

Vargasiella peruviana *C. Schweinfurth sp. nov.*

Herba gracilis, mediocris. Caulis vaginis tubulatis evanidis omnino tectus, supra foliis pluribus ornatus. Folia disticha, elliptica vel oblongo-elliptica vel elliptico-lanceolata, articulata. Inflorescentia subterminalis, laxe racemosa. Sepalum dorsale ovato-oblongum, complicato-acutum vel mucronatum, concavum. Sepala lateralina similia, acuta, conspicue mucronata, cymbiformia, dorso carinata, quam sepalum dorsale paulo majora. Petala elliptico-ovata, acuta. Labellum simplex, in positu naturali arcuato-recurvum et columnae parallelum, expansum ovato-oblongum, basi cordatum, apice rotundato abrupte acutum. Columna brevis, crassa.

Plant slender, terrestrial or epiphytic. Stem elongate, many-jointed, decumbent and rhizomatose below, with one or few strict branches near the middle, entirely con-

cealed by tubular sheaths which waste away into fibres except in the leafy upper portion, below producing scattered roots which are fibrous, stout, apparently short, mostly simple and densely tomentose (especially when young). Leaves several, on the upper portion of the stem, congested when young and scattered at maturity, distichous, convolute, elliptic to oblong-elliptic or elliptic-lanceolate, acuminate, cuneate below, sessile or indistinctly petioled, articulated to close tubular sheaths, membranaceous, with three to five nerves more prominently exerted beneath, 5.6–13.5 cm. long, about 2–2.5 cm. wide, increasing in size from the lowermost leaves up to the median ones. Inflorescences much surpassing the leaves, arising from the axil of an upper leaf, erect or nearly so, racemose above, up to about 33.5 cm. long; peduncle about 21.4 cm. long, provided with several remote sheaths which are tubular below and lanceolate-acuminate above; raceme loosely about 15-flowered or less; floral bracts oblong, acute, spreading, up to 1.4 cm. long. Flowers medium-sized, with campanulate-spreading segments, subfleshy. Dorsal sepal ovate-oblong, complicate-acute or mucronate, concave, 5-nerved, with the margins (especially above) very minutely cellular-erose, about 1.32 cm. long and 6 mm. wide. Lateral sepals similar, ovate-oblong, acute, cymbiform, dorsally carinate with the keel produced into a conspicuous mucro, 5- or 6-nerved, lightly oblique, about 1.45 cm. long and 7 mm. wide near the concave base. Petals elliptic-ovate, acute, apiculate, 5-nerved, about 1.2 cm. long and 6 mm. wide. Lip simple, arcuate-recurved and parallel to the column with the sides erect in natural position, articulated to the column-foot, nearly equaling the lateral sepals, with the anterior margins strongly undulate, about 1 cm. long and 6 mm. wide when expanded; disc when forcibly expanded ovate-oblong, cordate at the base,

rounded and acute or abruptly apiculate at the tip, with a pair of fleshy callose thickenings (which are more or less radiantly lobed below) in the lower half. Column short, stout, with a narrow fleshy wing on each side throughout, subtruncate above, about 7 mm. high at the back, produced at the base at a right angle into a short fleshy ovate-oblong foot. Anther relatively small, galeate, 1-celled. Pollinia 4, in two unequal pairs, without appendages, strongly complanate-subglobose, waxy. Ovary prominently 6-sulcate.

This concept has a very distinctive appearance, but seems to lack affinity with any genus known to me. It appears to be abnormal in respect to the inflorescence which must be interpreted as being pseudoterminal in the axil of an upper leaf. Yet it surely does not represent the truly lateral inflorescence characteristic of Schlechter's series *Pleuranthae*. The pollinia appear to be entirely without appendages, either viscid disc or caudicle, and thus to indicate a relationship to the subtribe *Liparideae*. However, it differs from all members of that subtribe (except from certain equitant-leaved plants of the Old World), in having articulated leaves and subfleshy or firm flowers. I therefore propose a new subtribe, **Vargasielleae**, to be inserted in Schlechter's arrangement before the *Liparideae*.

It is with great pleasure that I dedicate this genus to Dr. César Vargas of Cuzco, Peru, whose wide explorations in that country, often in the face of serious obstacles, have added immeasurably to our knowledge of the Peruvian orchid flora.

Cuzco: Prov. of Paucartambo, Pillahuata, epiphyte in rain-forest, at 3400 meters altitude, floral segments white lined with pink, December 11, 1942, *C. Vargas* 3010; Prov. of Convención, hills of Pintobamba, in humus of forest, at about 2400 meters altitude, perianth white with pinkish lip, March 3, 4, 1943, *C. Vargas* 3288 (TYPE in Herb. Ames No. 65952).