

low hot country of Vera Cruz. Snakes of the genus *Crotalus* are common in the neighbourhood of Orizaba, but disappear entirely in the wet and cloudy zone about Xometla, being again represented by a small species with a poor rattle at an elevation of 13,000 feet. Of harmless snakes, only *Tropidonotus scalaris* was met with, a representative of a typically northern genus. A small lizard, *Sceloporus microlepidotus*, also has a great vertical range from the hot plains of Oaxaca to the upper tree limit of Citlaltepētēl.

At their highest camp, 12,500 feet, were stunted pines and juniper, while at their feet grew asphodel and tussock grass, which continued to an altitude of nearly 14,000 feet. At 14,400 feet they reached what appeared to be permanent patches of snow, but the white summit of the peak, which from this side they found impracticable of ascent, was still 4000 feet above them.

At a later date Dr. Gadow, however, ascended the peak itself, an elevation of 18,200 feet, approaching it on the north-east side from La Barbara.

Proceeding in a south-easterly direction from Cordova (2700 feet) there was dense tropical vegetation on limestone formation all along the foot of the slopes. Eastward the country showed open savannas, followed by lagoons, swamps, and low forests in the neighbourhood of Agua Fria. The Rio Papaloapan with its many tributaries carries an enormous volume of thick yellow water, and for months the low ground is to a great extent submerged. Further on, Dr. Gadow describes low undulating grazing land, until he reached the railway which crosses the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

The eastern slope is clad with humid evergreen forests, but farther west the line crosses a ridge at an altitude of rather less than 1000 feet, and passes through dense tropical forests with occasional open patches, but on the Pacific coast a drier type of vegetation prevails. From Salina Cruz and Tehuantepec north-westwards to the City of Oaxaca the land again ascends towards the high plateau. The hills at first are covered with low vegetation, until at 3000 feet pines and oaks appear, but nowhere is there continuous forest. The general character of the country is dry. Deep gorges and sandy river beds alternate with an intricate system of hills and patches of xerophile vegetation. Looking south from an altitude of 5300 feet, the tierra caliente appears to be densely covered with wood, while to the north is seen a flat, almost treeless plateau, with here and there outcropping barren ridges of volcanic nature, or with wooded slopes of Palæozoic formation.

The whole of the Western or Pacific slope is much drier than that of the Atlantic, and the vegetation is consequently less dense. Pine trees descend to about 2000 feet, and cacti prevail.

It was on this occasion that, in company with Mr. Julius Flohr, I made a three days' expedition on mule-back from Mexico City to the Cave of Cacahuimilpa, stopping at the pretty little town of Cuernavaca *en route*, from which a fine view of the western slope is obtained.