

brambles* remind us of the form of our European vegetation. We in vain hoped to find on the mountains of Caracas, and subsequently on the back of the Andes, an eglantine near these brambles. We did not find one indigenous rose-tree in all South America, notwithstanding the analogy existing between the climates of the high mountains of the torrid zone and the climate of our temperate zone. It appears that this charming shrub is wanting in all the southern hemisphere, within and beyond the tropics. It was only on the Mexican mountains that we were fortunate enough to discover, in the nineteenth degree of latitude, American eglantines.†

We were sometimes so enveloped in mist, that we could not, without difficulty, find our way. At this height there is no path, and we were obliged to climb with our hands, when our feet failed us, on the steep and slippery acclivity. A vein filled with porcelain-clay attracted our attention.‡ It is of snowy whiteness, and is no doubt the remains of a decomposed feldspar. I forwarded a considerable portion of it to the intendant of the province. In a country where fuel is not scarce, a mixture of refractory earths may be useful, to improve the earthenware, and even the bricks. Every time that the clouds surrounded us, the thermometer sunk as low as 12° (to 9·6° R.); with a serene sky it rose to 21°. These observations were made in the shade. But it is difficult, on such rapid declivities, covered with a dry, shining, yellow turf, to avoid the effects of radiant heat. We were at nine hundred and forty toises of elevation; and yet at the same height, towards the east, we perceived in a ravine, not merely a few solitary palm-trees, but a whole grove. It was the *palma real*; probably a species of the genus *Oreodoxa*. This group of palms, at so considerable

* *Rubus jamaicensis*.

† M. Redouté, in his superb work on rose-trees, has given our Mexican eglantine, under the name of *Rosier de Montezuma*, Montezuma rose.

‡ The breadth of the vein is three feet. This porcelain-clay, when moistened, readily absorbs oxygen from the atmosphere. I found, at Caracas, the residual nitrogen very slightly mingled with carbonic acid, though the experiment was made in phials with ground-glass stoppers, not filled with water.