gave me his head assistant (also armed) a very intelligent man who didn't give a dmmn about corn and didn't care who knew it. Wasted no time in putting me in touch with owner of big granary where I sat on top of bushels of corn and measured samples of two different kinds. Photographed samples of same on floor of patio. Owner extremely interested in corn and inthe U.S.(as are most Mexicans). Talked so much I had to run to the hotel to get bags and make the afternoon train. That is the tale of four of my samples and I now have 55.

We plan to leave here the 20th of March.....Yours, Edgar Anderson

Mexican children in field



House in the mountains