

species; but what is more remarkable they comprise upwards of 400 species more than the Gramineæ, the next order below them; hence it may be confidently assumed that they will maintain this position, and possibly even take the second place where the Leguminosæ now stand. In Mexico and Central America, taken together, orchids form 8 per cent. of the species of phanerogamic plants, and 37 per cent. of the monocotyledons. Taking South Mexico alone, the most thoroughly explored part of our area, they constitute about 30 per cent. of the monocotyledons. The percentage of orchids in monocotyledons for the whole world is about 28; that is reckoning the species of the former at 5000, which is certainly none too high. Assuming the number of orchideous genera to be 350, we have 30 per cent. of them in Mexico and Central America, and about 18·8 per cent. of all the species. Out of 105 genera only fourteen are actually restricted to our limits. Three extend into western North America; six into eastern; sixty into the West Indies, and eighty-two into South America; but of the remainder only fifteen extend beyond America. Ten of these, which are nearly all of terrestrial habit, are of wide distribution; two (*Epidendrum* and *Govenia*) are represented in the Galapagos, two (*Bletia* and *Arethusa*) in China and Japan, and *Physurus* in tropical Asia. Of the widely diffused genera, the terrestrial genus *Spiranthes*, limited to the section *Euspiranthes*, specially deserves mention as having the widest range of any orchid type. It is found in America from the Arctic regions to Chili, including the West Indies; and the only orchid in the Bermudas is a *Spiranthes*. In the Old World the genus is generally spread, except in Tropical and South Africa; and *S. australis* has the widest area and is the commonest of all species of orchids, as it extends from Afghanistan and China to Australia and New Zealand. *Spiranthes romanzoviana*, a common North-American species, is elsewhere only found in county Cork*, Ireland. A specimen in the British Museum, purporting to have been collected by Pavon in Mexico, has been identified as this species by Mr. Ridley.

Coming to the species of orchids within our limits, we find that 800 out of 938, or 85 per cent., are endemic; figures unapproached by any other large order, except the Compositæ, which is 5 per cent. lower. An examination of the distribution table (p. 195) further shows that the endemic element is proportionately much stronger in Mexico and Guatemala than it is in the southern area. Looking at the distribution within Mexico, it is very striking and surprising how rapidly the numbers decrease northward, or rather, it would be more correct to say, how suddenly orchids cease almost altogether. From what we know of the routes of the various collectors, whose plants are not localized in herbaria, we may safely add the "Uncertain" column to South Mexico, which gives 500 species for this region. Turning to the North-Mexican column there is a total of only twelve species. This extremely low number seemed to demand a second examination of the data; and the result of this examination

* Or perhaps we should state was found, for there are reports of its recent destruction through the land being ploughed.