

infested by serpents, presents a rich harvest to the botanist. The Brownea, which the inhabitants call *rosa del monte*, or *palo de cruz*, bears four or five hundred purple flowers together in one thyrsus; each flower has invariably eleven stamina, and this majestic plant, the trunk of which grows to the height of fifty or sixty feet, is becoming rare, because its wood yields a highly valued charcoal. The soil is covered with pines (*ananas*), *hemimeris*, *polygala*, and *melastomas*. A climbing gramen* with its light festoons unites trees, the presence of which attests the coolness of the climate of these mountains. Such are the *Aralia capitata*,† the *Vismia caparosa*, and the *Clethra fagifolia*. Among these plants, peculiar to the fine region of the arborescent ferns,‡ some palm-trees rise in the openings, and some scattered groups of *guarumo*, or *cecropia* with silvery leaves. The trunks of the latter are not very thick, and are of a black colour towards the summit, as if burnt by the oxygen of the atmosphere. We are surprised to find so noble a tree, which has the port of the theophrasta and the palm-tree, bearing generally only eight or ten terminal leaves. The ants, which inhabit the trunk of the *guarumo*, or *jarumo*, and destroy its interior cells, seem to impede its growth. We had already made one herborization in the temperate mountains of the Higuerote in the month of December, accompanying the capitán-general, Señor de Guevara, in an excursion with the intendant of the province to the Valles de Aragua. M. Bonpland then found in the thickest part of the forest some plants of *aguate*, the wood of which, celebrated for its fine red colour, will probably one day become an article of exportation to Europe. It is the *Sickingia erythroxyloides* described by Bredemeyer and Willdenow.

ment of air at the two surfaces of the leaves of the *clusia* exposed to the sun without being cut open. The gas enclosed in the capsules of the *Cardiospermum vesicarium* appeared to me to contain the same proportion of oxygen as the atmosphere, while that contained between the knots, in the hollow of the stalk, is generally less pure, containing only from 0.12 to 0.15 of oxygen. It is necessary to distinguish between the air circulating in the tracheæ, and that which is stagnant in the great cavities of the stems and pericarps.

* *Carice*. See p. 207.

† *Candelero*. We found it also at La Cumbre, at a height of 700 toises.

‡ Called by the inhabitants of the country 'Region de los helechos.'