

A host of beautiful orchids inhabit the forests of Mechoacan, especially around Morelia, in the Cerro de Quinzeo, in the woods of Jesus del Monte, Irapeo, &c., among them *Spiranthes cinnabarina*, *Habenaria acutiflora*, *Malaxis galeottiana*, and *Epidendrum puniceum*, as well as nearly all of those described by La Llave and Lexarza.

The forests of the cold regions bordering the central plateau also shelter a few orchids, including *Govenia superba*, *Corallorhiza mexicana*, and *Pleurothallis violacea*.

*The Upper Cold Region.*—Phanerogamic vegetation reaches the summits of the loftiest mountains. The heights of Popocatepetl, Iztaccihuatl, Toluca, Orizaba, and Cofre de Perote, ranging between 10,800 and 13,600 feet, constitute a cold region of a very special character, where Filices, Gentianaceæ, Ranunculaceæ, Gramineæ, and Coniferæ predominate. At altitudes of 12,100 to 12,800 feet alders and oaks cease, and pines become stunted and shrubby, trailing their branches on the ground. On the peak of Orizaba, at about 13,600 feet, junipers form here and there small patches of verdure on the trachytic rocks; but at this altitude vegetation has become very poor and scanty, for it is only on the margin of the rivulets, fed from the eternal snows above, that one finds a few diminutive Umbelliferæ, species of *Cnicus*, *Senecio*, Gentianaceæ, *Vaccinium geminiflorum*, *Allium fragrans*, *Carex galeottiana*, *Bromus subalpinus*, *Poa conglomerata*, and *Deyeuxia orizabæ*.

On the small flats of volcanic sand at the foot of the glaciers, from 13,800 to 14,100 feet in altitude, grow dwarf species of *Castilleja* with orange-scarlet flowers, two species of Compositæ, two species of Cruciferæ, and *Bromus lividus*; and cryptogams abound, especially lichens, covering the rocks, and running up to the limits of the snow, which varies at different points.

The orchids reaching the greatest elevations are: *Habenaria prasina*, *Platanthera nubigena*, *Spiranthes ochracea*, *Malaxis gracilis*, and *Platanthera longifolia*, which do not altogether cease below 12,500 to 12,800 feet on the peak of Orizaba.

*Odontoglossum nebulosum* and *Cattleya citrina* live on the tall oaks of the Cerro de Capulapam and the peak of San Andres at altitudes exceeding 10,500 feet, and they are doubtless the only epiphytal species that ascend to so great an elevation in Mexico. *Odontoglossum membranaceum*, *Oncidium graminifolium*, *Epidendrum virgatum*, *E. varicosum*, *E. puniceum*, *Govenia superba*, and *G. spicata* disappear at about 9850 feet.

On looking back and re-examining the comparative distribution of orchids in the three great regions defined, it will be apparent that the cold region is little behind the temperate region, either in the variety or beauty of species peculiar to it.