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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

Fark. Columbia Univ.
New York City. Jan 7, 1897.

Mr. E. S. Steele.

Dear Sir. —

Your favor of 5th to hand.

I can hardly express a valuable opinion upon the subject you mention since I know nothing whatever of the conditions requisite for a perfumery industry. Nor have I ever been in the Upper Pecos region.

The conditions there are very similar however to those of the Rio Grande Valley of the South central portion of the territory with the one exception that their irrigating water is clear from artesian wells. The lower Pecos region around Eddy has very bad irrigating water it is so strongly alkaline.

Very little cultivation of plants for ornamental purposes is done in

southern N. Mex. but from
my own very limited experience
I know that it is difficult to
get many of the eastern garden
plants to grow. I don't think
irrigation makes up for a tropic
humidity at all - or if any, to
but a very slight degree.

There is a definite winter here
lasting from the middle of Nov. to
well along in March. During which
there is very little vegetable growth.
Chrysanthemums if protected from
frost frosts, which occurs generally
about Nov. 1, will bloom on till
about March ending - and Hardy
crucifers like cabbage & radish
will commence growing early in the
spring. Citrus fruits will not
grow unprotected any place in the
territory - The fig unless protected
kills back to the ground each
year.

The annual minimum temperature
is about 0°F .

Violets will not grow there except
with great care. Pansies in cold
frames will grow in early spring.
Sea roses will live out, and they
bloom most beautifully & profusely
in the early summer and early
fall - but through July & Aug they
produce but few flowers since it
is too hot.

Such things as geraniums will
not grow in the open in the sum-
mer at all except when very
carefully tended.

Of native plants which are fragrant
the mesquit (*Prosopis glandulosa* Torr)
is very abundant & blooms profusely
for about a month in April & May.

The cultivated alfalfa will bloom
at any time from May 15 to frost if
not allowed to go to seed.

There are two or three species of
delicately fragrant species of *Acacia*
native to the higher mesas (above

irrigation level) without more water than falls (annually about 10 inches), which bloom very profusely in Aug. & Sept.

The strongest perfume furnished by any plants down there comes from three very abundant species of Abonia - (A. fragrans, A. cycloptera, & A. turbinata) all of which bloom profusely from ear in May until frost. I don't know whether these plants are ever used for the purpose you mention however.

Datura meteloides flowers as well as those of Cucurbita foetidissima have very sweet odors though the foliage of each smells most unpleasantly.

Perhaps this will give you some idea of the climate. I don't know Av. Rel. Humidity. You can get some ideas on this subject & also better Horticultural data than I can give you from Prof. Vistal of Ag. College San Cruz N. M.

Prof Merriams maps and data concerning the life zones of that region unless they have been recently corrected are not all correct & very misleading -

Very Truly

E. O. Wootton.