

52715 to 52735—Continued.

Victor Oviedo, at Catiglata, near Ambato; it is usually known, however, as the 'Gonzales tree,' from the name of a former owner of the property.

"In size and quality of fruit this variety is far superior to the great majority of capulfs seen in Ecuador and other tropical American countries. It is worthy of propagation by grafting and should be planted in all those regions where the capulf can be grown. It will probably succeed in California, and perhaps also in the Gulf States. It would be a valuable acquisition for the highlands of Mexico and Central America, as well as for other tropical countries where there are plateaus or cultivated regions at altitudes between 6,000 and 10,000 feet.

"The parent tree is probably very old and is one of the largest capulfs I have seen. It is about 50 feet high and has a spread of 60 feet. Its fruits, which are very abundantly produced during the first months of the year (from January to March), are as large as the Black Tartarian cherry of California (three-quarters of an inch in diameter), dark maroon, with soft juicy flesh and a seed of about the same size as that of our northern cherries. The flavor is sweet and very agreeable, with a faint trace of bitterness if the fruit is not fully ripe."

52721. CABICA sp. Papayacæ.

Babaco.

"(No. 547. Ambato, Ecuador. January 12, 1921.) This is called *babaco* throughout the interandean region of Ecuador, where it is cultivated in many places, from Loja Province northward to Carchi Province. I have never seen it except in cultivation, and this only between 6,000 and 10,000 feet in altitude; nor have flowers other than purely pistillate ones been found on any of the numerous plants examined.

"This is, in fact, the most remarkable and valuable of the several interesting species of *Carica* cultivated in Ecuador. Because of its large fruits, which yield an excellent sauce, because of the relatively low temperatures which the plant can withstand, and because of its habit of producing seedless fruits it is worthy of attention in other countries. It is a smaller plant than *Carica papaya*, rarely reaching more than 10 feet in height. The stem is usually slender, especially when the plants are set closely together, as they are in the small commercial plantations of Ambato. The leaves are glabrous like those of the *higacho* (*Carica* sp., S. P. I. No. 53578), but with fewer lobes than in the latter. The fruits are commonly about a foot long and 3 to 5 inches in diameter; they are truncate at the base, sharply acute at the apex, and conspicuously 5-angled in transverse outline. The flesh is about half an inch in thickness, nearly white, distinctly fragrant, and very acid. It is eaten only after cooking. The large cavity in the center of the fruit contains a quantity of white cottony substance and occasionally a few seeds. The latter are possibly produced when the flowers are fertilized with pollen of other species of *Carica* (since staminate flowers of the *babaco* are not seen in cultivation).

"The plant is propagated by cuttings and in no other manner. Whether it represents a wild species which I have not seen, or whether it has been derived by cultivation from the *higacho*, I am unable to say; the latter hypothesis does not appear unreasonable. It is worthy of a careful trial in California and Florida."

Fruits of the babaco are shown in Plate IV.