

from the sculpture, the varices, and the columella, good as they are in themselves, show many degrees of variation according to the different species. The sculpture consists generally of vertical (longitudinal) plaits, riblets, or striæ, crossed by spiral impressed furrows. If both are strongly expressed, the sculpture may be termed "plexa" (braided); in some species the spiral furrows are very weak, scarcely discernible under an ordinary lens, and in others they seem to be wanting throughout. It is not easy to clearly describe these gradations in a few words, and therefore only the extremes are mentioned in the adjoining table. The varices are interruptions of growth, marked by an impression and by colour, either a dark streak alone or a dark streak preceded by a pale one: they are very distinct and numerous in some species, more or less rare and obsolete in others; so that it is not at all satisfactory to form two sections in this genus by the presence or absence of varices, as Fischer and Crosse have done.

Many species have been described only from one or a few examples, and not figured; they have been admitted and handed down from work to work by subsequent writers, who have themselves described new species, without the possibility of comparing the specimens. As it is rather difficult in this genus to determine the species from description alone, and many of them present considerable individual variations, it is to be feared that several species have been twice or thrice introduced as new, and that the actual number of species is not really so large. I have fortunately been able to compare the typical specimens of Shuttleworth's species (kindly lent me by Prof. Th. Studer of Berne), some of Pfeiffer's types (lent me by Dr. H. Dohrn), and drawings of others in the British Museum (kindly furnished by Edgar Smith), with the material of the Berlin Museum, which includes Albers's and many of Strebel's types, and with the shells collected by Messrs. Salvin, Godman, and their friends in various parts of Mexico and Central America. This has enabled me to trace many well-characterized species through various localities, and to diminish the number of so-called species by reducing some to mere synonyms or subordinate varieties. On the other hand, I have been compelled, somewhat against my wish, to name several new species on single or few specimens; and to admit species proposed by previous authors, without being able to indicate very striking differences. In this genus, as in many others, it seems to be very difficult, or rather impossible, to draw a clear line of distinction between local variations and nearly allied species. Only one who can observe many specimens in various localities, and one who is well acquainted with the minute differences, can hope to settle this question. At all events, I have been able by the help of my friends to figure many—true or pretended—species which have not hitherto been figured, and were therefore scarcely recognizable by the practical conchologist.

The Mexican and Central-American species of this genus may be arranged as follows:—

- A. *Plexæ*: sculpture more distinctly granoso-reticulate; aperture  
 large; size rather large . . . . . *indusiata, vanuxemi,*  
*sowerbyana, coulteri, cuneus, aurata.*